

IT Service Provider Review Process

This is our free impartial guide to choosing the right outsourced IT service provider for your business. This process will give you the best insights into the MSPs you're looking at and allow you to make the most informed decision of who to use.

1

Research

- ▲ Ask contacts in your industry for recommendations
- ▲ Look for specialists in your industry that understand your business and the important role that technology plays within it
- ▲ How many engineers do they have, and how far away are they from your office?
- ▲ What hours does their helpdesks operate?
- ▲ Do they offer fixed pricing or pay-per-ticket?
- ▲ What is their client retention rate?
- ▲ Do they offer custom reporting?
- ▲ How do they track tickets and measure performance?
- ▲ How simple is their migration process?

2

Meet

- ▲ Choose 3-5 companies to meet with
- ▲ Understand the way they work and familiarise yourself with their service
- ▲ Structure a set of standardised questions to ensure that nothing is missed
- ▲ Do they instil confidence in you?
- ▲ Focus the conversation on the challenges your business is facing and how the MSP will resolve them

3

Proposals

- ▲ Have the MSP's answered all the questions you had in an easy to read proposal document?
- ▲ It's worth compiling the offerings and prices into a spreadsheet so you can easily compare them
- ▲ Does the proposal include everything discussed within your meeting, and solve the problems you have?
- ▲ Don't focus purely on cost – at this stage you will likely already have a preference, and for a good reason. Remember, price isn't everything!

4

Discuss

- ▲ Make sure you discuss the offering with your colleagues – a second point of view always helps
- ▲ Discuss the proposals with the MSPs and ask questions
- ▲ Ask for any additional materials they have, such as case studies and migration process documents

5

Shortlist

- ▲ Credit check the MSPs
- ▲ Are there any migration costs?
- ▲ Meet with the provider more than once – it may take between 2 & 5 meetings
- ▲ Consider meeting with the MSP's team whom would service your business
- ▲ Ask for a tour of their facilities e.g. office and datacentre
- ▲ Take time to thoroughly review the SLA contract
- ▲ If you've not already done so, request references from existing clients

6

Decide

- ▲ Throughout the entire process you will have had a preference to a provider – trust your instincts!
- ▲ Weigh-up all the pros and cons
- ▲ Sign a contract for a 12-month term only. You don't want to be stuck with a poor MSP
- ▲ What is the notice period?
- ▲ Does the contract auto renew?