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presents

Managed Services - What you Need to Know

Technology is seen as a key driver of innovation and efficiency. Today's CIOs are no longer solely responsible for the management of IT, but now for supporting business growth by reducing costs, increasing efficiencies and driving innovation, all in effort to build a strategic advantage.

Keeping an IT environment running smoothly requires constant attention and the availability of a highly skilled staff. Yet, many organizations are overwhelmed by rapidly changing business demands and the ability to retain proper IT talent.

That's what makes managed IT services an attractive alternative to traditional in-house IT service delivery. Managed services can help free you from necessary, but time-consuming IT tasks like monitoring and managing your IT infrastructure.

In an effort to help, we offer this eGuide to you to provide and in-depth overview of managed services and what you should consider...

Read more...

| FEATURE	FEATURE	FEATURE	FEATURE	FEATURE
Defining Managed Services	**What's Best for Your Business?**	**Addressing Your Challenges with Managed Services**	**Why Businesses Are Demanding Managed Services**	**Benefits of Letting Go**
Learn about the business value of Managed Services.	Find out more about In-House vs. Managed Services vs. Hybrid Approach.	Managed Services help IT combat challenges while delivering maximum value to the organization.	North America is expected to be the largest managed services market in terms of revenue generated.	Learn all about the wide range of benefits that Managed Services can provide to an organization.

Defining Managed Services

Many business executives and IT managers are faced with the challenge of keeping up with technology changes to meet the increasing demand for IT services, all while IT budgets are shrinking. Every IT activity needs to be justified to find funding and support.

Managed services allow a business to offload IT operations to a service provider, known as a Managed Services Provider (MSP).

The MSP assumes an ongoing responsibility for 24-hour monitoring, managing and/or problem resolution for the IT systems within a business.

Managed services allow a business to:

- Free internal resources to focus on more strategic business initiatives

- Be proactive versus constantly living in a break-fix mentality

- Leverage a team experts across a variety of platforms, technologies and applications
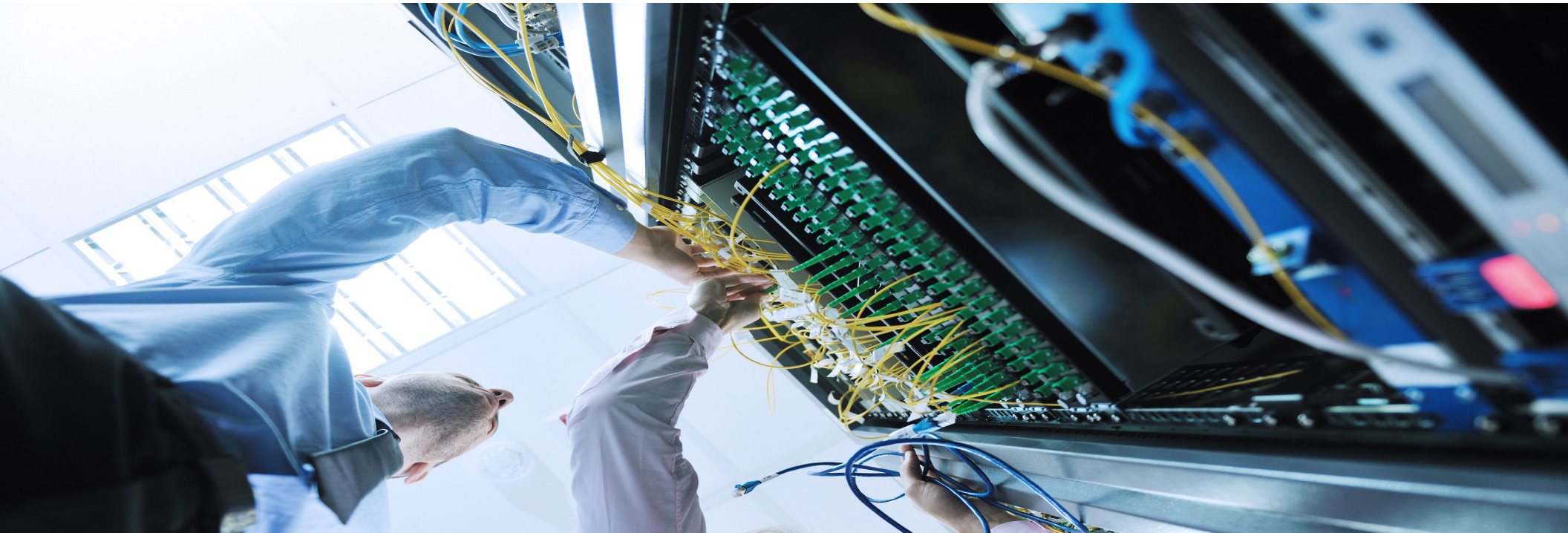
In-House vs. Managed Services vs. Hybrid Approach -
What's Best for Your Business?

Most organizations struggle with keeping their IT infrastructure operating at peak efficiency while also managing the costs associated with the task. An organization has three choices to help accomplish this feat:

1. **In-House** - Maintain your IT infrastructure internally. This is the most common route taken by most enterprises and often presents several challenges including:
   a. Finding and retaining talent with all the necessary skills to manage every aspect of an IT environment

   b. Meeting compliance mandates

   c. Helping the business maximize productivity and achieve scalability, all while reducing costs

2. **Managed Services** – Outsource IT management to an MSP whom will assume responsibility for support and maintenance services which are designed to make sure IT "just works." A managed services model presents its own share of challenges as well, including:

   a. An organization may feel less in control of their IT environment once placed in the hands of an MSP

   b. Potential disruptions during transition to the MSP

3. **Hybrid IT Approach** - Keep mission-critical applications in-house but outsource those that need to leverage the scalability, expertise or cost-efficiencies a MSP offers. Challenges exist in this model as well, which include:

   a. Meeting business objectives with on- and off-premise environments

   b. Targeting workloads to the appropriate infrastructures

   c. Balancing technical obsolescence with predictable economics

In summary, there's no right way to manage your IT infrastructure. If you first identify the key issues and accurately determine the cost of those areas within your business, that will help you understand the costs and benefits of working with an IT services partner. Next, look at the management models available, and compare the strengths and weaknesses of each, paying close attention to cost impact and your strategic business needs. Once these issues are clear, making the decision becomes much easier.
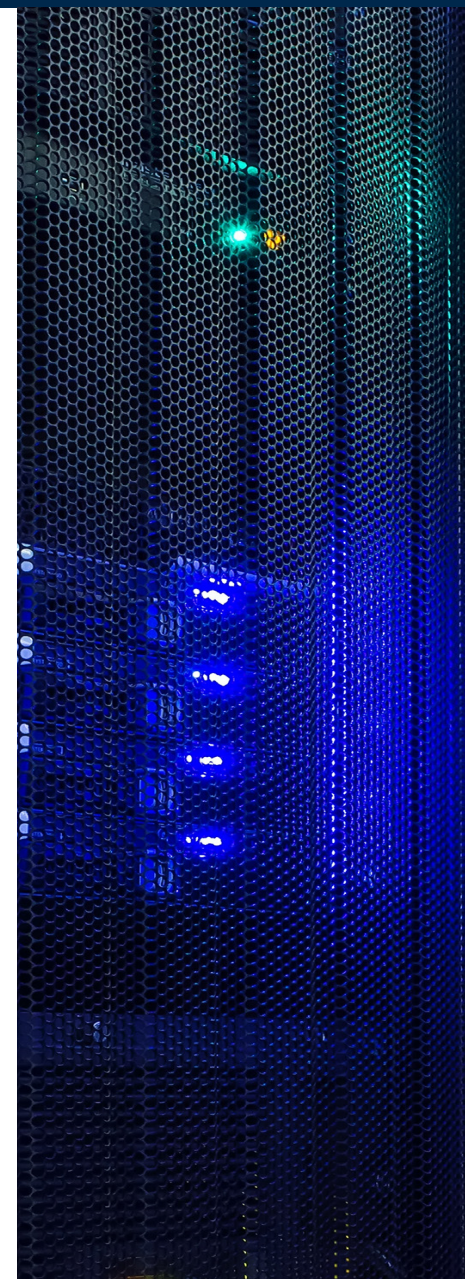
## Addressing Your Challenges with Managed Services

According to Gartner, many IT organizations report being overwhelmed with business demand, unable to meet rapidly changing business requirements and struggle to retain the IT talent needed to face modern IT challenges. Enter managed services to the rescue.

Managed services help IT combat their challenges while also delivering maximum value to the organization by:

- Freeing in-house IT talent to focus on core business objectives by offloading the day-to-day focus of managing IT operations to a third-party expert with 24/7 support

- Increasing operational efficiency, reducing risk and increasing agility/scalability

- Achieving better economies of scale

- Gaining access to world-class expertise and capabilities

When deciding which functions to outsource, organizations need to assess their current talent pool and IT initiatives, and then determine where the highest need and return from outsourcing to managed services will be.

Managed Services will:
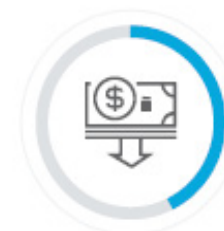
Reduce recurring in-house costs by **30% to 40%**

Increase efficiency by **50% to 60%**

80% of network outages are due to changes

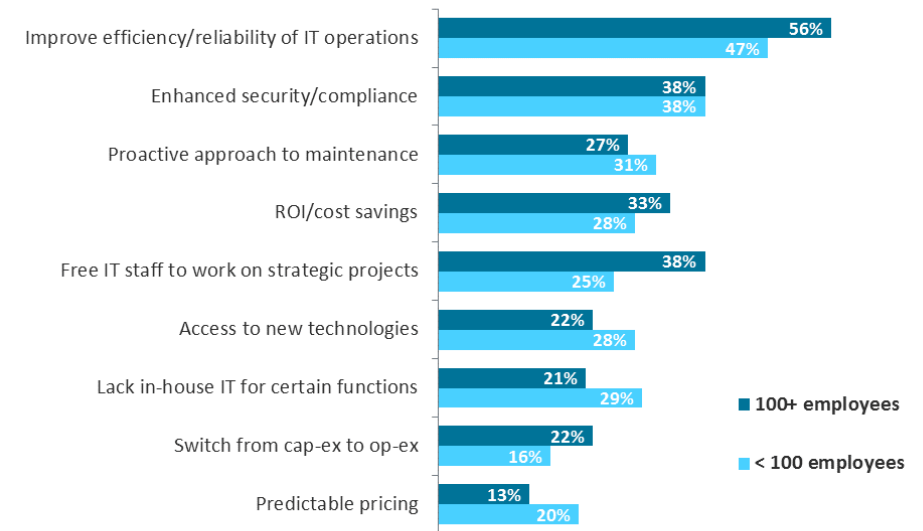**65%** of IT budgets are spent just to keep the "lights on"

Sources: Managed Services Market – Global Advancements 2013–2018, MarketsandMarkets

Why Businesses Are Demanding Managed Services

As cited in *CompTIA's 5th Annual Trends in Managed Services* report, "Research firm MarketsandMarkets predicts that the global managed-services market will grow from $107B in 2014 to $193B by 2019, at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 12.5%. North America is expected to be the largest managed services market in terms of revenue generated." What's driving the rapid adoption?

As data center technology changes and increases in complexity, the difficulty of finding, hiring and training specialized IT staff is increasing. Similarly, as companies grow and new divisions or remote offices are added across disparate time zones, it is becoming more challenging to provide around-the-clock IT support.

## Main Factors Driving End User Managed Services Decision

Factor	100+ employees	< 100 employees
Improve efficiency/reliability of IT operations	56%	47%
Enhanced security/compliance	38%	38%
Proactive approach to maintenance	27%	31%
ROI/cost savings	33%	28%
Free IT staff to work on strategic projects	38%	25%
Access to new technologies	22%	28%
Lack in-house IT for certain functions	21%	29%
Switch from cap-ex to op-ex	22%	16%
Predictable pricing	13%	20%

CompTIA   Source: CompTIA 4th *Annual Managed Services Trends* Study | Base: n=224 end user businesses using managed services

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Benefits of Letting Go

Managed services give you a wide range of benefits designed to free you from the necessary – but time consuming – chores of monitoring and managing your IT infrastructure. They include:

- **Reduced risk** — Reduce your outages by increasing coverage and creating proactive maintenance.

- **Reduced complexity of IT operations** — You won't have to hire experts in all the facets of technology affecting your business. MSPs often have a wide-range of certified and hard-to-find technical expertise.

- **Improved focus on your core business** — MSPs leverage their technical experts and monitoring tools to proactively manage and maintain your IT systems. As a result, you can concentrate on the strategic initiatives that better serve your company and customers, without making huge investments in enterprise-grade toolsets.

- **Comprehensive geographic coverage** — Get complete coverage of your IT infrastructure wherever it's located. Whether it's your headquarters, a branch office or a server in a third-party data center, as long as there is Internet connectivity available, an MSP can monitor and maintain that location.

- **Access to the latest technology** — You can enjoy the benefits of enterprise-class monitoring tools without the cost of purchasing and operating them, or the time-consuming tasks of training your staff on the latest-and-greatest tools.

- **Predictable costs** — Take the guesswork out of budgeting. Turn reactive problem solving and increasing expenses into a well-defined service with an established cost.
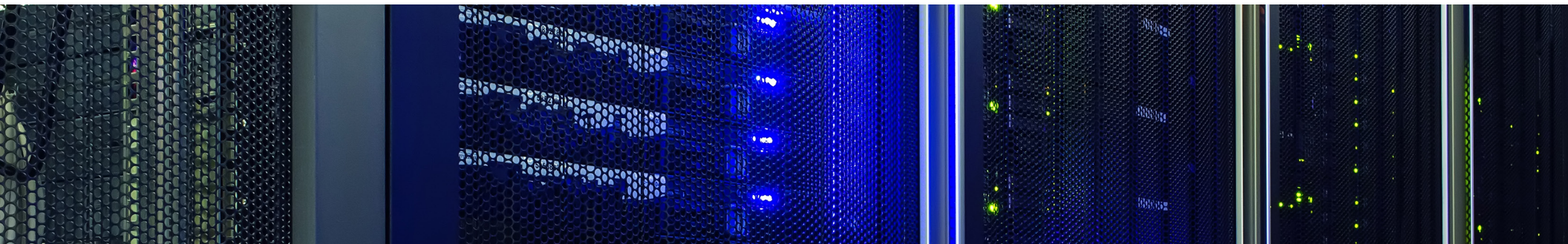
Top 8 Considerations When Selecting a Managed Services Provider

The decision of which service provider to partner with will shape the future of your business, so it's important to know what to look for. Here's a list, from our experience, of the top 8 most important considerations.

1. Deep skills and expertise - An MSP should have deep expertise across all IT delivery models, including not only managed services and cloud but also traditional IT services. Go beyond the basic questions about certifications and headcount.

2. Proactive, technology-based approach - Find out whether the services provider has a reactive, "break/fix" mentality or a proactive approach that focuses on issue prevention and continuous improvement.

3. Alignment with industry best practices and ITIL standards - An MSP should employ industry best practices in managing your IT resources — in particular, aligning with the ITIL approach to IT service management to ensure reliability of service.

4. Service level agreements (SLAs) - Uptime, security, power and redundancy requirements are imperative. The MSP should be willing to commit contractually to meeting your service level requirements — and back up those commitments financially if those SLAs are not met.

5. Comprehensive portfolio of managed services to meet your business needs - Since your business and IT needs are continually changing, you require flexibility on demand, meaning the ability to add additional services without adding unnecessary cost and complexity. Ensure that your provider offers a comprehensive suite of managed services such as cloud infrastructure, application, database, network and security management solutions that can be tailored to meet your specific business needs.

6. Supports multiple environments - It's a hybrid cloud, hybrid IT world. An MSP should have deep expertise in managing a variety of solutions regardless of the deployment model: on-premises, in the cloud (public or private) or a combination of numerous deployment models.

7. Reputation and financial strength - A solid service provider will have a strong financial history showing steady growth in a variety of vertical markets. In addition, make sure that your provider has a solid customer retention record, and don't be afraid to ask for references.

8. 24/7 Support - Business is no longer 9 to 5. You should settle for nothing less than 24-hour monitoring, managing and/or problem resolution for the IT systems within your business.

For a more in-depth look into these considerations, download our Considerations when Choosing a Managed IT Services Provider eBOOK.

OneNeck Managed Services

At OneNeck, we know not all managed services are created equally. Whether you are looking to outsource all or part of your IT needs, OneNeck is a turnkey, full-service MSP with 20+ years of experience. Our certified experts are experienced in deploying services in a wide variety of IT environments, and our goal is to improve your efficiency so your internal IT staff can focus on your strategic initiatives.
Our US-based managed services portfolio includes:

- Applications
- Cloud
- Communication and collaboration
- Database
- Enterprise Applications (ERP)
- Network
- Security
- Servers
- Storage

Our goal is to offer best-in-class services using our tools, technology and tried-and-true best practices. We're here to give you relief from the mundane, so you can focus on the strategic.

What's Your Next Step? Visit us at **www.oneneck.com/managedservices** or contact us at **info@oneneck.com** to learn more about OneNeck's Managed Services.

Right support for the right technology

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