



10 Golden Questions For Choosing Your New IT Support Provider

HOW TO CHOOSE A RELIABLE, COMPETENT AND STRESS-FREE IT SUPPORT COMPANY.

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ARE YOU UNHAPPY WITH YOUR CURRENT IT SUPPORT PROVIDER?

Does this sound like your current IT support provider?

- Takes too long to respond to your requests;
- Promises to call you back and then doesn't;
- Fixes other people's problems when they're meant to be fixing yours;
- Keeps sending you someone who doesn't know you or your network;
- Seems to be a jack of all trades, but a master of none;
- Causes a different problem every time they touch something...

If you answered "Yes!" to any of the above questions, then it's definitely time to find a new IT support provider for your business.

Surveys consistently show that over 50% of Australian businesses are unhappy with their current IT support provider. However, making the switch can often be a daunting task - how do you stop yourself getting burnt again? This report will give the 10 golden questions you need to ask each of the contenders:

QUESTION #1 - DO THEY HAVE DIFFERENT IT SUPPORT PLANS DEFINED?

Providing IT support to different businesses is definitely not a case of one size fits all. Some companies want to use IT support providers on an as-required basis, others make a business decision to get outside help for all issues. Both are valid strategies, and any IT support provider who is serious about providing the right support levels to their customer base will have a range of clearly defined plans to offer you.

QUESTION #2 - DO THEY HAVE A FORMAL AGREEMENT DOCUMENT?

Like most things in business these days, there is too much at stake to rely on a handshake with your new IT support provider. They need to have a plain English written agreement that precisely identifies the scope of the services and the costs for those services. You also need this Agreement to include a confidentiality clause as you are effectively handing the keys of your business secrets to an outsider. And finally any Agreement you sign needs to be fair to both parties – not heavily slanted in the provider's favour.



QUESTION #3 – DO THEY HAVE RELEVANT TERTIARY QUALIFICATIONS AND CURRENT MICROSOFT CERTIFICATIONS?

The IT profession is unlike most others as it has no mandatory accreditation system. For example, organizations that provide plumbers, electricians, engineers, architects, lawyers, dentists, doctors and accountants are regulated to protect their client base from receiving sub-standard or unqualified services. You need to find a provider whose entire technical team is qualified with some form of IT tertiary qualification. And because the IT industry does not stand still, it's important that your new provider keeps its staff up to date by investing in their ongoing education with current industry certifications from Microsoft.

QUESTION #4 – DO THEY HAVE MULTIPLE STAFF ON HAND TO PROVIDE BOTH QUICK RESPONSE TIMES AND A WIDER SPREAD OF KNOWLEDGE?

Many organisations use a one-person entity for their IT support. Now a lot of the time, they do a really good job for a good price. However, the long-term challenge comes when they can't respond to your emergency or complete your project on time or provide support on your new solution or keep you up to date with the ever-increasing range of IT solutions. This is because they get too many clients, or they don't have enough time to keep up-to-date, or they get sick, or they go on holiday. And eventually, many go out of business because they can't make enough money, leaving their clients in the lurch.

QUESTION #5 - DO THEY HAVE A SERVICE DESK SYSTEM IN PLACE?

It's one thing to have a guru who just jumps in and starts "fixing" your problem. And it's another thing completely to have a systems based process to record the details of your requirements, recording the actions taken to resolve the issue, and following through to ensure the task has been completed to your satisfaction. Every IT support provider – big or small – must have an industry-recognized Service Desk software system at the heart of their service delivery operation. A system that adheres to the ITIL standard and that integrates into your monitoring and remote access systems will provide ongoing efficiency, consistency and reliability.

QUESTION #6 – DO THEY MONITOR NETWORKS CONTINUOUSLY SO THAT ISSUES CAN BE FIXED BEFORE THEY BECOME BIG PROBLEMS?

Every IT support company likes to use the phrase "we're proactive, not reactive". The big question is how do they achieve that? Most IT support guys simply use a range of cheap ad-hoc tools to monitor a few client sites for different things like internet access, network performance, server uptime and so on. But to be able to utilise a comprehensive range of tools that are integrated into one solution is vital for any IT support provider that has more than two staff and is looking after more than 10 clients.



QUESTION #7 – DO THEY ABSOLUTELY PROMISE TO CHECK THAT YOUR BACKUPS WORKED EVERY DAY?

Checking backups every day for a week for one client is easy. Checking backups every day FOREVER and for multiple clients requires a procedure, an audit process, an automated test restore process and sufficient trained staff to cope for absences. Actioning this vital process takes a company-wide commitment to do the right thing and check client backups EVERY day, as promised.

QUESTION #8 – DO THEY PROVIDE A CLEAR AND CONCISE REPORT EVERY MONTH ON THE HEALTH OF YOUR SYSTEM?

As well as having all your day to day issues resolved in a timely manner, it's also very important to know whether your system is ticking over smoothly and that there's not a big problem looming. This is best achieved by choosing an IT support provider that uses a comprehensive software solution to provide all their clients with a regular report on the health of their network. This report needs to be automatically generated (no "manual adjustments" allowed!) and distributed on a monthly basis.

QUESTION #9 – DO THEY PROVIDE OTHER VALUE ADDED SERVICES?

These days, everyone expects that IT support companies can provide high quality services at a cost-effective price. The "X-factor" is what else they can do to help businesses innovate and use technology to improve profitability. Technology companies today also need to be able to deliver innovative software apps, VoIP phone solutions, online business websites, cloud computing, devices for the mobile workplace, Internet connections and expertise in your industry.

QUESTION #10 – DO THEY ENCOURAGE YOU TO PERFORM REFERENCE CHECKING ON THEIR EXISTING CLIENTS?

The most important action to take when choosing a new IT support provider is to find out what their existing clients have to say about their standards of service. Anonymous quotes on a website mean virtually nothing. An IT support provider that is proud of its service levels will have multiple client testimonials for you to read through, and will actively encourage you to make contact with them.



WHO ARE NETCARE?

We have been in business since 1990, providing IT services and products to Sydney-based companies. We are best suited to businesses that do not have their own IT Department and that means that most of our clients have between 10 and 100 PCs.

We specialize in providing IT services to professional service businesses, wholesalers, distribution companies and importers throughout the greater Sydney region. In other words businesses that provide products and services to other businesses.

*“We increase the profits of our clients by providing
IT services and innovative technology solutions that add real value”*

The foundation of our business is our NetCare range of services. We currently have over 70 clients, representing over 2000 users, who have entrusted the monitoring and support of their IT systems to our team via NetCare agreements.

Our focus for each and every one of these clients is to provide them with industry-leading system reliability, performance and security.

To successfully achieve this, we have a team of qualified Microsoft specialists, each of whom has comprehensive qualifications, coupled with relevant practical experience and a results-focused attitude.



We believe we have a sound, dependable and cost-effective offering for the supply of strategic IT services and support to your company. We have the systems, procedures, processes, documentation, help desk software, managed services tools, checklists, training programmes, vendor certifications, phone systems, agreements, forms, scheduling skills, diagnosis skills, 1st Level support, 2nd Level support, 3rd Level support, ISP contacts, hardware vendor contacts, telco contacts, spare parts, economies of scale, and most importantly - a professional team in place - to provide **WORLD CLASS IT SERVICES AND SUPPORT.**



We are so confident of our ability to provide stress-free IT support that we offer an unconditional money-back guarantee on your NetCare agreement if within sixty days of its signing, you're not completely convinced we're doing a far better job than any other IT support provider you know.