A practical guide to help you choose the right Business IT Support

Labyrinth IT.com

Guiding your business through the maze of modern IT

Overview

Choosing an IT partner can be tough.

With so many options out there, it can be hard to cut through the noise and find one that truly fits your business.

Technology should help your business thrive. It's important to find an IT partner who can understand your business goals and help you to achieve them.

This guide has been created to help you ask the right questions and choose the best option for your business.

Value

Measuring the offerings of different IT companies on a like for like basis can be really difficult because each service is slightly different. Here you should take time to carefully understand exactly what you get for your money.

Certainly, with IT outsourcing, as with most things in life, you get what you pay for. So, a very low monthly fee might suggest a limited service and additional charges outside of the agreement.

On-site support is key. The majority of IT support requests can be resolved remotely but the more serious, and urgent, needs will often require a qualified engineer to be with you. These are the times when you need to feel sure that you will not be faced with a hefty bill.

You should feel 100% confident in your decision before signing any contract. Many businesses are trapped and waiting for a contract to end before they can change it.

Do not be afraid to ask lots of questions!

Questions to ask:

• **Does the plan include:**
 - Unlimited remote support
 - Unlimited on-site support
 - Routine maintenance such as servicing and firmware updates
 - All parts and labour for repairs
 - Minor change requests such as creating user and email accounts
 - Unlimited IT consultations and guidance on IT strategy

• **Do you insist clients sign up to a long contract?**

Service

Great IT can truly empower your business. Having an IT partner who understands how you work and will respond rapidly to the needs of your business is essential.

There should be solid fundamentals that support this - such as a professional set of documentation and proactive monitoring. This will help avoid problems before they impact your business.

The size of your outsourced company can be important too. "One man band" or very small companies may offer a highly personal level of service but are not always able to meet changing needs. Larger organisations that haven't structured with the customer in mind may not present as flexible and understanding.

It's important to find the right balance for your business.

Questions to ask:

• Do you create and maintain professional IT documentation for your clients?

• Do you proactively monitor your client's network?

• How many engineers do you have?

• What are your guaranteed response times?

• How long would it take to send an engineer on-site for an urgent issue?

Security

IT and Data security is becoming more important by the day. Cyber attacks on businesses of all sizes are becoming very common so it's important not to be seen as an easy target.

It is now essential that all businesses, no matter how small, have a professional security plan in place that is regularly updated.

This may include; enterprise anti-virus, a hardware firewall with active subscriptions, device encryption and other important measures. Your IT partner should advise you of appropriate options.

When you outsource your IT, your provider becomes one of your data handlers. They should be able to demonstrate that the physical and technical recommendations that they make to their customers are also implemented internally.

Questions to ask:

• **What are your baseline security recommendations?**

• **Do you supply and monitor anti-virus for all devices?**

• **Do you regularly carry out security audits for your clients?**

• **How do you manage access control for your clients?**

• **Do you centrally manage Windows patches for all devices?**

Reputation

The relationship with your IT company should feel like a trusted partnership. They should act as an extension to your team and understand that your ongoing success is key to theirs.

A prospective IT partner should be able to supply you with some good quality testimonials from other customers and you are quite entitled to ask for references.

They should be able to demonstrate that they themselves have forged relationships with industry leading hardware and software vendors demonstrating that they are keeping up with the rapid changes in technology.

Experience is also key. Although focus on one specific vertical is good, an IT company with exposure to many different sectors will have had to deal with a wider range of problems, and this will help them to think outside the box when resolving more complex issues.

Questions to ask:

- **How long has your company been in business?**

- **How many employees do you have?**

- **Do you have any clients in a similar business sector?**

- **Are you able to provide testimonials?**

- **Do you have professional indemnity insurance?**

Contact

About Labyrinth Technology

We believe that you shouldn't have to be an IT expert to run your business.

After more than 16 years providing a comprehensive, outsourced service for companies of all sizes, we understand how disrupting IT problems can be. That's why we work in partnership with our many different clients to help them get the most from their technology: avoiding wasted time and allowing them to focus instead on the growth of their business.
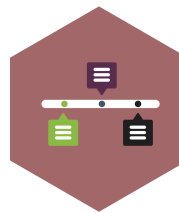
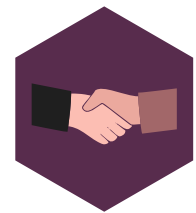Our process is simple and designed to work around your business:

1. Meet with us to discuss your IT needs

2. Allow us to propose a bespoke plan

3. Agree the timeline

4. Work in partnership to execute the plan

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