

10 questions to ask your managed service provider

How do you get the right managed service provider? Ask the right questions.

Turning over key IT functions to a managed services provider (MSP) means ensuring that your requirements are clearly understood and that the provider has the proven experience, staff, tools and processes that are necessary to proactively manage your business.

We've assembled 10 questions you should ask potential MSPs so you can ensure they are good fit for your needs and your business. The MSP who can best answer these questions will be the one who is best poised to serve you over the longer term.

1. How long has the MSP been in service and can they describe in detail the services that they are managing, with customer examples of success?
2. What is the breadth of managed services provided by the MSP? Remember, the more of your infrastructure an MSP supports and manages, the greater synergies and efficiencies can be realized and translated into savings for you. Here are some of the areas you may want to have managed for you:
 - LANs
 - WAN
 - Legacy voice and IP telephony systems
 - Security systems, data centres
 - Storage
 - Servers
 - Contact centres
 - Email, messaging and unified communications
3. Does the MSP provide incident management that will meet your needs?
4. Does the MSP stay up-to-date with industry-leading tools, processes and people?
5. Does the MSP have technical certifications from leading vendors such as Cisco, Juniper, and Nortel?
6. Does the MSP comply with ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) best practices and processes?
7. Where are the MSP's network and security operations centres located? If offshore, what guarantees are provided that your operations will not be affected?

8. What is the range of management capabilities of the MSP? Examples include:

- Service desk – with automated notifications and diagnosis
- Asset management
- Configuration management (hardware and software)
- Fault management
- Change management
- Release management
- Performance management (threshold and capacity)
- Vendor management
- Business intelligence and data analysis
- Capacity reporting and planning
- Trends reporting and recommendations (incidents, events, assets, calls)
- Correlation of management systems for optimal efficiency (manager of managers)
- Enterprise workflow management solutions

9. How will the MSP manage your existing infrastructure, including legacy equipment?

10. Can your MSP offer you integrated solutions which include professional services, equipment and maintenance contract?

To learn more about managed services available to you, and to discuss the managed services approach at Bell, please contact your Bell representative. You can also request to have a Bell representative contact you by [completing this quick form](#).

