

IT BUYER'S GUIDE



*Marchese Computer Products, Inc.
"The Technology Experts"*

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What Every Business Owner Must Know About Hiring An Honest, Competent, Responsive And Fairly Priced Computer Consultant

Don't Trust Your Company's Critical Data And Operations To Just Anyone! This Business Advisory Guide Will Arm You With Revealing Questions You Should Ask Any Computer Consultant Before Giving Them Access To Your Company's Network

Read This Guide And You'll Discover:

- ✓ The "dirty little secret" of the computer repair industry that most people don't know and will never be told by their IT guy (knowing this ALONE could save you from wasting tons of money and untold aggravation when outsourcing your computer support).
- ✓ 20 revealing questions that will help you instantly spot an unethical or grossly incompetent computer repair/support technician in minutes.
- ✓ 4 costly misconceptions most business owners have about computer maintenance and repair, one of which you will need to know about BEFORE even picking up the phone.
- ✓ Viruses, worms, spyware and hackers: what you need to know to protect yourself.
- ✓ 5 mistakes to avoid when choosing a computer consultant.
- ✓ Why "cheap" or "lowest price" computer repair shops aren't the bargain they initially appear to be.
- ✓ The one surefire sign that you should run – not walk – away from a computer support firm.

From The Desk of:
Paul Marchese
President, Marchese Computer Products, Inc.

Dear Colleague,

Choosing a computer support company isn't easy. There is no shortage of horror stories about incompetent computer repair "gurus" bungling jobs and causing MORE problems as a result of their loose morals or gross incompetence. I'm sure if you talk to your own friends and colleagues you will get an earful of the unfortunate experiences they have encountered in this area.

Why is this? Because the computer repair and consulting industry, along with a lot of other industries, has its own share of incompetent or unethical businesses that will try to take advantage of trusting business owners who simply do not have the ability to determine whether or not the technician knows what they are doing. Sometimes this is out of greed for your money, but more often it's simply because they don't have the skills and competency to do the job right, but won't tell you that up front. From misleading information and unqualified technicians, to poor management and terrible customer service, we've seen it all...and we know they exist in abundance because we have had a number of customers come to us to clean up the disasters they have caused.

Buyer Beware: The Computer Repair And Consulting Industry Is NOT Regulated

Here's an embarrassing (and little-known) fact about my industry: it is not regulated like many other professional service industries, which means ANYONE can claim they are a "computer repair expert." **In fact, a lot of the businesses in this industry started because the owner was FIRED or laid off from their job and couldn't find work anywhere else. That means many of the so-called experts are useless and make sleazy auto repair shops look like the pinnacle of virtue and competence.**

Automotive repair shops, electricians, plumbers, lawyers, realtors, dentists, doctors, accountants, etc., are heavily regulated to protect the consumer from receiving substandard work or getting ripped off. However, the computer industry is still highly unregulated and there aren't any laws in existence to protect the consumer – **which is why it's so important for you to arm yourself with the information contained in this report.**

Anyone who can hang out a shingle can promote themselves as a computer expert. Even if they are honestly *trying* to do a good job for you, their inexperience can cost you dearly in your network's speed and performance or in lost or corrupt data files. That is why we decided to offer this report. The information in this guide is provided to help raise standards within the computer repair and support industry, and to give YOU useful information to help you guard against the lack of ethics or incompetence of some companies and technicians.

Dedicated to serving you,

Paul Marchese

About The Author

I started **Marchese Computer Products, Inc.** in 1981. We are now WNY's oldest Technology Company with a staff of 7 employees. We are focused on providing **IT Support and Solutions to small/medium businesses in our region.** We understand what it means to be a small/medium business and how to help you grow using technology. Our clients range from a single PC to over 100 workstations with multiple servers. Our clients find their servers, computers, emails, network, and Internet vital for daily operations. Many of our clients have specialized **lines of business applications, ERP software, or automation networks** that they use to run their business and rely heavily on that software being operational. We specialize in getting and integrating the right technology and services for your business so you don't have to waste your time trying to fix an IT issue. We want you to do what you do best and strive to take the burden of IT off your plate so you can achieve all of your goals.



In the area of software, networking, telecommunications and VOIP , we offer our clients an authorized source for a diversity of products including such brands as Microsoft, Symantec, Sonicwall, Allworx, Intuit, Cisco, SMC, Intel, AMD, Empire Access, Spectrum, Verizon, Windstream, ACC/AT & T, and many other leading brands.

We have the GLOW regions only web hosting facility and Data center. We offer complete web services, design, hosting, and consulting. We take great pride in our technical expertise and level of service. We host and maintain hundreds of web sites and provide email filtering with spam and virus checks.

We are a Lexmark Certified Solution Partner and a regional service center. We are an Allworx APEX Silver certified reseller. We are NYS Licensed Alarm Installer #12000270340

Comparing Apples To Apples: The Predominant I.T. Service Models Explained

Before you can accurately compare the fees, services and deliverables of one I.T. services company with another, you need to understand the three predominant service models most of these companies fit within. Some companies offer a blend of all three, while others are strict about offering only one service plan.

The 3 predominant service models are:

- **Time and Materials.** In the industry, we call this “break-fix” services. Essentially you pay an agreed-upon hourly rate for a technician to “fix” your problem when something “breaks.” Under this model, you might be able to negotiate a discount based on buying a block of hours. The scope of work may be simply to resolve a specific problem (like removing a virus), or it may encompass a large project like a computer network upgrade or move that has a specific result and end date clarified. Some companies will offer staff augmentation and placement under this model as well.
- **Managed I.T. Services.** This is a model where the I.T. services company takes the role of your “I.T. department” and not only installs and supports all the devices and PCs that connect to your server(s), but also offers phone and on-site support, antivirus, security, backup and a host of other services to monitor and maintain the health, speed, performance and security of your computer network.
- **Software Vendor-Supplied I.T. Services.** Many software companies will offer I.T. support for their customers in the form of a help desk or remote support for an additional fee. However, these are typically scaled-back services, limited to troubleshooting their specific application and NOT your entire computer network and all the applications and devices connected to it. If your problem resides outside of their specific software or the server it’s hosted on, they can’t help you and will often refer you to “your I.T. department.” While it’s often a good idea to buy some basic-level support package with a critical software application you use to run your business, this is not enough to provide the full I.T. services and support most businesses need to stay up and running.



When looking to outsource your I.T. support, the two service models you are most likely choosing between are the “managed I.T. services” and “break-fix” models. Therefore, let’s dive into the pros and cons of these two options, and then the typical fee structure for both

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Managed I.T. Services Vs. Break-Fix: Which Is The Better, More Cost-Effective Option?

You've probably heard the famous Benjamin Franklin quote, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." I couldn't agree more – and that's why it's my sincere belief that some form of managed I.T. is essential for every small business.

In our company, we offer different plans to fit the needs of our clients. In some cases, where the business is small, we might offer a very basic managed services plan to ensure the most essential maintenance is done, then bill the client hourly for any support used. For our smallest clients, they often find this the most economical. But for some of our midsize organizations, we offer a fully managed approach where more comprehensive I.T. services are covered in a managed plan. By doing this, we can properly staff for their accounts and ensure they get the fast, responsive support and expertise they need.



The only time I would recommend a "time and materials" approach is when you already have a competent I.T. person or team proactively managing your computer network and simply have a specific I.T. project to complete that your current in-house I.T. team doesn't have the time nor expertise to implement (such as migrating to a cloud-based solution, implementing a cyber security plan, etc.). Outside of that specific scenario, I do not think the break-fix approach is a good idea for general I.T. support for one very important, fundamental reason: you'll ultimately end up paying for a pound of "cure" for problems that could have easily been avoided with an "ounce" of prevention.

Why Regular Monitoring And Maintenance Is Critical For Today's Computer Networks

The fact of the matter is computer networks absolutely, positively need ongoing maintenance and monitoring to stay secure. The everincreasing dependency we have on I.T. systems and the data they hold – not to mention the *type* of data we're now saving digitally – has given rise to very smart and sophisticated cybercrime organizations that work around the clock to do one thing: hack into your network to steal data or money or to hold you ransom.

As you may know, ransomware is at an all-time high because hackers make millions of tax-free dollars robbing one small business owner at a time. But that's not their only incentive. Some will attempt to hack your network to gain access to bank accounts, credit cards or passwords to rob you (and your clients). Some use your computer network to send spam using YOUR domain and servers, host pirated software and, of course, spread viruses. Some even do it just for the "fun" of it.

And don't think for a minute these cybercriminals are solo crooks working alone in a hoodie out of their basement. They are highly organized and well-run operations employing *teams* of hackers who work together to scam as many people as they can. They use advanced software that scans millions of networks for vulnerabilities and use readily available data on the dark web of YOUR usernames, passwords, e-mail addresses and other data to gain access.

Of course, this isn't the only I.T. danger you face. Other common "disasters" include rogue employees, lost devices, hardware failures (still a BIG reason for data loss), fire and natural disasters and a host of other issues that can interrupt or outright destroy your I.T. infrastructure and the data it holds. Then there's regulatory compliance for any business hosting or touching credit card or financial information, medical records and even client contact information, such as e-mail addresses.

Preventing these problems and keeping your systems up and running (which is what managed I.T. services is all about) is a LOT less expensive and damaging to your organization than waiting until one of these things happens and then paying for emergency I.T. services to restore your systems to working order (break-fix).

Should You Just Hire A Full-Time I.T. Manager?

In most cases, it is not cost-effective for companies with under 250 employees to hire a full-time I.T. person for a couple of reasons.

First of all, no one I.T. person can know everything there is to know about I.T. support and cyber security. If your company is big enough and growing fast enough to support a full-time I.T. lead, you probably need more than one person. You need someone with help-desk expertise as well as a network engineer, a network administrator, a CIO (chief information officer) and a CISO (chief information security officer).

Therefore, even if you hire a full-time I.T. person, you may still need to supplement their position with co-managed I.T. support using an I.T. firm that can fill in the gaps and provide services and expertise they don't have. This is not a bad plan; what IS a bad plan is hiring one person and expecting them to know it all and do it all.

Second, finding and hiring good people is difficult; finding and hiring skilled I.T. people is incredibly difficult due to the skill shortage for I.T.. And if you're not technical, it's going to be very difficult for you to interview candidates and sift and sort through all the duds out there to find someone with good skills and experience. Because you're not technical, you might not know the right questions to ask during the interview process or the skills they need to do the job.

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More often than not, the hard and soft costs of building an internal I.T. department for general I.T. support just don't provide the best return on investment for the average small to midsize business. An internal I.T. department typically doesn't make sense until you have closer to 100 employees OR you have unique circumstances and need specialized skills, a developer, etc., but not for day-to-day I.T. support and maintenance.

Why “Break-Fix” Works Entirely In The Consultant’s Favor, Not Yours

Under a “break-fix” model, there is a fundamental conflict of interests between you and your I.T. firm. The I.T. services company has no incentive to prevent problems, stabilize your network or resolve problems quickly because they are getting paid by the hour when things stop working; therefore, the risk of unforeseen circumstances, scope creep, learning curve inefficiencies and outright incompetence are all shifted to YOU, the customer. Essentially, the more problems you have, the more they profit, which is precisely what you DON'T want.



Under this model, the I.T. consultant can take the liberty of assigning a junior (lower-paid) technician to work on your problem – one who may take two to three times as long to resolve an issue that a more senior (and more expensive) technician might resolve in a fraction of the time. There is no incentive to properly manage the time of that technician or their efficiency, and there is every reason for them to prolong the project and find MORE problems than solutions. Of course, if they're ethical and want to keep you as a client, they should be doing everything possible to resolve your problems quickly and efficiently; however, that's akin to putting a German shepherd in charge of watching over the ham sandwiches. Not a good idea

Second, it creates a management problem for you, the customer, who now has to keep track of the hours they've worked to make sure you aren't getting overbilled, and since you often have no way of really knowing if they've worked the hours they say they have, it creates a situation where you really, truly need to be able to trust they are being 100% ethical and honest AND tracking THEIR hours properly (not all do).



And finally, it makes budgeting for I.T. projects and expenses a nightmare since they may be zero one month and thousands the next.

What To Look For In A Managed I.T. Services Agreement And What You Should Expect To Pay

Important! Please note that the following price quotes are industry averages based on a recent I.T. industry survey conducted of over 750 different I.T. services firms. We are providing this information to give you a general idea of what most I.T. services firms charge and to help you understand the VAST DIFFERENCES in service contracts that you must be aware of before signing on the dotted line. Please understand that this does NOT reflect our pricing model or approach, which is simply to understand exactly what you want to accomplish FIRST and then customize a solution based on your specific needs, budget and situation.

Hourly Break-Fix Fees: Most I.T. services companies selling break-fix services charge between \$150 and \$175 per hour with a one-hour minimum. In most cases, they will give you a discount of 5% to as much as 20% on their hourly rates if you purchase and pay for a block of hours in advance.

If they are quoting a project, the fees range widely based on the scope of work outlined. If you are hiring an I.T. consulting firm for a project, I suggest you demand the following:

- **A very detailed scope of work that specifies what “success” is.** Make sure you detail what your expectations are in performance, workflow, costs, security, access, etc. The more detailed you can be, the better. Detailing your expectations up front will go a long way toward avoiding miscommunications and additional fees later to give you what you REALLY wanted.
- **A fixed budget and time frame for completion.** Agreeing to this up front aligns both your agenda and the consultant's. Be very wary of loose estimates that allow the consulting firm to bill you for “unforeseen” circumstances. The bottom line is this: it is your I.T. consulting firm's responsibility to be able to accurately assess your situation and quote a project based on their experience. You should not have to pick up the tab for a consultant underestimating a job or for their inefficiencies. A true professional knows how to take into consideration those contingencies and bill accordingly.

Managed I.T. Services: Most managed I.T. services firms will quote you a MONTHLY fee based on the number of devices they need to maintain, back up and support. In Western and Central New York, that fee is somewhere in the range of \$250 to \$300 per server, \$150 to \$175 per desktop.

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If you hire an I.T. consultant and sign up for a managed I.T. services contract, here are some things that SHOULD be included (make sure you read your contract to validate this):

- Security patches applied weekly, if not daily, for urgent and emerging threat
- End Point Protection updates and monitoring
- Firewall updates and monitoring
- Backup monitoring and test restores
- Spam-filter installation and updates
- Monitoring workstations and servers for signs of failure
- Optimizing systems for maximum speed
- Documentation of your network, software licenses, credentials, etc.

The following services may **NOT be included** and will often be billed separately. This is not necessarily a “scam” or unethical UNLESS the managed I.T. services company tries to hide these fees when selling you a service agreement. Make sure you review your contract carefully to know what is and is NOT included!

- Hardware (ex. new servers), PCs, laptops, etc.
- Software licenses or Cloud Licenses
- Special projects

Warning! Beware the gray areas of “all-inclusive” service contracts. In order to truly compare the “cost” of one managed I.T. services contract with another, you need to make sure you fully understand what IS and ISN'T included AND the SLA (service level agreement) you are signing up for. It's VERY easy for one I.T. services provider to appear less expensive than another UNTIL you look closely at what you're getting.

The following are 20 questions to ask your I.T. services provider that will clarify exactly what you're getting for the money. Some of these items may not be that important to you, while others (like response time, adequate insurance and uptime guarantees) may be critical. Make sure you fully understand each of these items before making a decision about who the right provider is for you, then make sure you get this IN WRITING.

20 Questions You Should Ask Your Computer Consultant Before Hiring Them To Support Your Network

Customer Service:

- 1 Do they answer their phones live or do you always have to leave a voice mail and wait for someone to call you back?**
Our Answer: We answer our phones live from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and give all clients an emergency after-hours number they may call if a problem arises, including on weekends. Why? Because many of the CEOs and executives we support work outside normal hours and find it the most productive time they have. If they cannot access their computer network AND can't get hold of anyone to help them, it's incredibly frustrating.
- 2 Do they have a written, guaranteed response time to your calls?**
Our Answer: We guarantee to have a technician working on a problem within 60 minutes or less of your call. This is written into every one of our managed service agreements we give to our clients because it's standard procedure.
- 3 Do they take the time to explain what they are doing and answer your questions in terms that you can understand (not geek-speak), or do they come across as arrogant and make you feel stupid for asking simple questions?**
Our Answer: Our technicians are trained to have the "heart of a teacher" and will take time to answer your questions and explain everything in terms that are understandable.

4

Do they consistently (and proactively) offer new ways to improve your network's performance, or do they wait until you have a problem to make recommendations?

Our Answer: We conduct quarterly review meetings with our managed clients to look for new ways to help improve their operations, lower costs, increase efficiencies and resolve any problems that may be arising. Our goal with these meetings is to help our clients be more profitable, efficient and competitive.

5

Do they provide detailed invoices that clearly explain what you are paying for?

Our Answer: We provide detailed invoices that show what work was done, why and when, so you never have to guess what you are paying for. We also double-check our invoices for accuracy before they are sent to you.

6

Do they guarantee to complete projects on time and on budget?

Our Answer: All projects are guaranteed to be completed on time, in writing. We don't nickel-and-dime you, ever.

Maintenance Of Your Network:

7

Do they insist on remotely monitoring your network 24-7-365 to keep critical security settings, virus definitions and security patches up-to-date and PREVENT problems from turning into downtime, viruses, lost data and other issues?

Our Answer: Yes, our remote network monitoring system watches over your network to constantly look for developing problems, security issues and other problems so we can address them BEFORE they turn into bigger problems.

8

Do they provide you with a monthly or weekly report that shows all the updates, security patches and the status of every machine on your network so you know for SURE your systems have been secured and updated?

Our Answer: Our clients get a detailed report that shows an overall health score of their network and the updates to their antivirus, security settings, patches and other important network checks (like hard-drive space, backups, speed and performance, etc.).

9

Do they have other technicians on staff who are familiar with your network in case your regular technician goes on vacation or gets sick?

Our Answer: Yes; and since we keep detailed network documentation (basically a blueprint of your computer network) and updates on every client's account, any of our technicians can pick up where another one has left off.

10 When they offer an “all-inclusive” support plan, is it **TRULY** all-inclusive, or are their “gotchas” hidden in the fine print?

Our Answer: Our “Platinum” support plan is just that – all-inclusive. One of the more popular service plans offered by consulting firms today is an “all-inclusive” or “all-you-can-eat” managed services plan. These are actually a good thing because they’ll save you a lot of money in the long run – HOWEVER, make sure you **REALLY** understand what is and isn’t included. Some things to consider are:

- Is phone/e-mail help desk included or extra?
- What about network upgrades, moves or adding/removing users?
- Is hardware and/or software included?
- What about 3rd-party software support? (We recommend that this IS included.)
- What are the costs/consequences of early cancellation?
- If the hardware and software is included, what happens if you cancel the contract?
- Are off-site backups included? To what degree?
- If you have a major disaster, is restoring your network included or extra?
- What about on-site support calls? Or support to remote offices?
- Are home PCs used to access the company’s network after hours included or extra?

Backups And Disaster Recovery:

11 Do they **INSIST** on monitoring an off-site as well as an on-site backup, or are they letting you rely on outdated tape backups?

Our Answer: We do not allow our clients to use tape backups because they are incredibly unreliable. We make sure all of our clients use multi-tiered solution that includes both onsite and cloud based backups for total security and redundancy.

12 Do they **INSIST** on doing periodic test restores of your backups to make sure the data is not corrupt and could be restored in the event of a disaster?

Our Answer: We perform a monthly “fire drill” and perform a test restore from backup for our clients to make sure their data **CAN** be recovered in the event of an emergency. After all, the **WORST** time to “test” a backup is when you desperately need it.

13

Do they insist on backing up your network BEFORE performing any type of project or upgrade?

Our Answer: We do; and that's simply as a precaution in case a hardware failure or software glitch causes a major problem.

14

If you were to experience a major disaster, do they have a written plan for how your data could be restored FAST and/or one that enables you to work from a remote location?

Our Answer: All clients receive a simple disaster recovery plan for their data and network. We encourage them to do a full disaster recovery plan for their office, but at a minimum, their network will be covered should something happen.

Technical Expertise And Support:

15

Is their help desk US-based or outsourced to an overseas company or third party?

Our Answer: We provide our own in-house help desk and make sure the folks helping you are friendly and helpful. We consider this one of the most important aspects of customer service, plus we feel it's important for keeping your data secure.

16

Do their technicians maintain current vendor certifications and participate in ongoing training – or are they learning on your dime?

Our Answer: Our technicians are required to keep the most up-to-date vendor certifications. Plus, our hiring process is so stringent, 99% of the technicians who apply don't make it through (guess who's hiring them?). We are also a NYS Licensed Alarm Installer. We Design, Install, and Maintain Video, Burglar, and Fire Alarm Systems.

17

Do their technicians arrive on time and dress professionally?

Our Answer: Our technicians are true professionals that you would be proud to have in your office. They dress professionally, show up on time, and if they cannot (for some odd, unforeseen reason), we always notify the client immediately. We believe these are minimum requirements for delivering a professional service.

18

Are they familiar with (and can they support) your unique line-of-business applications?

Our Answer: We own the problems with all line-of-business applications for our clients. That doesn't mean we can fix faulty software – but we WILL be the liaison between you and your vendor to resolve problems you are having and make sure these applications work smoothly for you.

19 When something goes wrong with your Internet service, phone systems, printers or other IT services, do they own the problem or do they say, "That's not our problem to fix"?

Our Answer: We feel WE should own the problem for our clients so they don't have to try and resolve any of these issues on their own – that's just plain old good service and something many computer guys won't do.

20 How long has the company been in business"?

Our Answer: We have been in Business over 40 years and we are proud to be the oldest Technology provider in all of Western New York. We have simply done technology integrations no one else has. We provide a complete solution and look at your goals to make sure what we recommend is the right fit to meet all of your technology goals.

The 4 Most Costly Misconceptions About Computer Maintenance and Repair



Misconception #1: My computer network doesn't need regular monitoring and maintenance.

This is probably one of the biggest and most costly misconceptions that business owners have. Usually this is because they've been fortunate enough to have never encountered a major disaster; but that's similar to someone thinking they don't need to wear a seat belt when driving a car because they've never had an accident.

Computer networks are complex and dynamic systems that need regular updates and maintenance to stay up, running fast and problem-free. In fact, it's surprising how fast a brand-new PC will slow down after a few weeks of use without proper updates and maintenance. Here are just a FEW of the critical updates that need to be done on a weekly – if not daily – basis:

- Security patches applied – with NEW viruses and hacker attacks cropping up DAILY, this is a CRITICAL part of maintaining your network
- Antivirus updates and monitoring
- Firewall updates and monitoring
- Backup monitoring and test restores
- Spam-filter installation and updates
- Spyware detection and removal
- Monitoring disk space on workstations and servers
- Monitoring hardware for signs of failure
- Optimizing systems for maximum speed
- Phone System Patches and monitoring

Your computer network is just like a car: if you don't change the oil, replace the filter, rotate the tires, flush the transmission and perform other regular maintenance on your car, it will eventually break down and cost you FAR MORE to repair than the cost of the basic maintenance – and a car is far simpler than a computer network!

If your computer support tech does not insist on some type of regular, automated monitoring or maintenance of your network, then DO NOT HIRE THEM. Lack of system maintenance is the NUMBER ONE reason most people end up losing valuable files and incurring heavy computer repair bills. If your technician isn't offering you these services, you need to find someone else to support your computer or network for two reasons:

- Either they don't know enough to make this recommendation, which is a sure sign they are horribly inexperienced, *OR*
- They recognize that they are profiting from your computer problems and don't want to recommend steps toward preventing you from needing their help on an ongoing basis. After all, they'll get paid MORE to remove a virus than to make sure your system is patched, updated and secured (which can be done quickly and inexpensively with good monitoring).

Either reason is a good one to get as far away from that person as possible!



Misconception #2: My nephew/neighbor's kid/brother-in-law/office manager knows this computer stuff and can take care of our computers.

Most people look for a part-time "guru" for one reason: to save a few bucks. But this often comes back to haunt them. We frequently get calls from business owners who desperately need our help to get them back up and running or to clean up a mess that was caused by an inexperienced neighbor, friend or relative who was just trying to help.

If the person you have working on your machine does not do computer repair and support for a living, there is a good chance they won't have the knowledge or experience to truly help you – they are a hobbyist at best. And do you really want a part-time, inexperienced person responsible for handling something as important as your data and computer network? As with everything in life, you get what you pay for. That's not to say you need to go broke to find a great technician, but you shouldn't be choosing someone based on price alone.



Misconception #3: All computer technicians are created equal. Your best option will be the one who offers the lowest price.

As we stated a moment ago, you get what you pay for. A cheap price usually means a cheap job. Really good technicians do NOT work cheap because they are in high demand just like every other professional service category. The only technicians that will work cheap are those who are just starting, and they are grossly inexperienced.

And some shops will hire college kids or newbie technicians because they will work for next to nothing to gain experience, OR they allow interns to support your network because they don't have to pay them at all – but what you don't realize is that an inexperienced technician like this can end up costing more because:

- They improperly diagnose problems, which means you're paying them to fix the WRONG thing and they STILL won't resolve your problem. Case in point: A few years ago a TV reporter went undercover to 8 computer repair shops in LA with a perfectly working PC, but simply disconnected a cable in the back (a fix that the AVERAGE computer tech would have caught in minutes with a visual inspection).

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Several shops improperly diagnosed the problem and wanted to charge them anywhere from \$59 to over \$275 to fix it!

- They could take 3 to 5 times as long to do the same repair an experienced technician could fix quickly. Again, you're paying for those extra hours.
- They could do MORE damage, costing you more money and downtime.

With your client data, accounting records, e-mail and other critical data at stake, do you REALLY want the lowest-priced shop working on your machine?

We take the view that most people want value for their money and simply want the job done right. You will find that we are not the cheapest, but we don't apologize for that. As the owner, I decided a long time ago that I would rather explain our higher rates ONE TIME than make excuses for POOR SERVICE forever. That said, we're not the most expensive either. We simply feel that we should offer a good service at a fair price. That's why we have been able to stay in business for over 38 years and have over 500 customers who've been with us that entire time.



Misconception #4: An honest computer support company should be able to give you a quote over the phone.

I wish this were true, but it isn't. Just like a good doctor, an honest and professional technician will need to diagnose your network before they can quote any price over the phone; consider the example above where all that was needed was to plug in a simple cable. Without SEEING the machine, we could have never diagnosed that over the phone. In most cases a good tech will need to actually see the issue to determine how involved the fix will be.

Also, some consultants will quote you a cheap rate over the phone to get in the door, but then jack up the prices once they get in your office by taking 3 times as long, selling you add-ons and up-sells, etc.

Always, always, always make sure you get a real in writing quote so there is no surprises and you won't end up getting burned – and NEVER Ever take a phone quote!

5 More Mistakes To Avoid When Choosing A Computer Consultant

1

Choosing a computer consultant based on a single phone call. We recommend you invite them into your office and ask them for a written proposal. Be clear on what your expectations are and what type of problems you want them to resolve. As stated a moment ago, a competent professional should offer to do an audit of your network BEFORE quoting you anything. After all, would you take a doctor's word that you need surgery if they hadn't done x-rays or other diagnostics? Of course not! Prescription without diagnosis is malpractice.

2**Choosing a computer consultant that doesn't have a written money-back guarantee.**

In our view, a good consulting firm should be accountable for their services and for fixing things RIGHT. If you aren't pleased with a job that was done, they should (at a minimum) make it right for free; and if they simply cannot resolve an issue to YOUR satisfaction, you shouldn't get stuck with the bill.

Plus, the fact that they stand behind their work with a money-back guarantee shows they have confidence in themselves to make you a happy client. And don't fall for the "We don't offer one because people will take advantage of us" routine. In our experience, MOST people just want an honest service at a reasonable price. If you give them that, they are happy to pay. Are there a few unethical folks out there? Of course, but they are the minority, and we would rather bite the bullet on the very few dishonest folks so we can gain the trust and confidence of the majority of clients, who just want their problems fixed fast and fixed right.

3**Choosing a computer consultant without speaking to several of their current clients.**

Check their references! Don't just take the sales guy's word that they are good – ask to speak to at least 3 or 4 clients that are similar to you in size and scope. If they hesitate or cannot provide you with references, don't trust them!

Another good sign is that they should have multiple client testimonials and success stories posted on their web site and throughout their marketing collateral. A lack of this may be a sign that they don't HAVE clients who are happy enough to provide a good reference – again, a warning sign.

4

Choosing a computer consultant who cannot remotely monitor, update and support your network. In this day and age, a computer consultant who doesn't do this is living in the Stone Age. You want someone to do this because it will dramatically increase your network's security and will enable them to do faster repairs. That's not to say they shouldn't come on-site; but remote monitoring and repairs make fixing problems FASTER for YOU and help AVOID problems cropping up in the first place.

5

Choosing a computer consultant who isn't experienced in the industry with at least 15 years in the field. In this day and age, a computer consultant who just threw his hat in the arena could ultimately cost you many times the savings you may think you are getting. You want someone with a great deal of experience. This will save you from the many pitfalls that are around in the technology industry. We have helped companies start with just a single employee and a single computer to grow to over 100 of both. This was done without breaking the bank and based on our experience we were able to SAVE them from taking the wrong path and wasting their hard earned dollars.

A Final Word And Free Offer To Engage With Us

I hope you have found this guide to be helpful in shedding some light on what to look for when outsourcing the support of your company's network. As I stated in the opening of this report, my purpose in providing this information was to help you make an informed decision and avoid getting burned by the many incompetent firms offering these services.



If you have any additional comments or questions, we welcome them! Have an idea to make this guide even more helpful? Let us know! And, of course, if you are looking for someone you can trust to take over the care and maintenance of “all things digital” in your office, we’d love the opportunity to EARN your business.

Below you will find information on how to request a FREE Network Health Check and Diagnosis. This is, of course, provided for free, with no obligations and no expectations on our part. I want to be clear that this is NOT a bait-and-switch offer or a trick to get you to buy something. My reputation for running an honest and trustworthy business is something I hold very dear. I would never jeopardize that in any way. So why are we offering something like this for free?

Two reasons:

- We are simply offering this service as a risk-free “get to know us” offer to people we haven’t had the pleasure of doing business with. Again, our goal is to allow you to make an informed and confident decision – and offering this is one way we can help you better evaluate us.
- This will allow us to determine if we even CAN help you. Obviously we can’t help everyone, and our services might not be a good fit for you. Conducting this Health Check enables us to do a small project for you to help you evaluate whether or not we’re the right company for you without risking your money.

Fresh eyes see things that others cannot – so, at a minimum, our free Assessment is a completely cost- and risk-free way to get a credible third-party validation of the security, stability and efficiency of your I.T. systems.

Looking forward to your call!

Paul Marchese, President
Phone: 585-343-2713
Web: www.mcpinc.com

FREE Network Health Check For All Prospective Clients Who Want To Put Us To The Test!

As a prospective customer, we would like to offer you a FREE Network Health Check and Diagnosis (\$297 value).

How To Request Your FREE Network Health Check:

You can call, email or simply fill out the request on our website,
www.mcpinc.com.



*Marchese Computer Products, Inc.
“The Technology Experts”*

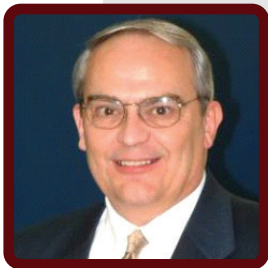
To Schedule Your FREE Assessment,
please visit www.mcpinc.com or call our office at **585.343.2713**

Read On To Hear What Our Clients Have To Say



We Would Not Go Anywhere Else

For more than 15 years, Marchese Computer has provided us peace of mind knowing that we have the latest updates and protection without us having to do a thing. For our 24 hour business, Marchese Computer is always very responsive to any issues that happen no matter what time of the day or night. MCP has "bailed us out" on a number of occasions. They always make you feel that you are their most important customer. We would not go anywhere else.



Dan Fischer
President & General Manager, WBTA 1490



Responsive To Our Needs

We have worked with Marchese Computer Product, Inc. for more than 15 years and the single biggest benefit to our company is their responsiveness to our needs. They have always made themselves readily available to provide all of our technological support no matter what the circumstances. I have never had the need or the desire to work with any other IT firm as the Staff at Marchese Computer is well educated and versed in all IT Solutions. For any IT solutions we have needed at our Law firm they have provided efficient and on point services at a reasonable price.



Benjamin J. Bonarigo, Esq
Attorney, Bonarigo & McCutcheon



Took The Worry And Complexity Out Of It For Us

We moved to Marchese Computer's managed services so we could take the worry and staffing needs out of IT. Paul and his staff have provided personal service and spot on recommendations to us of over a decade and they always are willing to go the extra mile in making sure our goals are met within budget.. Simply put you should call Marchese Computer today, you won't be disappointed..



Doug Post
Village Administrator, Village of Attica



Quality Service And Support

I called on Marchese's with a very challenging task in making our main server function again. They came through with a solution in a very quick timeframe. I have gone back to them with other easier tasks and have gotten equally stellar service. The staff that they have are capable and willing to work until the job is completed. I never needed to call or email for updates as they were in constant communication with me. Our farming business is thankful for an IT group so close with such expertise.



Thomas Matthews Thomas Matthews
Business Manager, Noblehurst Farms

To Schedule Your FREE Assessment,
please visit **www.mcpinc.com** or call our office at **585.343.2713**

Read On To Hear What Our Clients Have To Say:



Meets All Our IT Needs And More

Since hiring Marchese computer 6 years ago we have been operating more efficiently with MCP supporting the complex issues in our medical practice. We have found that Marchese Computer Products has been very reliable in monitoring our office with their Managed services and in their ongoing support to us. MCP has responded to any issues we have has in a very short order, minimizing our downtime. MCP's technical knowledge is superior to other IT firms we have worked with in the past. MCP continues to meet all our IT needs. I would highly recommend MCP as an IT solution.

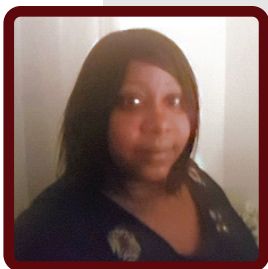


Dr. Ken Halliwell
President, Niagara Neurology and Sleep Medicine



Takes The Worry Out Of Our IT

Marchese Computer allows us not to worry about our IT. Our ability to directly contact Paul and his staff is unprecedented. Marchese Computer's help is always immediate. We never get the old "I'll have him call you back". We have been a customer for many years and we have been very happy with the services provided. We highly recommend them.



Lisa Saddler
SolarX Eyewear LLC



Stands Behind Their Work

The simple answer to why Marchese computer over our old provider is Knowledge, fast service, and they never tried to sell me something I didn't need. They listened to what our needs were, explained the technology and guided us through integrating our two facilities with Phones, Video, Firewalls, and internet connections.

Marchese Computer stands behind their work and stays until the job is done. They are a local company with a lot of year's experience. You can rely on the local guys at Marchese computer.



Jeremy Lies
Owner, Oliver's Candies



To Schedule Your FREE Assessment,
please visit **www.mcpinc.com** or call our office at **585.343.2713**

7 Things We Do Better

1 Over 40 Years Of Experience

We have been helping small businesses in the GLOW region of Western New York for over 40 years and are proud to be the oldest technology reseller in Western New York. We have simply done things with technology integration into businesses that no one else in the area has and we are sure we can help you with your technology needs.

2 Full Line Of Services

We don't stop at just a quick PC fix. Our solutions include Telecom, VOIP, Security, Fire Systems, video surveillance, Web design, Web Hosting, Managed services for both your PC's/Servers and printers to a total network engineering and Server rebuild we've got it covered.

3 We Answer Our Phones Live

We don't use the proverbial phone defense systems that have become commonplace and are always a nightmare of frustration. We want your resolution to be as painless as possible and stop the cycle of frustration. If you leave a message for a call be we strive for 100% callbacks within the same hour.

4 Security Is Our Top Priority

At Marchese Computer we follow industry best security practices for all our clients, as well as internally. Your security is only as good as the weakest link. We educate our team and clients on cyber security to keep networks safe.

5 We Listen To You And Help Solve Your Business Problems

We take the time to sit with you and listen to what your needs are. We look for solutions that are a right fit rather than selling you whatever is the buzz technology that day. We strive to achieve solutions for your business in your budget.

6 We Speak In Plain English

We take the time to explain in non-Geek terms what we are doing and what the issue is.

7 Proven Track Record

Unlike many in our industry, we can prove how we deliver Peace of Mind, Fast issue resolution, Money Savings, Data Protection, Less Downtime for your business, and simplicity in IT management for you.

To Schedule Your **FREE Assessment**,
please visit **www.mcpinc.com** or call our office at **585.343.2713**