

eBook

Benefits of Outsourcing your IT Resources



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IT systems are a key business asset, requiring ongoing investment and maintenance to really perform. For most organisations, IT resource is also one of the biggest expenses and one that can spiral quickly in the face of an IT crisis or simply trying to ensure that the latest support and expertise is available. In this eBook we will examine how outsourcing IT resources can take the pressure off businesses of all sizes. We'll look at the different options available, as well as how best to identify what an individual company really needs.

THE PROS AND CONS OF OUTSOURCING YOUR IT NEEDS

There is a moment in the lifespan of most businesses when the question of whether or not to outsource IT resources has to be considered. There's no set time or situation when this decision needs to be made – this is very much a case of when it is right for the individual business. There are pros and cons to outsourcing needs whenever you decide to do it.

THE PROS OF IT OUTSOURCING

Make cost savings – this is a key motivator for many organisations that opt for IT outsourcing. IT spend can be reduced by working with a service that you pay for as and when you need it, as opposed to a team contracted full time. Plus, capital spend is freed up for other internal investment and IT outsourcing businesses are competitive and will actively look to identify where savings can be made to attract and retain your business.

Access broad collective expertise – IT outsourcing gives you access to an entire team of experts, many of whom may be more specialised and senior than the business could afford to employ on an individual basis.

Free up internal resources – the professionalism and reliability of IT outsourcing leaves internal teams free to focus on core business development.

Better manage risk – small, in-house IT teams can find it challenging to deal with issues such as security, migration and maintenance. The result is often significant down time and waste of company resources. IT outsourcers are on top of best practice, industry developments and industry threats, better placed to provide a lower risk, higher performance service.

Tech flexibility – outsourced IT gives you access to a much wider range of resources that you can benefit from but don't have to directly invest in. From the latest software, to better alternatives for your key IT needs, you have the flexibility to pick, choose and upgrade from a much broader and more advanced selection.

THE CONS OF IT OUTSOURCING

Vendor reliance – it is one thing to work with an expert vendor who encourages you to invest in increasingly complex products or systems that they have a good grasp of (or own). However, this can create a dependence on the vendor for business IT continuity, which can make it difficult to leave, no matter how necessary this becomes. Don't get 'locked in.' Make sure that your vendor documents their work and you always have the option to go elsewhere.

Employee morale – particularly if you're dissolving an internal team to make way for outsourcing investment be aware of the effect this can have on morale. The good news is that great performance and IT that makes employees' lives easier can quickly tip this the other way.

Loss of control – outsourced IT resources won't ever be quite as within the control of the business as those being handled by an internal, contracted team. Strong documentation and regular communication are essential with whomever you choose to work.

Outsourcing appropriateness – it's not always that easy to outsource certain functions to certain suppliers. Be careful to choose an IT outsourcing supplier that is capable of meeting your needs.

Security risk – it can be unnerving to share proprietary data with an external business. That's why it's so crucial to ensure that the IT resource provider you choose is the right one.



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DIFFERENT MANAGED SERVICE LEVELS OF OUTSOURCING

Managed IT services provide a viable option for businesses looking for support with everything from emerging technologies, to better resource management and finding IT solutions that enable growth. These services are delivered off-site and are provided on a sliding scale, from the most basic monitoring, to a fully managed IT resource package. Some of the different options in the market include:

- Computer and server support – maintenance and monitoring, as well as protection against the most pressing tech threats.
- Remote network monitoring – minimising downtime and providing a troubleshooting service
- Data backup and disaster recovery – regular, reliable back up and storage off site with no hardware investment
- Network security – the most up to the minute security protection, from spam management to firewall management, to insure against issues such

as viruses and hacks.

- Custom software solutions – bespoke technology solutions designed for an individual business and its very specific needs.
- Technology evaluation and planning – effective IT strategy based on comprehensive network and setup evaluation to optimise IT spend.

CO-MANAGEMENT

Co-managed IT resources provide a hybrid option somewhere between full outsourcing and an in-house team. The best services are designed to operate as an extension of the existing in-house offering, adding to current resource, bridging any gaps and offering the opportunity to develop new capability. Co-managed IT services can:

- Release in-house IT staff from handling daily maintenance to focus on more value added tasks.
- Reduce the costs of managing 100% of IT requirements in-house.
- Act as an extension of the internal team, whether that's holiday cover or high-level expertise for a specific situation.
- Provide access to 24/7 support 365 days a year without the associated costs and internal pressure.
- Effectively upgrade IT support and potential for tech development within the business by providing access to a team with specialist expertise equipped with the latest tools. All without the cost of direct investment.

WORKING OUT YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS

Not every business needs to cover the ongoing cost of an in-house IT team. Even one person can be hugely wasteful and not as effective as the overall cost should justify. Businesses often get a false sense of security from having IT capability in-house, but this is frequently an unnecessary expense that doesn't generate genuine return on the investment. The key is to work out what will best benefit your business.

- Do you need to cut costs and free up cash flow for other investments?
- Would your business benefit from access to technology – hardware or software - that it can't afford to buy outright?
- Do you often experience IT service downtime with existing arrangements?
- Do you operate in a sector with particularly pressing security risks?
- Are you looking for ways to upgrade and optimise the way you use technology in your business?
- Is your in-house IT team constantly under pressure?

If the answer to any of the above is 'yes' then your business could benefit from looking at the options for outsourcing IT resources. From basic data back up and disaster recovery managed services, through to full support or selectively co-managed IT with key support, there are many different options that allow you to tailor the kind of service that your business needs. If your IT services aren't providing the support and strategy your organisation requires to thrive then outsourced IT services could be just the growth hack that your business needs.

[Click here](#) to download our free guide on how to choose an IT manage service provider



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