

10 reasons why Managed Services delivers more than technology - blueAPACHE

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You didn't start your business to manage the technology that enables you to run it. So why are you? Traditionally, accessing specialist technical staff was challenging. Even if you could build the business case to justify them, finding and retaining them was problematic at best – then there were the knowledge leaks created by moving staff, and the continuity issues when they disappeared on holidays. Today, there are specialist Managed Service Providers (MSPs) that deliver the day to day technology and communication tools you need to run your business efficiently. They are service-driven organisations that can augment many of the roles that a CTO would historically have to manage – they help mitigate your technology risk, provide access to the specialist resources you may struggle to justify as employees, and provide scalable and flexible solutions as predictable operational expenses. The benefits MSPs are more far-reaching than a simple help desk or network manager. A few benefits of the key benefits identified by customers include:

1. A complete, certified staff base of help desk and specialist engineers can tackle numerous issues and advise on projects.
2. Accountability The better MSPs will own the services (or at least the management tools controlling the services) that they provide. This provides a unique layer of accountability, or “one throat to choke”. If they are 100 percent accountable of the services, you won't be caught chasing five different vendors or affiliates and wasting hours trying to resolve issues.
3. Infrastructure Knowledge It's important for businesses to have a resource that can be their central point of infrastructure knowledge. A good MSP will want to know how data flows through the company and how systems operate, and will be open to products which may be outside of their product line.
4. Planning and Budgeting Technology planning is a complicated endeavour that takes into consideration things that can change in a moment's notice. Being unprepared for the inevitable can ruin your budget. MSPs typically use a scalable monthly cost, allowing businesses to better budget and prepare for upgrades.
5. Simple Reporting Give someone outside your firm a planning and budgeting role and they had best provide regular – and detailed – reporting on usage and activity. Your MSP can provide a single pane of glass reporting on issues, remediation and user activity.
6. Improved Efficiency MSPs have generally invested in extensive toolsets which help identify, resolve and report on issues quickly and reduce the number of “fires” that arise. This results in less downtime and a better user experience, with fewer disruptions for updates and patches.
7. Better Security Security is a major concern for every business. Protecting your data can be a full-time job, and may well be the most important role of an outsourced team. MSPs can manage and monitor your firewalls and antivirus, and assure that the latest updates and patches are applied.
8. Infrastructure lock-in When investing in your own hardware and infrastructure, you become committed to that model for many years. Changing becomes a very expensive exercise – making infrastructure investments risky in a fast moving technology environment. When using a MSPs infrastructure, they are take on infrastructure investments and have teams of specialists ensuring the right solutions are being deployed.
9. Easier Growth The better MSPs have a broad service offering to deliver even better value. From private cloud to network and unified communications, the larger specialist MSPs can provide flexible solutions to suit your business stage. By delivering these extended solutions as a Service (with predictable pricing), MSPs make it easier for you to build business cases for new projects and improve the ability for you to explore business opportunities.
10. Strategic Partner One benefit that should not

be underestimated is the access to strategy. MSPs invest heavily in ensuring their knowledge and expertise is a market differentiator – they know where the technology is going and how you can better leverage it for your business advantage. With the right MSP partner, you gain a specialist technology advisor.

These are just a few of the many benefits of working with a better MSP. The key is to find one you can trust, who listens and genuinely understands your technology objectives, who has the depth of resources you need, and is industry recognised . If the idea of having a single trusted resource as an outsourced team member appeals to you, contact our Managed Services team .

According to your blog, what are Managed Service Providers (MSPs) and what role do they play for businesses?

MSPs are specialist service-driven organisations that deliver the day-to-day technology and communication tools businesses need to run efficiently. They augment many of the roles a CTO would historically manage, help mitigate technology risk, provide access to specialist resources that may be hard to justify as employees, and provide scalable, flexible solutions as predictable operational expenses.

How does accountability work with a good MSP?

The better MSPs own the services (or at least the management tools controlling the services) they provide, creating a unique layer of accountability often described as 'one throat to choke.' If they are 100 percent accountable for the services, businesses won't be caught chasing five different vendors or affiliates and wasting hours trying to resolve issues.

Why is infrastructure knowledge important in a managed services relationship?

It's important for businesses to have a resource that serves as their central point of infrastructure knowledge. A good MSP will want to understand how data flows through the company and how systems operate, and will be open to products outside its own product line.

How do MSPs help with planning and budgeting?

MSPs typically use a scalable monthly cost model, which allows businesses to better budget and prepare for upgrades, helping them manage the complexity of technology planning where unpreparedness can otherwise ruin a budget.

What kind of reporting can businesses expect from an MSP?

An MSP can provide single pane of glass reporting on issues, remediation, and user activity, giving businesses regular and detailed reporting on usage and activity from their outsourced partner.

How do MSPs improve efficiency and reduce downtime?

MSPs generally invest in extensive toolsets that help identify, resolve, and report on issues quickly, reducing the number of 'fires' that arise. This results in less downtime and a better user experience, with fewer disruptions for updates and patches.

What security responsibilities can an MSP take on?

MSPs can manage and monitor firewalls and antivirus systems, and ensure that the latest updates and patches are applied, treating security—which can be a full-time job—as one of the most important roles of an outsourced team.

How does using an MSP address the risk of infrastructure lock-in?

When businesses invest in their own hardware and infrastructure, they become committed to that model for many years, making changes expensive and infrastructure investments risky in a fast-moving technology environment. When using an MSP's infrastructure, the MSP takes on the infrastructure investments and has teams of specialists ensuring the right solutions are deployed.

How do MSPs support business growth?

The better MSPs have a broad service offering—from private cloud to network and unified communications—that provides flexible solutions to suit a business's stage. By delivering these extended solutions as a Service with predictable pricing, MSPs make it easier to build business cases for new projects and improve the ability to explore business opportunities.

In what way can an MSP act as a strategic partner?

MSPs invest heavily in ensuring their knowledge and expertise is a market differentiator, understanding where technology is going and how businesses can leverage it for advantage. With the right MSP partner, a business gains a specialist technology advisor, not just a technology vendor.

What should a business look for when choosing a better MSP, according to the blog?

The blog advises finding an MSP you can trust—one who listens and genuinely understands your technology objectives, has the depth of resources you need, and is industry recognised.