

HOW
**MANAGED
SERVICES**

HELP SOLVE
YOUR

**BUSINESS
PROBLEMS**





Business isn't always (ever?) easy. No matter your size or industry, depth of experience or longevity, expect challenges. Something that suits you today could be out of date by the end of your next billing cycle.

This eBook identifies eight business problems and how managed services can help.





Watch Your Footing – The Evolving Business Environment

Take a moment to imagine you're standing at the edge of an ocean. You can't stay still for too long. Ocean critters might bite. Your bare skin will get shredded by sharp shells. The tide could topple you.

Running a business is a lot like trying to remain steady and upright as the sand shifts underfoot. To be successful, you can't stand still and let the cold waves of change wash over you. Yet finding solid ground requires you to navigate an ever-evolving environment and face challenges coming from several directions. But you don't have to do it alone. Managed services can help you ride out common business problems.

The Biggest Problems Facing Businesses Today






Your business environment is dynamic; that's part of what keeps you interested. Yet you have to keep a constant, watchful eye on the horizon. You must try to anticipate obstacles and be proactive to avoid disaster down the road.

The biggest problems facing businesses today include:

- managing resources (operating costs, cash flow, employees, and more);
- complying with government regulation and industry standards;
- combatting cybersecurity threats;
- staying abreast of the competition;
- providing high-quality customer service;
- adapting to growth and shifting market demands;
- unifying an ever more global workforce;
- securing mobile, collaborative resources.





Fortunately, managed services support you in the face of any of these challenges. First, let's offer a quick explanation of what we mean when we're talking about managed services.

Understanding Managed Services

Managed services providers (MSPs) manage, watch, and maintain your business technology. The right MSP gets to know your existing business infrastructure. They learn about your people and processes to make recommendations for your needs. This shouldn't be a one-size-fits-all approach to managing your tech demands. An MSP understands your business and suggests current, reliable, and secure technology solutions.

With MSP support, you can optimize productivity, cut operating costs, and prioritize security. Meanwhile,





existing information technology (IT) staff can focus on driving innovation and growth.

Managed Services Tackle Business Challenges

There are unseen riptides everywhere in your business environment. With managed services, you can better address business challenges. This section explores the role an MSP plays in navigating the shark-infested waters.

Managing resources. Investing in technology can feel like a sinkhole for your operating budget. You want to control costs, but keeping IT infrastructure current is an ongoing challenge. At the same time, you want to generate cash flow and stay out of too much debt. IT problems, cyberattacks, or hardware failures can decimate monthly budgets. You also have to hire and keep valuable human resources.






How does a managed service help?

For one thing, working with an MSP can reduce your IT costs. They'll examine existing business tools to cut the unnecessary and find better deals. They may suggest the cloud to save you from expensive on-site servers, hardware, and power. Plus, you can plan around a simple, manageable monthly or quarterly fee.

Employee engagement and morale also gain from top-notch, reliable technology. Millennial new hires will be happier if you can let them work remotely using their own devices. All employees can enjoy the high-quality collaboration and communication tools an MSP recommends.

At the same time, IT employees avoid the repetitive tasks that threaten to take up the workday. Skilled tech workers can tackle challenging tasks while an MSP handles the routine.




A photograph of classical building columns, likely from a government or institutional building, with a bright light flare at the top right.

Complying with government regulation and industry standards. Your industry may have specific, often complicated, compliance requirements. The medical, financial, and legal sectors, for instance, must all prove they are addressing any IT vulnerabilities.

How does a managed service help?

Meeting (and exceeding) compliance regulations can require specific security setups. Not wanting to risk a cyberattack, you protect client data, network access, and more. Paying legal fees or regulatory fines would compound the disaster. Managed services install best practices to identify, prevent, remediate, and protect.





Combatting cybersecurity threats. Data breaches make the news regularly. Cybercriminals access proprietary systems or sensitive data. Employees provide passwords, respond to fake business communications, or click to unleash viruses. Whether the bad guys hack or hijack or take another approach, it's not good for business.

How does a managed service help?

Overwhelmed internal IT teams can be reactionary. The MSP is proactive to ensure your business security. Avoid disruptions leading to revenue loss, customer churn, and reputation damage. MSPs secure applications and networks, manage mobility, and handle any incidents.






Staying ahead of the competition. Businesses rely on IT to be successful and remain competitive. At the same time, technology is making it easier for new players to enter the market. The number of contenders for each product or service you offer is growing. Upstarts may spend all their time and effort on taking away one of your revenue streams.

How does a managed service help?

Making sure you have the technology you need to succeed is an MSP's responsibility. You may not be up to date on the software and network solutions available, but you don't have to be with your trusted partner looking out for your best interests. Focus your attention instead on adapting, innovating, and continuing to grow. Plus, your business frees up its IT teams for more value-adding initiatives.






Providing high-quality customer service. Customer excellence is a major differentiator for business, and there are a range of options available. People can easily find new service providers or product offerings. Building brand loyalty is essential.

How does a managed service help?

Your MSP partner finds the technological solutions that enable your business's best. Using tools that help them to be more productive, your people can be more customer-centric. MSP process improvements let employees anticipate customer pain points and market shifts.






Adapting to growth and shifting market demands. Having to manage business growth is not a bad problem to have. Still, you need to know that your technology can scale with you, affordably, and reliably. Your IT infrastructure needs to keep up with you.

How does a managed service help?

The MSP can provide cloud options allowing you to add hardware, storage, seats, and more. Create new accounts and keep sensitive data secure more easily. An MSP will start out by searching out areas you may be overpaying or duplicating technology. But as you grow, they can also identify and recommend the best tools for your shifting needs.

Alternately, a seasonal business wanting to scale back can enjoy cloud flexibility. Your MSP helps you manage a business decline more easily and affordably, too.






Unifying an ever-more-global workforce. Remember when business was done on paper and via phone? Even email seems slow these days, especially if it means sending a file back and forth for one person to work on, edit, or amend and then return via email.

How does a managed service help?

An MSP recommends the right global collaboration and communication technology for you. Cloud packages such as Office365 and Google Apps can make a difference. Users share calendars and instant messages, view shared desktops, collaborate in real-time, and more.






Securing mobile, collaborative resources. Business is done on the move and remotely more and more. To remain productive and also recruit and retain top talent, you need to enable mobility. Your people might collaborate across country borders or even between the office and a nearby coffee shop. They want reliable access to the same business tools they might use when on-premises.

How does a managed service help?

MSPs can offer the best in cloud collaboration. The cloud enables your business staff to work remotely, in the office, at home, or on mobile devices. Plus, the MSP can manage user access using remote monitoring. They secure collaborative resources to let your people do their best work worry-free.

Servers with lots of storage can also be a backup location for your data.





Servers can be located in your office or off-site. Some businesses prefer on-site servers so that they keep full control, but this option is expensive. Servers need maintenance and upgrades, and they take up real estate and utilities. So, many businesses today have servers in the cloud (we'll get to the cloud in a bit).

Other hardware you need to know about? Modems and routers. It's easy to get these two confused, but the modem is a device that connects you to the internet. In a home office, you might connect your modem to your computer using an Ethernet cable. Then, when you add people, you want more computers to have access to your network. That's where the router comes in. A router lets you wirelessly connect devices (laptops, smartphones, tablets, speakers, and more) to your private network via Wi-Fi.

Modem and router combo devices are available, and mesh networks are gaining momentum when one





wireless router isn't cutting it. A mesh network uses many access points to capture and rebroadcast routing signals.

Conclusion

Returning to that ocean shore, managed services is like a surfboard on the crashing waves of technological change. We'll help you ride the waves of big business problems in style – cowabunga dude!

Your managed services partner offers you the freedom to focus again on what you do best. You're good at your business. We're good at managing and monitoring the technology you need to address challenges that crop up. Let us help you navigate the tumultuous shores. Contact us today!



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