

# Hiring a Managed Service Provider: Your How-To Guide





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When it comes to designing, installing, and managing the technologies that support the workplace, many business owners just throw their hands up in the air and turn the job over to a team of IT professionals.

And why shouldn't you?

As a business owner, you're busy trying to run your business and keep it innovative at all times. You may not have the time, energy, or resources to keep up with the fast pace of technology at every corner. That's the job of your IT department!

While hiring and training full-time IT staff may be your answer, it can also be quite expensive. You have to consider salary, benefits, vacation/sick days, W-2 forms – the list goes on and on. Plus, sometimes temporary employees don't always live up to your expectations.

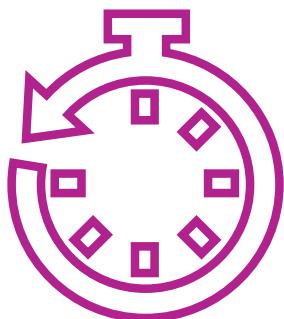
That's when you should consider outsourcing your IT needs by partnering with a managed service provider (MSP). Outsourcing lets you focus on the aspects of your business that need your attention most.



According to the [results from a survey](#) by Business Solutions Magazine, the industry is making a big leap forward from break-fix IT shops to the managed services model. If you're not sure about transitioning your business model yet, perhaps these statistics might help persuade you to do so:

**31%**

of respondents saw an increase in managed services revenue between 25 to 100%

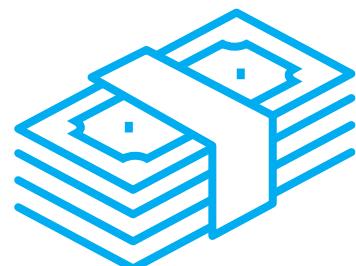


**76.8%**

of respondents cite Backup & Disaster Recovery as the top service for switching to managed services

**44%**

of revenue comes from managed services





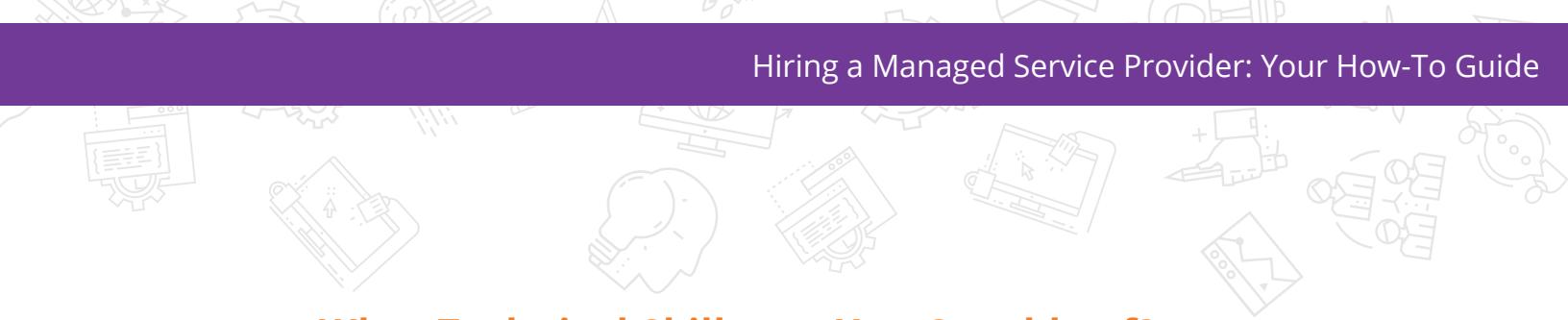
## 5 Key Questions to Ask Before Hiring an MSP

Relying on a managed service provider is generally a good idea when you don't have the time or expertise to run your IT operations on your own. Keeping your infrastructure running smoothly and securely at all costs is no easy feat. For example, if you're the owner of a small chain of restaurants, the last thing on your mind is making sure your networks, applications, or systems your business relies on is up-to-date and working the way it should. You have better things to worry about!

The challenge comes in finding the right managed service provider for your business; someone who doesn't bombard the conversation with tech jargon, not really taking the time to understand your business processes, people, or unique needs. Here are five questions to ask in order to help you determine whether a potential MSP is the right partner:

### What Billing Model do You Use?

In order to prevent the same type of IT problems from recurring time and time again, you must move away from the **break-fix model** of IT. With break-fix services, your vendor charges you by the hour until the problem is fixed. That means they're not concerned about fixing the root cause of the problem the first time around. Instead, you need to look for a billing model that charges a fixed rate for proactive maintenance and support.



## What Technical Skills are You Capable of?

IT people love technology, and most of the time, they'll agree to tackle on any tech problem even if they might not have the most expertise in that field. To determine whether or not a managed service provider is the best fit for your business, look for someone who client references and experience working in your particular vertical.

## Do You Outsource Monitoring or Helpdesk Support?

In an attempt to lower costs, some managed service providers may pass the baton over to outsourced help for their monitoring or helpdesk services. But this may lead to a dip in the quality of your support as well as problems in communication. Make sure your MSP keeps all of their services in-house for a better return on investment.

## What are Your Response Times?

A reliable managed service provider should boast fast response times to support tickets and requests. Be sure to get an estimate of how quickly your service provider guarantees to respond to IT issues, and better yet, make sure it's laid out in your IT support contract.

## Do You Provide Proactive Services?

Proactive maintenance of your IT systems is necessary in order to prevent problems from arising and disrupting your productivity and workflow. Proactive maintenance also lowers your TCO (total cost of ownership) over time as it ensures you don't run into any major IT disasters or drastic IT overhauls in the future. In most cases, your managed service provider will perform an analysis of your network and systems on a regular basis to determine whether or not parts of your infrastructure need to be updated.

# Partnering with Immense Networks

At Immense Networks, our mission is to help your business succeed and create new opportunities of growth through exceptional IT support and solutions. We'll take care of your IT infrastructure 24/7. That way, you can experience better performance, fewer tech headaches, and higher uptime. [Give us a call](#) today to find out if we're a good fit for you.



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