

WHY HIRING THE CHEAPEST COMPUTER SUPPORT COMPANY WILL ACTUALLY COST YOU MORE

Instead of asking about price right off the bat, the better question is, "What will I get for my money?"



Don't hire inexperienced "professionals".

IT support coverage needs to be comprehensive, addressing every potential sink-or-swim crisis before it actually happens.

As anybody working in IT will tell you, the most common question we get isn't, "Why is my computer running so slowly?" or "Why is my Internet not working?" It's, "What do you charge for your services?" With so many IT companies clamoring for your attention, it makes sense that you'd want to look for the most inexpensive, cost-efficient option, right?

The problem is that this question doesn't get to the heart of the issue. Sure, any IT company can offer rock-bottom prices, but as with anything else, those savings are going to come with fewer, lower-quality IT services. Also, many cheaper services say they are inexpensive, but they typically have slow response times and nickel and dime you over everything. Instead of asking about price right off the bat, the better question is, "What

will I get for my money?"

With cheap IT companies, the answer is not much. Maybe they'll be there when the server breaks down or if Microsoft Word is acting weird on your computer. But you can bet they won't help you implement IT systems that will prevent real, catastrophic issues from arising – the kinds of things that determine the success or failure of a company at the most basic level.

Today, business and technology go hand in hand. It's an inescapable fact that good tech forms the pillars upon which successful companies stand. Many business owners still insist on cutting corners with IT, hiring cheap and inexperienced "professionals" to protect and support the most fundamental aspects of their operation.

Of course, it's hard to fault them for doing so. Without a firm grasp of a business's IT needs, it's all too easy for a subpar, would-be IT partner to convince an owner they meet the company's requirements. That's why the question, "What will I get for my money?" is so important. IT support coverage needs to be comprehensive, addressing every potential sink-or-swim crisis before it actually happens. The integrity of your network infrastructure should support your business, rather than force you to run around putting out fires.

A downed server or temporarily unreliable network might seem like minor issues, but even the smallest of IT problems can easily snowball into an expensive nightmare that threatens your company's very existence.

Downtime can cause serious damage to your business, and your bottom line.

Take a company that stores all its data on a central, networked server, for example. Maybe they're a large law practice with thousands of vital case documents. They were reluctant to spend much on IT support, so they went with the cheapest option available. Of course, regular server maintenance wasn't included in their package, but they assumed their trusty hardware would keep kicking for at least a few more years. But when an employee tries to access the database, an error pops up. Upon further investigation, it turns out the outdated server has finally broken down, apparently for good. All those documents, all that data instrumental to the basic functionality of the company, is irrecoverable – thousands of hours of work (and thousands of dollars) down the drain, and all because of an issue that would easily have been caught and prevented by a team of qualified IT experts.

When technology works, it's easy to imagine that it'll continue working without issue. But the fact is that a computer network requires constant, behind-the-scenes monitoring and maintenance to ensure it stays up and running, not to mention secure.

From hordes of hackers waiting in the wings for you to slip up, to hardware failure, to natural disasters, rogue employees and a million other IT threats, it's important to ensure the stability of your network before a problem comes knocking. Cheap Band-Aid solutions work great until the day they cost you thousands.

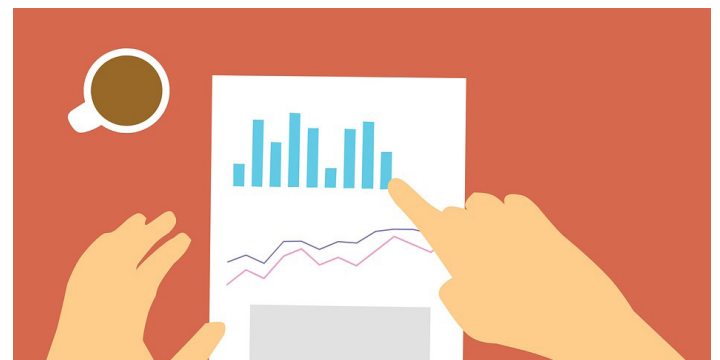
What is your data worth to you?



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Cheap Band-Aid solutions work great until the day they cost you thousands.

It's better to invest in a team of real IT experts, and avoid crisis altogether. It's much cheaper to prevent something from breaking than it is to replace it altogether.



RUN YOUR NEXT MEETING LIKE A CEO

As both a CEO for over a decade and a humble bystander, I've grown to appreciate the fine art of how to run a meeting well. I have seen billionaire tech CEOs run meetings where people cried their eyes out they were so inspired, and I've seen frontline supervisors at an aluminum can manufacturing company run meetings so poorly that people were falling asleep, heads clunking down on the table.

Want to run your next meeting like a CEO? Here are three ways experts avoid rookie mistakes and elevate their meetings to the next level.

1 Make an agenda with three simple questions. This is an absolute ninja level of CEO wizardry. As many authors have said, success comes not when you have all the answers, but when you ask all the right questions. Show you have CEO swagger and print on a piece of paper (and include in the online calendar appointment) three simple questions for the itinerary. Simple questions make valuable meetings.

2 Summarize key points you hear. Meetings get side-tracked when lots of people are talking and nobody is summarizing key points as you go. Great leaders often pause naturally about every 10 minutes and take the time to summarize the key points they're hearing. Little statements like, "It sounds like one big conclusion we are making is X" or, "One big question I hear us asking is Y" can have a tremendous impact. Right after these summary statements, you'll see the conversation turn toward a decision point and boom – a decision is made.

3 Make people feel safe. I once heard a governor tell a skittish junior staffer, "Tell me more about what you mean by that. I want to understand." On another occasion, a CEO told a new member of her team, "I am not promising I'm going to share your point of view, but I want to understand it. So tell me more." The best CEOs don't want to intimidate people in meetings. Instead, they make people feel safe, so that everyone feels open to sharing useful information without fear of retribution or being made to look stupid. Make people feel respected, heard and appreciated, and you'll be impressed by the value of the information you learn, and the solutions that come from your team.

PREFERRED IT SECURITY SPOTLIGHT

How To Prevent Hackers From Stealing Your Phone Data

1. Implement a mobile device policy. This is particularly important if your employees are using their own personal devices to access company e-mail and data. If that employee leaves, are you allowed to erase company data from their phone? If their phone is lost or stolen, are you permitted to remotely wipe the device – which would delete all of that employee's photos, videos, texts, etc. – to ensure YOUR clients' information isn't compromised?

2. Require STRONG passwords and passcodes to lock mobile devices. On a cell phone, requiring a passcode to be entered will go a long way in preventing a stolen device from being compromised.

3. Require all mobile devices be encrypted. Encryption is the most effective way to achieve data security. To read an encrypted file, you must have access to a secret key or password that unlocks (decrypts) the data.

4. Implement a remote wipe software for lost or stolen devices. If you find a laptop was taken or a cell phone lost, remote "kill" or wipe software will allow you to disable the device and erase any and all sensitive data remotely.

5. Backup remote devices. Make sure you are backing up all mobile devices including laptops so you can quickly restore the data if necessary.

Free Report: What Every Small-Business Owner Must Know About Protecting And Preserving Their Company's Critical Data And Computer Systems

This report will outline in plain nontechnical English common mistakes that many small-business owners make with their computer network that cost them thousands in lost sales, productivity and computer repair bills, as well as providing an easy, proven way to reduce or completely eliminate the financial expense and frustration caused by these oversights.

Download your FREE copy today at <http://www.preferreditgroup.com/protect-your-network/> or call our office at 260-440-7377.

PROTECT YOUR NETWORK

"What Every Business Owner Must Know About Protecting and Preserving Their Network"



Don't Trust Your Company's Critical Data And Operations To Just Anyone!

OUR COMMUNITY

Spring is getting closer, and that means it's almost time for our annual Charity Poker Event to benefit the local Children's Sanctuary.

Every year, we host a charity poker game with a silent auction of some pretty awesome items.

Last year, we raised over \$5,000 for local foster children and their families. We want to do even better this year!

If you'd like to donate to the event or donate a gift to our Silent Auction, please give Courtney a call at our office.

We are looking for anything from gift cards to products and services.



CONTACT US



Fort Wayne
260.440.7377

Warsaw
574.306.4288

Columbia City

Indianapolis

260.213.4266

317.426.8180



www.preferreditgroup.com



6333 Constitution Drive
Fort Wayne, IN 46804

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