

# How adding a Managed Service Provider Will Make You a Hero in Your Organization

In a world driven by technology, it's becoming increasingly important for organizations to ensure that their IT systems run smoothly. If they don't, it could lead to downtime, or even worse, data loss. This, ultimately, could have devastating consequences like a lack of efficiency, a loss of revenue, or even reputational damage.

The problem is, however, to ensure that their systems run smoothly, organizations need IT professionals with the right skills and experience. And unfortunately, hiring people with these skills often comes with significant cost implications.

That's where managed service providers come in. They're able to provide any organization with all the services it needs and more at a price far more affordable than hiring experts in-house. Because of this, organizations can benefit from increased reliability, more expertise, and more capabilities which makes them more efficient.

As a result, an MSP's value proposition is exceptional. Now, the question is what services they offer, what they cost, and how using one will make you an IT superhero in your organization? Here, we'll consider these questions in more detail.

## What Is a Managed Service Provider?

So, what exactly is a [managed service provider](#) or MSP? In simple terms, an MSP provides information technology services to organizations. These services can include everything from infrastructure design and support to security implementations, network services, and applications. We'll deal with these services in more detail later on.

An MSP's services can also include regular, ongoing support at a customer's premises, a third-party data centre, or in an MSP's own data centre when it hosts the customer's infrastructure, storage, and applications.

It's important to note that the services provided differ from MSP to MSP. For example, some MSPs may specialise [in specific sectors](#) of the IT industry like infrastructure, data storage, or networking. In turn, others may focus on specific industries like financial services, manufacturing, healthcare or legal.

Also, many MSPs may offer their services in conjunction with the services of third parties. For example, an MSP may offer its own systems administration services in addition to the data storage and infrastructure services offered by a third-party cloud provider.

Here, it's important to remember that it's often better to use an MSP that is vendor agnostic. In this way, your organization will prevent being locked into a specific vendor despite the fact that that vendor could increase its prices or cease some services at any time.

With that in mind, let's consider what types of services MSPs offer.

## What Types of Services Do MSPs Offer?

Before looking at these services in more detail, though, it's important to discuss the different types of MSPs that you can choose from. This is simply because MSPs differ in the number of services they offer to organizations and the customers they target. Based on this, we [can categorise MSPs](#) as follows:

- **Pure-play MSPs.** These MSPs are typically smaller providers that focus on offering a limited range of services like network monitoring or application performance monitoring. Commonly, they also focus on offering their own native services. As such, these providers tend to target smaller organizations with a reduced need for IT services.

- **Staffing legacy MSPs.** These providers tend to target mid-level or larger organizations and they offer a wider range of services including software installation and upgrades, infrastructure, network monitoring, and various reporting services.
- **High-level MSPs.** This category includes both small and large MSPs that allow their clients to outsource as much of their IT services as needed. As such, these providers provide their clients with a wide range of services.

With the above in mind let's look at the specific services an MSP could offer to your organization. Here, it's important to keep in mind that the number of services offered will largely depend on your organization's specific needs and requirements and the technology and systems it has. As a result, your organization will typically not need all these services.

Some of the commonly offered services by MSPs include the following:

- **Infrastructure.** This includes the managing and monitoring of infrastructure services either on-site or in the cloud. These services could also, depending on the provider, include virtualization services for operating systems, applications, or software and managing virtual servers.
- **Networking.** These services typically include network management and monitoring of network devices or servers and could also include automating many networking tasks.
- **Applications.** These services typically include the management and maintenance of the applications an organization uses. It can, for instance, include installation of the software and updates to ensure that the organization always runs the latest versions.
- **Hardware.** These services generally relate to the monitoring and management of on-site hardware like desktop PCs, laptops, or servers. It usually involves monitoring the state of the hardware, whether its software is updated, whether it has enough storage, and more.
- **Maintenance.** Under these services, you'll find general maintenance to an organization's hardware, infrastructure, software, and the like.
- **Security.** Security services usually involve the complete management and monitoring of an organization's security systems to ensure that both its data

and the data of its customers remain safe. It generally consists of several of the sub-services mentioned below.

- **Backups.** With backup and disaster recovery services, an MSP will ensure that scheduled backups are made consistently, it'll monitor and maintain storage and backup systems, and test backups. This, ultimately, ensures that in the case of a data loss due to system or hardware failures, organizations will be able to recover their data seamlessly.
- **Firewalls.** These services involve managing an organization's firewall service and ensuring that both its hardware and software are up to date. These services will typically also include receiving regular status updates and extensive reporting.
- **Anti-virus.** Under these services, you'll typically find solutions like anti-virus, anti-malware, and anti-spam which protect an organization's data and information. The MSP constantly manages, monitors, and updates all these applications.
- **Network security monitoring.** These services involve the continuous monitoring of network traffic in order to identify any risks or vulnerabilities that could compromise an organization's data. If any are found, these vulnerabilities can then be rectified. Depending on the provider, these services could also include penetration and vulnerability testing.
- **Support.** These services involve providing general IT support to an organization including assistance to employees or troubleshooting any issues. In some cases, these services will also include providing an IT helpdesk to the organization.
- **Consulting.** As the name suggests, these services involve providing the organization with consulting services by an expert to help it with the implementation of new technology or systems, as well as technology and cybersecurity strategies.
- **Software-as-a-Service.** These services typically involve the implementation and management of cloud-based SaaS software solutions. These solutions generally include subscription-based platforms like Salesforce, Zendesk, Google Workspaces, and Microsoft 365.
- **Communication.** When an MSP provides communication services, it will typically provide services relating to the monitoring and management of

messaging services and the provision of telecommunications solutions like Voice over IP, video conferencing, and other communications platforms.

## What Is the Value of an MSP?

Now that you've seen what services an MSP could offer to your organization, you're probably wondering what benefits your organization would be able to gain through it. In other words, what value could an MSP bring to your organization?

Fortunately, there are quite a few benefits of using an MSP, which include:

- **Fill staff shortages.** For any organization to have a comprehensive IT management solution, it would require specialists that deal with each aspect comprehensively. However, it often happens that organizations struggle to find the right people to fill these roles or simply can't afford it. MSPs solve this problem and allow organizations to fill staff shortages when they outsource their IT services.
- **Increased expertise.** As mentioned above, organizations need the right people with the right skills and experience to ensure proper management of their IT systems. Typically, MSPs come with extensive skills, knowledge, and years of experience that can serve organizations well.
- **Lower costs.** Let's face it, hiring the right experts comes at a significant cost. So, when your organization doesn't need to hire these experts when outsourcing the management of its IT systems to an MSP, your organization will save a significant amount of money compared to managing its IT services in-house. But it goes further than savings brought about as a result of this. Because your organization's systems will always run as they should and be maintained and managed properly, downtime, issues, and other critical problems will be kept at bay. This means that your organization will be more efficient and its employees more productive. As a result, it will be able to generate more revenue.
- **Increased reliability.** As mentioned above, your organization's systems will always be properly managed and maintained which means they'll run as they're supposed to and will always be up to date. Because of this, your

organization's infrastructure, hardware, software, and other IT systems will be more reliable. Ultimately, this puts it in a position to generate more revenue because it will be more efficient.

- **More capabilities.** Flowing, to a certain extent, from having access to more expertise, your organization will have increased capabilities, or in other words, capabilities it might not have had by managing its IT systems in-house. It goes further than this, though. Considering the sheer number of services offered by an MSP, your organization will have access to a range of services including security, network, hosting, cloud management, disaster recovery, backup services, and more, all for the payment of a low fee.
- **Scalability.** Just think about it. When your organization has access to increased expertise, more capabilities, and increased reliability, all at a lower cost compared to managing its IT systems in-house, it will be perfectly poised to scale. As a result, it will have the right systems and technologies that will allow it to grow.
- **Proper maintenance.** Because an MSP can manage, monitor and report on any issues relating to your organization's IT systems and technology platforms, it can identify any issues and problems long before they lead to bigger challenges. This is simply because of the MSP's proactive approach that incorporates preventative maintenance. In turn, this ensures reliability and stability.
- **Data protection.** As mentioned earlier, with an MSP you have access to advanced data backup and disaster recovery systems. As a result, you'll limit the risks of data loss and have peace of mind that your organization's data is always safe and protected.
- **Improved security.** When you consider the services outlined above, MSPs provide a comprehensive security solution to protect your organization's data. This is especially crucial when you consider that cybercrime, security breaches and subsequent data loss are becoming increasingly prevalent and, as such, it's vital to take the necessary steps and implement the right strategies to prevent this. Also, many MSPs provide compliance services and can give your organization guidance on the regulatory requirements of gathering, storing, and using customer data.

- **Always up to date.** As mentioned before, an MSP can ensure that your organization's systems, hardware, software, and infrastructure are always up to date which then increases their reliability. However, there is another benefit. Because the right MSP will always be up to date regarding the newest technologies and best practices, it will be in the best possible position to advise your organization on its IT needs and requirements.

## What Do MSPs Cost?

This is a difficult question to answer because the costs relating to an MSP vary not only based on the specific provider but also on the types of services your organization requires. It is, however, possible to outline the different pricing structures often used by MSPs.

Here, MSPs typically, use the [following pricing models](#):

- **Per-user pricing.** Here, the MSP will charge a flat fee for every user in your organization. This is ideal if your employees use multiple devices in their workflows.
- **Per-device pricing.** In contrast to per-user pricing, based on this model, the MSP will charge a flat fee for every device it needs to manage. Depending on your organization, this could be a suitable model to use but it's important to keep in mind that it could become expensive when your organization or employees use multiple devices.
- **All-inclusive pricing.** As the name implies, with this pricing model the MSP will charge a single flat fee for all its services. This is probably one of the most common approaches that most MSPs use. You should, however, keep in mind that, based on your organization's specific needs and requirements, this model might not be the best fit.
- **Per service.** With this pricing model, your organization will be able to choose the specific services that align with its needs and requirements and only pay for those services. Understandably, this approach provides the most flexibility.
- **Tiered pricing.** With this pricing model, the MSP charges a fee based on the number of services your organization uses. As the number of services

increases, the price increases with it, often at a lower rate. So, in other words, the MSP's services become cheaper the more services you use.

- **Monitoring-only pricing.** In this instance and with this pricing model, the MSP only provides monitoring services. As such, it won't be responsible for any other services like maintenance, management, and the like.

The most important factor, however, that you should take into account when it comes to pricing is not necessarily the price you'll pay but rather the value you'll get. In other words, you shouldn't just measure the services you'll get for the price you'll pay but rather the benefits you'll gain.

This means that, should your organization pay more for an MSP, but it provides it with excellent reliability, security, and increased efficiency, it'll receive more value compared to paying less but not enjoying any of these benefits. To sum up, your organization will enjoy a greater return on investment (ROI).

## How Do MSPs Work?

By now, you're probably convinced that you need an MSP for your organization. So, let's briefly consider how MSPs work. At the foundation of the relationship between your organization and the MSP lies a service level agreement (SLA).

This SLA clearly stipulates the services the MSP will provide and how much your organization will pay. Typically, the SLA will also determine the minimum levels of service and the level of performance required by the MSP and how this performance will be measured. These could, for instance, include guaranteed uptimes, data transfer and recovery rates, and so on.

When your organization accepts the agreement, the MSP will typically start providing its services on the date specified in the agreement and, unless renewed, will cease to do so as provided for in the agreement. This is obviously subject to certain preliminary actions being performed that will equip the MSP to provide these services.



Ultimately, in a competitive market, it's crucial that your organization be as efficient and productive as possible which will, in turn, allow it to stand out from the crowd and generate more revenue.

To do this, it needs IT professionals with the right skills to ensure that its systems are stable and always run reliably. It's here that MSPs are of immeasurable value because they provide organizations with the expert skills that the technology landscape of today requires.

To find out more about us, our range of services, and how we can help your organization become more efficient, visit our website or contact us so we can discuss your organization's needs and requirements in more detail.

Other sources:

1. <https://oxen.tech/blog/types-managed-it-services/>
2. <https://www.msp360.com/resources/blog/what-is-an-msp/>