


# How to drive value from a Managed Service Provider (MSP)



It is challenging to push innovation within a business alongside managing and maintaining a diverse and complex IT environment. It requires a heavy budget and considerable time and effort that can shift your focus away from core operational processes. You may also find it challenging to incorporate a flexible business infrastructure that can integrate the latest technologies swiftly and competently.



Globally, businesses increasingly rely on Managed Service Providers (MSPs) to outsource their administration and management responsibilities. With their wide range of capabilities, MSPs can deliver a broad range of efficient IT services and take care of the business network and management needs, leaving enough time and resources that firms can utilise to focus on more value-driving tasks.

As per [reports](#), the global managed services market was valued at USD 161.37 billion in 2021, and it is expected to reach USD 311.32 billion by 2027, registering a CAGR of 12.44% from 2022 to 2027. It is evident that MSPs will continue to add value in the upcoming years, providing tremendous potential for growth and efficiency.

If you want to propel your business to new heights and grow your capabilities, then MSPs can offer you the necessary level of support to cater to your requirements. However, it is essential to carefully plan which services to outsource and consider what type of partner to work with to best meet your needs.

This ebook provides you with an overview of key considerations to take into account when thinking about working with an MSP, so you can drive your business into the future and start reaping the benefits.



# What is a Managed Service Provider?

Traditionally defined, managed service providers offer services across infrastructure management, remote monitoring, server provisioning and maintenance, patch management, IT support including hardware, network, and software maintenance, and other such services. By providing these services, they help businesses enable uptime, enhance IT performance, save time, and allow the business to focus on strategic operations for improved workflow and revenue.

But in recent times, managed services providers have outgrown their potential remarkably. As many companies are migrating to the cloud, MSPs now offer cloud infrastructure management, complex network monitoring, expanded storage capabilities, desktop and communication solutions, cyber-security, data backup and recovery, disaster recovery, mobility, and more. To be precise, MSPs offer services across every activity that constitutes the foundation of the IT operations for a company.

A woman with glasses and a yellow sweater is shown in profile, smiling as she works on a laptop. The background is dark with warm, out-of-focus lights, creating a professional and focused atmosphere.

## Is a Managed Service Right for You?

Managed service providers offer customised solutions as every business has different requirements. Companies can utilise the expertise of MSPs to decide on the right technology for the business and get continuous support as and when needed. Thus, they can efficiently handle the core components of IT operations at reduced costs. Studies confirm that deploying managed services can increase business operational efficiency by [45-65%](#) and reduce IT costs by 25-45%.



## Here's why businesses consider outsourcing managed services:

### Limited IT capability

In today's environment, businesses are struggling with overloaded workforces, which can cause frustration amongst the team, affecting work quality and project completion times. There may also simply not be enough hands to constantly manage and monitor infrastructure, which can lead to downtime or sub-optimal performance.

There is also a nationwide technology skills shortage, meaning that companies do not have certain skill-sets in-house to manage or implement specific technologies, holding them back from digital transformation.

Therefore, businesses may turn to a managed service provider who will have expert resources on-tap to fill the skills gap or take away the burden of everyday management and support. This is much less time and resource heavy than hiring for an in-house team – recent [research](#) shows that businesses can save as much as 20% of the staff hiring and placement costs year over year with the help of MSPs.

### Potential cyber threats

Businesses are plagued with constantly evolving risks and threats including malware, phishing scams, ransomware and data breaches. IT environments are complex, involving networks, data, critical infrastructure and often span across on-premises and cloud. This makes it extremely difficult to ensure thorough and robust protection, 24/7, to protect against attacks.

Firms can leverage the skills and experience of MSPs to design a security solution that will keep their business safe, as well as providing the resources to constantly monitor potential threats and tackle them before they cause damage.

## Hidden costs of running IT

As businesses adopt a growing number of new technologies such as edge computing, artificial intelligence and automation, the resulting IT ecosystem is increasingly complex and diverse. It involves various delivery models, suppliers, processes, and data that can be challenging to manage, especially with the dwindling IT budgets and rising management costs. Consequently, it becomes challenging for businesses to continue with their digital strategies and deliver valuable outcomes.

MSPs will have experience in many different IT environments, alongside subject matter experts, technology partner relationships and access to the latest training resources. This means they will be able to design, manage and support your IT estate without you having to invest in hiring employees or upskilling your team, which is usually costly and time-consuming. MSPs are also likely to hold vendor relationships and may be able to pass on cost benefits from an economy of scale approach opposed to a one-off purchase by your company.

Many MSPs will also offer customers access to exclusive training resources, such as product update webinars or best practice workshops.

## Quality work

In today's cut-throat market, businesses need to be agile and respond quickly to changing conditions. However, in-house teams may struggle to keep up with growing customer demands and technical challenges, leading to a compromise on service quality.

By outsourcing to an MSP, you can ensure that service quality never dips, whilst having the ability to scale your services with them as requirements change. Working with an MSP will also ensure your costs don't spiral out of control as they might do internally, as they will be contracted to an agreed budget.



## The Business Value an MSP Delivers

Businesses today need highly skilled IT experts, improved products and services, enhanced agility, and rapid ROI to succeed in a competitive marketplace. This is why MSPs are forecast by [Gartner](#) to become increasingly influential in managing digital touchpoints for businesses and helping them achieve competitive advantage.

### Here are some key learnings:

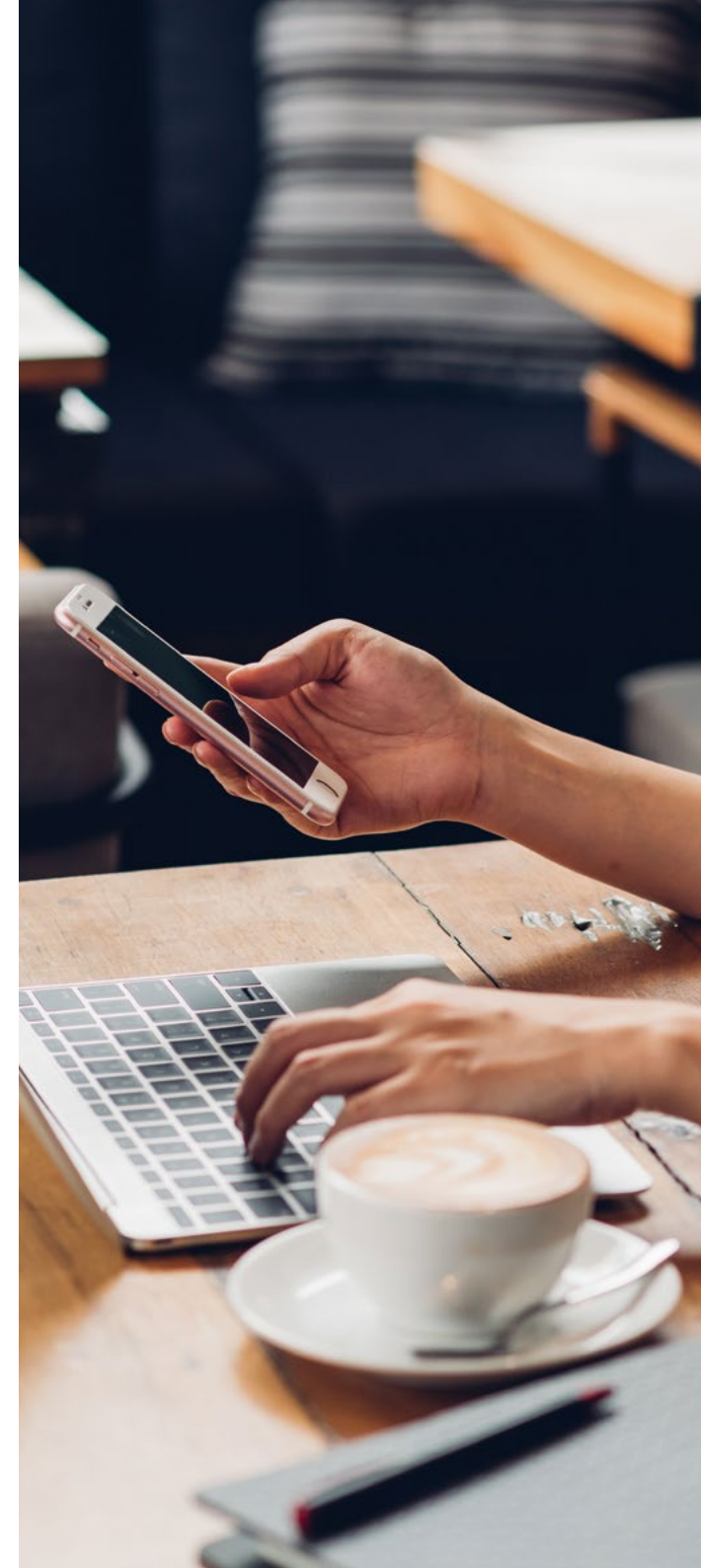
#### Enhanced security and business resilience

At a time where cyber-attacks are on the rise, it's never been more important to have a solid cyber-security strategy. MSPs have a wealth of cross-sector experience and resources to monitor and manage risks at scale.

They can also take the burden away by automating otherwise time-consuming tasks such as patch management, vulnerability scanning, daily system check-ups, backups, and more. By having a dedicated team aligned to your needs, they can ensure your business stays secure, whilst providing advanced analytics, enabling business continuity, and reducing system downtime.

#### Adoption of modern technology

Businesses often lack expertise in choosing the right technology for their daily operations. Managed service providers have the right skills and resources to select and implement advanced technologies at a faster pace. This accelerates digital transformation and innovation, helping businesses optimise their technology stack and jump ahead of the competition.







### **Flexibility to adapt to transforming business conditions**

Managed service providers can quickly scale the scope, size, and range of services the business requires. For instance, if a company plans an expansion, MSPs can gauge the requirements and offer relevant services, supporting growth and optimising performance.

Doing so enables the company to align its IT operations with operating requirements and accelerate time to market with more rapid provisioning of skilled resources.

### **Disaster recovery**

Disasters can strike at any time – whether it be user error, a natural disaster, or disruption such as the COVID-19 pandemic, so it's critical for businesses to have a Disaster Recovery (DR) plan in place to avoid irrevocable damage.

By having a reliable data back-up system and DR plan in place, businesses can ensure that should disaster strike, they can resume work as quickly as possible and recover critical business resources such as data records, networks, and databases without affecting service levels.

### **Reduced capital expenses**

Constrained capital expenses are one of the bottlenecks that organisations often find themselves dealing with. With rapid market fluctuations and continuous innovation from competitors, it can be challenging to prioritise investment decisions.

MSPs can help advise businesses on technical decision-making, as well as optimising costs and providing agility to scale resources up or down to meet demand. Furthermore, by outsourcing certain tasks, the internal team are freed up to focus on revenue-generating initiatives.

## How to choose an MSP

Whilst working with a Managed Service Provider can clearly be advantageous, they are not all on a level playing field or the right fit for your business. You will need to take several factors into account when selecting a partner to ensure they are best-placed to help you achieve your objectives.

### Here are some key learnings:

#### Expertise matters

Any competent managed services provider should offer skills beyond basic hardware and software maintenance. They must keep themselves updated with the latest technology and skill sets to deliver customised business models suiting different organisational requirements. Many MSPs are now moving beyond the traditional 'keeping the lights on' function and providing more complex, transformational services that help organisations gain advantage.

Identify which services you need and your objectives, and make sure the MSP has experience in that area, both in terms of skill sets and previous projects.

You will also want to identify relevant certifications, training sessions and best practices that the MSP adheres to. Finally, after detailed analysis, businesses can decide which service providers can offer them the best solutions to manage their enterprise effectively and efficiently.

#### Support for multi-vendor and multi-cloud environments

Today, IT ecosystems are getting more complex with the amalgamation of hardware, software, networks, servers, databases, public & private clouds, and more. This makes management of such an environment increasingly challenging.

Hence, the business must ensure that the managed service provider has extensive experience working in the latest IT landscape and can implement sophisticated technologies to improve quality and productivity. You will also want to ensure that the MSP has multivendor experience and partnerships so they can objectively advise on the best suited platforms and have the knowledge to effectively implement and manage them.



### **Need for Agile teams**

Businesses are presently operating in digitally connected times where it's imperative to collaborate and connect with multiple parties and vendors to execute operations. Therefore, agility is crucial in order to drive revenue and deliver exceptional customer service.

Whether a business wants to outsource technical teams with specific technical capabilities or broader expertise does not matter. MSPs can help companies stay agile and scale beyond measure with consistent service delivery.

### **Support industry best practices**

The services that MSPs offer must align with the best industry practices and, most importantly, [ITIL](#) (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) standards. ITIL is a framework that standardises the end-to-end lifecycle of IT services within a business. In addition, it constitutes a crisis, incident, event, shift, configuration, inventory, capacity, and performance management.

Therefore, when selecting an MSP, you will want to ensure they adhere to ITIL standards to gain from predictable service delivery and continuous improvements.

### **Keep the in-house IT team focused**

Businesses have finite IT teams with a heavy workload, which can lead to burnout. An MSP can relieve this pressure from the in-house team and let them prioritise critical initiatives focused on business growth and performance. To do this, not only does the MSP need to have the required skillset, but also the same values and culture fit so they seamlessly work alongside your team.

## Things to look out for when choosing an MSP

Although there are numerous benefits of working with an MSP, there are several factors which you will need to bear in mind before outsourcing to a partner, to ensure a positive relationship.

### Reputation

Undoubtedly, MSPs offer businesses an edge over their competition through access to the latest technology and ability to fast-track adoption. However, they essentially take control out of the hands of the in-house team and will often have access to confidential data.

Therefore, it is important to thoroughly check the service provider's background and alignment to privacy and regulatory standards, such as [ISO-27001](#), to ensure your organisation's assets are in safe hands.

### Transparency

When taking over services for your organisation, an MSP will deploy numerous technologies and tools and may provide your team with hands-on experience working with these technologies. However, many MSPs do not provide the required documentation or

might not include all relevant parties in the planning and strategy, which can affect the internal team's capabilities in the long run.

Therefore, when selecting an MSP, businesses should find out their process for knowledge transfer and training for existing teams to expand the capabilities of the workforce and ensure they can run the tools internally should they wish to suspend the relationship.

### Engagement models

Businesses commonly use remote services – especially with the increase in hybrid working, however you will want to consider this carefully before hiring a remote MSP. Although it may be cheaper, you may want to work with a partner who will provide on-site support or presence, particularly for management of on-premises IT.

### Budget

As discussed throughout this ebook, organisations are commonly squeezed for budget and are under pressure to do more with less. However, it's important to consider the ROI when selecting an MSP to work with, as the cheapest partner may not produce the best returns. You need to make sure the partner you select has a proven track record, customer references and SLAs that they stick to.

When working with an MSP, it is also critical for businesses to determine which functions to outsource and which ones to retain internally to manage the costs better and achieve the desired goals within the budget.

## Wrap Up

Over the last several years, organisations have become more familiar with MSPs and are turning to them for managing a variety of technical functionalities. Businesses are focused on partnering with the best to deliver the best. They want to avoid spending time detecting and fixing IT issues. Instead, companies want to utilise their resources and efforts in more value-driving activities. Such an approach enables businesses to accelerate their digital transformation goals.

Ultimately, the capabilities of MSPs are gauged based on the human and economic value they provide, and a partnership with the right MSPs can catalyse their success. From managing infrastructure to undertaking a full digital transformation project, MSPs, such as Advanced, help companies drive innovation and make the digital shift needed to propel your businesses into the future.



# Why Advanced

At Advanced, we focus on you and the value we can provide. We give you access to expert solutions, enabling you to implement the best-suited technologies and deliver business objectives faster and better. Unafraid of complexities, we prioritise driving your business towards consistent success, and our team is always available for your assistance.

## How can Advanced help your business?

We provide mission-critical services and support that help businesses focus on their core activities while accelerating and transforming digitally. Our range of services encapsulates cloud, security, managed services, digital workplace, app customisation and modernisation, and many more. We have been empowering many global brands for years, so you can lean on our unique expertise and vast experience to create a reliable roadmap, unlocking the capability and flexibility to take your business into a robust & digital future.

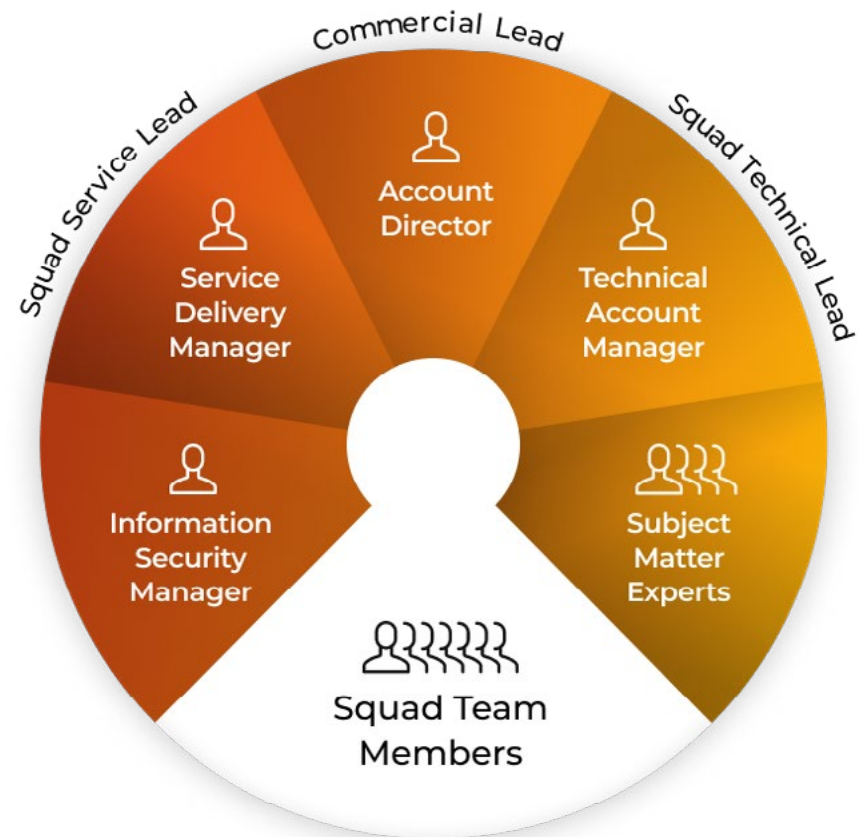
Our specialists consult businesses to devise a digital strategy that accounts for where you are presently and then carries you smoothly forward with a strategic growth plan. Working closely with you, we can assist you in building an IT strategy that benefits your whole organisation, aligns with global best practices, and guides you to a more competitive stance.

**Adaptive IT**

We can scale to meet the changing needs of growing businesses with rapidly evolving advanced technologies that can efficiently reduce management complexities. This way, future goals are effectively met, and costs stay low, enabling you to kickstart new projects whenever required.

At Advanced, we have launched a brand new way to deliver improved services to businesses, known as Squads. Our Squad consists of Information Security Managers, Service Delivery managers, Account Directors, Technical Account Managers, and Subject Matter Experts. Our team focus on building stronger relationships, utilising agile solutions for faster development and improvements, and keeping faith in proactive dedication.

Our services have helped English brands deliver care to 40 million people, managed over £1 billion in charity contributions, funded 2.5 million students, and helped reach 1.2 billion passengers to their destinations on time



**Want to learn more about how Advanced  
can help address your IT challenges?  
Reach out to us today!**

[> Learn More](#)



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## More Information

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