

A quick guide to IT Outsourcing from CCS

This guide has been written to assist businesses considering outsourcing their IT support arrangements. If you answer 'yes' to any of the following questions then it applies to you!

- Are you considering IT outsourcing for your IT support?
- Perhaps you already have outsourced IT support and are not satisfied with the service?
- Maybe you have in-house IT support and you're considering a change?
- Or it could be that you don't have any IT support and you or your staff have been managing it yourself. It's becoming too much for you and you're looking for a cost-effective means of managing your IT.

If any of these sound like you, then read on! CCS have put together some ideas, recommendations and considerations for IT outsourcing. They are not intended to be exhaustive, rather they provide a useful starting-point and reference for your considerations.

Outsourced IT Support considerations

At CCS we ask our customers to consider numerous factors. These are some of our recommended considerations for IT Outsourcing:

- When was the last time your IT infrastructure was reviewed/overhauled? If it's been more than 2 years you should at least have a review of systems for integrity, security and optimal performance
- How big is your business, ie how many staff use IT equipment (note the expression – it's not just PCs, but laptops, tablets, smartphones, POS, handheld devices etc as well). Knowing the size of your requirements will help your IT provider gauge the level of support required.
- How will you work with your IT outsourcing partner? The key word here is 'partner'. The CCS approach is that we become you IT department, just not co-located with you.
- Are you willing and able to put in the initial time and effort required to assist your new IT partner? They will need to understand your IT systems, your IT policies and procedures and also any business-critical software and applications you run.
- You will need to recognise that having the right IT partner in place is an investment for your business – not a cost. The right IT partner will help your business operate smoothly and securely, thereby allowing you to focus on actually running your business, not chasing down IT issues.
- How regularly would you expect to see technicians from your IT Partner?

For further guidance please contact CCS to arrange a free consultation.

Outsourced IT Support Recommendations

CCS have a lot of IT Outsourcing recommendations! This is a sample:

- Your chosen provider will have access-all-areas to your IT and business. Implicit trust is needed. Be sure you're confident in your potential partner's absolute discretion and integrity
- Do you need 9-5 support or extended hours support? Many owner-operated businesses, and indeed business directors, sometimes require evening and weekend support.
- Does the outsourced IT support provider wait for you to raise an issue? Or are they proactively managing your IT systems to maximise your operational efficiency and minimise your IT problems?
- What is their cyber security calibre? The advent of continuous cyber-attacks – on businesses small and large – means that you need a lot, lot more than anti-virus software in place.
- What happens when you sign the contract with them? Ask them “what happens in the first few days and weeks”? If they don't have a clear plan and recognised process for establishing themselves as your IT partner it should give you cause to reconsider.
- Do you like the team? It may sound un-business-like, but being able to get on with the IT technicians is really important. They are the people you will be dealing with regularly, not the sales person who acts like your best friend.
- What ongoing training do they have in place? IT is an incredibly fast-moving field. It's important to chose a partner with regular training of their technicians (CCS technicians have weekly training).
- Do they speak in plain-English, or at least try to explain matters in language you understand? Do you feel comfortable saying “Sorry, that one went over my head, can you explain it another way please”? Being patronised is one of the biggest complaints clients bring in the IT industry.
- How easy are they to contact? It may sound silly, but there are an awful lot of providers who have 'help-lines' and 'online chat' that vary in their reliability. Your provider should be able to provide you with preferred contact methods and a definitive response time.

That's just a few recommendations, there are many more!

Contact CCS for a free consultation on your IT outsourcing requirements today.