



MANAGED SERVICES

Managed services can mean many different things. Some regard it as a fully outsourced solution while others see it as a way to get expert input into the day to day management of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In reality, managed services are defined by requirements.

FOCUS

Disaster recovery is all about preparing. Preparing for something which may never happen but while adopting the processes, the organisation operates in a secure, resilient environment.

REASONS TO CONSIDER MANAGED SERVICES

There are many reasons why an organisation should consider managed services. As the economic climate evolves and changes, excellence in ICT is needed to enable and support organisations. With new working practices, new technologies and more users operating in a more mobile environment, the demands on the IT Department's resource and knowledge is increasing. This is where managed services can help.

Allowing someone else to manage elements of ICT allows the IT Department to remain focused on strategy and new projects, safe in the knowledge that the time and resource intensive tasks are being managed by someone else.

From an organisation efficiency perspective, there are many reasons why managed services should be considered:

- **Controlled cost:** Predictable ICT management costs for budgeting purposes

- **Service levels:** Managed services providers work to agreed service levels which are measurable
- **Improved productivity:** Proactive management, less downtime, more productive IT Department and users
- **Focus:** IT Department focuses on strengths and strategies
- **Controlled headcount:** No specialist recruitment or contractor hire
- **Security:** Reduces the risk of security breaches and proactively manages threats
- **Legal requirements:** Data protection, employee protection and email compliance

A managed service can deliver many benefits to the IT Department, the organisation, the end-user and the community. With the expert resource available, an organisation can operate in a more controlled, managed environment where the fire fighting mentality is replaced with a proactive approach.

DISPELLING THE MYTHS

There are some myths about managed services, the most common being loss of control. Allowing a third party to manage parts of the ICT environment can be seen as splitting responsibility and losing visibility of what's happening on a day-to-day basis. In reality, when a managed service works effectively, it gives control back to the IT Department.

Cost control, service level control and management control are all increased when the managed service provider and the IT Department work closely together.

AREAS COVERED BY MANAGED SERVICES

The managed services we provide fall into a number of categories. Our experience allows us to provide the full range, from an out-tasked element through to a fully outsourced ICT management service. A managed service from us can incorporate some or all of the following:

Operational Service:

- Helpdesk for end-users, desktop, voice, video and data
- Remote or onsite support
- Data back-up

Monitoring Service:

- Email/Internet usage and performance
- System availability
- Network management
- Telephony and contact centre

Maintenance Service:

- Systems and software
- Desktop and server upgrades
- Version control and management

Planning Service:

- Strategy and management
- Product evaluation and viability
- Board level input

Procurement Service:

- Economies of scale
- Supplier liaison
- Inventory management

As managed services are dependent on the in-house skills and resource, we can tailor a solution to complement the IT Department. Working together we can provide a seamless solution where each party focuses on their strengths to deliver a high quality service to users, partners and the community.

MAKING MANAGED SERVICES A SUCCESS

Communication is the key to making managed services a success and this communication needs to happen on a number of levels:

- **Communicate with IT staff:** Ensure everyone understands their role and responsibilities in working with the managed service provider
- **Communicate with management:** Less fire-fighting frees time to build and manage the IT Strategy in line with the organisation's strategic and tactical objectives
- **Communicate with the managed services provider:** Open communication and regular reviews promote a virtual IT team environment where the service provider understands the organisation and its plans to ensure it continues to support them



“Using CNT’s Managed Service offering we have been able to develop our long term IT strategy and improve our infrastructure. We have made cost savings by following their advice and our in-house IT Administrators feel part of a team and find their roles have become much easier to manage and much more satisfying.”

Peter Osborne, Chief Executive, Havelok Housing



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