



# Managed IT Service Provider Criteria Checklist

When speaking with MSPs and evaluating their services, it's important to remember that not all Managed IT Service Providers are the same. Before speaking with anyone, identify your goals and success drivers and make sure to consider the following criteria when evaluating Managed Service Providers (MSPs).

## Engaging Questions

Your MSP is an extension of your IT team and, therefore, should be engaged and excited about learning more about your company. Make sure the MSP asks in-depth questions about your goals, business, customers, and challenges.

## Understand Scalability

One of the benefits of partnering with an MSP is that your business is not constrained by the limitations of hardware and full-time staff. Rapid shifts in technology and security often require considerable expense to maintain the necessary systems and hardware components but with MSPs, you should have the flexibility to scale up or down depending on the project.

## Available Support

An MSP should provide both remote and on-site support. When IT emergencies require a fast response, you may need the option of in-person support. In-person support is vital for proper maintenance of your network, hardware, printers, and computers. A local MSP can provide both in-person and remote support.

## Track Record

Do your due diligence to ensure that your MSP has a proven track record that meets your expectations. Sure — sales guys can be all well and good while they're running through service offerings, but typically they're gone after the sale. Check out company reviews online and make sure to follow-up with references (don't be shy, ask about successes and failures!). Companies who have had longer relationships with an MSP will often have more to discuss.

## Capabilities/Services

Make sure to pinpoint your most critical points-of-need. Some MSPs may offer a variety of services, and others may offer specific, specialty services. Regardless, you should receive a customized and personalized service designed based on your company size, industry, goals, and needs.

## Security

Security is a big deal. Find out what security processes and systems the MSP has documented and tested. Ensure that the MSP has robust security measures in place and that they are willing to adhere to your company's data security policy.

## Accountability

You should receive an explicit, detailed Service Level Agreement (SLA) that outlines the service you expect and what they will provide. The MSP should stand behind their SLA and their work performed.

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