



MANAGED IT SERVICES



THE IMPORTANCE OF IT SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Technology has opened the door to a world of possibilities within our day-to-day operations, especially pertaining to business management. Our services are more streamlined, we're faster in response and delivery, and we're more capable of meeting our customers where they're at online. But, the wonderful IT resources we enjoy also come at a great risk, especially for small to mid-sized organizations who don't have the systems in place to manage their technology. Data breaches are always looming, and anyone is susceptible to a total system outage. Plus, since cybercriminals are employing more deceptive techniques, businesses can't afford to turn a blind eye to IT maintenance.

As reliance on technology increased, so did the need for greater security measures to protect our network systems. Managed IT services emerged as an all-inclusive shield against data vulnerability. Many small businesses have negated these efforts, despite the fact they're a large target for cybercriminals.

In fact, 43% of web-based attacks are against small businesses.

Consequently, these types of businesses need to take advantage of the constant system monitoring IT services provide.

IT maintenance needs vary from business to business, as not all organizations utilize the same software, devices, or networks. Regardless, all organizations should rely on a management service for around-the-clock protection. After all, your IT infrastructure doesn't shut off when you do. You need a service provider to proactively monitor the status of your system and identify threats as they arise, rather than when the problem has already transpired. Let's discuss the role of managed IT services for small businesses and how they differ from more traditional solutions.

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE BEFORE MANAGED IT BUSINESS SERVICES

Our IT infrastructures may be more complex than they were in the past, but the risk of technical difficulties has always been prevalent. Rather than continually monitoring their technology systems, business owners relied on break/fix providers in a time of need. As the name suggests, once a system quits operating as it should, a technician comes in to diagnose and treat the issue at hand. For some time, this was an acceptable standard of IT management, as we did not have the level of dependence on our systems as we do now.

But, if you're solely relying on IT support on a need-be basis, you're putting yourself and your business at much more significant risk for a cyberattack. Cyber incidents have increased at an alarming rate, and they're more severe now than they've ever been.

Studies show 60% of small businesses go out of business within six months of an attack.

Plus, no matter how sophisticated our automated systems may be, they're always at risk of an outage which can have a profound impact on your business' operations. Waiting for a break/fix service could double down on the amount of lost productivity during a disruption.

Before managed service providers, businesses usually weren't committed to one specific break/fix service. They'd scramble to find an available service and rush to get their technician up to speed on their current issue so they could reach a solution in as little time as possible. This effort proved to be expensive and inefficient, as technicians had no prior knowledge of the company's systems before their arrival. Businesses were at a much higher risk of human error, and would often have to call in another service later down the road for the same issue. Due to these fruitless efforts, a shift in the process has occurred. Learn why managed IT services have become a universal solution sought out by business owners to withstand technical difficulties.

MANAGED IT SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

If the risk of a cyberattack or data loss scares you, you're not alone! Discover some of the main responsibilities IT services handle to help protect small business' technology.



DATA BACKUP

Data is an essential part of a business' day-to-day operations. Organizations rely heavily on the cloud and other data-management platforms to store and maintain relevant information, such as sensitive client documentation, historical data, and financial records. Any data loss event can be catastrophic, as businesses could lose support from customers and key stakeholders, severely impacting the future of the organization.

The risk of data loss always looms for businesses; 140,000 hard drive crashes occur in the U.S. each week alone. A managed service provider will set a reliable system in place to secure your sensitive information. IT services include customized backup plans specific to each organization they work with, allowing for seamless protection. An IT professional will also have a recovery plan in place in the event of a breach or data loss. Remember, it's far less damaging overall to protect your data through a backup solution than it is to try to recover after a loss.



DATA AND NETWORK SECURITY

As technology systems have grown to be more encompassing, the rise of security threats has also increased. There are countless security threats a business needs to be on the look-out for including data breaches, hacker attacks, malicious software, viruses, and stolen data. New attacks emerge every day, and they're not something to brush off. The average employee isn't always able to spot a threat, as they often appear as regular system updates, company emails, or legitimate websites.

Managed service providers assess the risks associated with security breaches and find practical solutions to safeguard their clients' businesses. They offer an extensive list of security solutions which can include anti-virus protection, spyware and malware services, spam control, firewall solutions, and network monitoring.

Cybersecurity management needs to be a preventative effort, or otherwise, you're at risk for a major loss, internally and externally. An experienced service provider will keep your system out of harm's way by continually monitoring your network activity.



SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Maintaining a healthy system of networks can quickly turn into a full-time responsibility as there will always be new software updates to your business' storage, servers, and devices. While it's essential your business maintains these system updates to enhance speed and security, many users often find implementing new features and improvements annoying, time-consuming, and confusing. To combat this, integrating a system maintenance service for your business can help you keep up with your updates and other first lines of defense against security threats. These services can also handle organizing automatic updates, configuring server networks, troubleshooting system errors, and more to optimize for success while you handle your business.

Additionally, proactive maintenance of business systems brings forth a more productive work environment with minimal downtime. You won't have to spend time worrying about your network's security or whether your systems are outdated or running at a less-than-optimal potential. In the event you run into an issue, you'll have one point of contact to answer all your questions and help troubleshoot issues. Whenever a problem arises, you can count on a managed service provider to quickly size up the issue and provide a swift resolution.

BENEFITS OF MANAGED SERVICE PROVIDERS

The impact of a managed IT service can save a business' technical operations in countless ways. Learn how proactive and sustained monitoring can change the state of your technology.



ENHANCED SECURITY

Without a managed service provider, it's likely your software, networks, and devices are decentralized. As a result, your systems begin to operate less efficiently when they're not consolidated into one central data center. It's more challenging to maintain software updates, backups, and ensure all programs are installed properly when you have to manage a myriad of different applications.

Monitoring services brings your data network together into one consolidated location. Not only will this enhance security measures by having all your information in one space, but it also improves data accessibility among your staff. These efforts secure digital access points from all employees regardless of their location, which further increases the productivity levels of your network applications.



PROACTIVE IT SERVICES

Technology-related matters require a proactive approach, rather than reactive, as what you would experience with a break/fix provider. The latter isn't as incentivized to employ quality, consistent solutions, as they're operating on a per-hour and per-project basis. However, when working with a managed IT business service, you can trust they will deliver stable solutions. In these relationships, both the business and the service provider are incentivized to prevent technical issues that interrupt productivity because they cost both parties time and money.

It's a misconception that outsourced work isn't nearly as productive as it should be.

Managed service providers have systems in place to monitor your system's health around-the-clock. Even if you're out of the office, you can rest assured knowing you have stringent security measures to protect your entire data system. If a threat is detected, your organization can have the systems in place to remain protected against an attack.





CUT COSTS

At the surface, paying a monthly retainer for a managed IT business service may seem like an unnecessary expense. But, when considering the impact a data breach or cyberattack can have, enlisting in IT maintenance proves to be a more cost-effective solution. Your provider will keep your systems up-to-date and take extra security precautions to minimize your risk against threats. You're also able to request as many services needed, based on a contract you and your provider establish. The alternative to this - hiring a temporary break/fix provider - can cost a substantial amount, especially when dealing with more severe issues.

Outsourcing IT management is also less expensive than retaining an internal IT department or specialist. A full-time employee will raise your budget, as you'll have to factor in dollars spent on training, resources, payroll, and network infrastructure. With flat-fees and predictable bills, managed IT business services can trim those costs down.



THE BOTTOM LINE: MANAGED IT SERVICES ARE A NECESSITY FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

For how comprehensive today's technology systems are, it's no longer debatable whether small business owners should secure a managed service provider. Failing to take a proactive approach in IT management can result in thousands of dollars in damage. Instead, hire a managed service provider who is reliable and experienced, and also understands the software your organization utilizes. Furthermore, it's also important your provider is committed to long-term growth. As you scale your business, your IT needs will also increase. A managed service provider should be able to analyze your current situation and make recommendations based on which direction your business is heading.

Computer Troubleshooters services a wide range of small to medium-sized businesses and is well-versed in creating customized solutions tailored to specific organizational needs. Our extensive services and years of experience have made us one of the most reliable managed IT service providers for small businesses. We're more than just an outsourced expert- we become your trusted advisor in all of your IT endeavors, as we understand your technology systems are at the core of your operations. Contact your local Computer Troubleshooters office to learn about our customized technology solutions for small business owners.

