

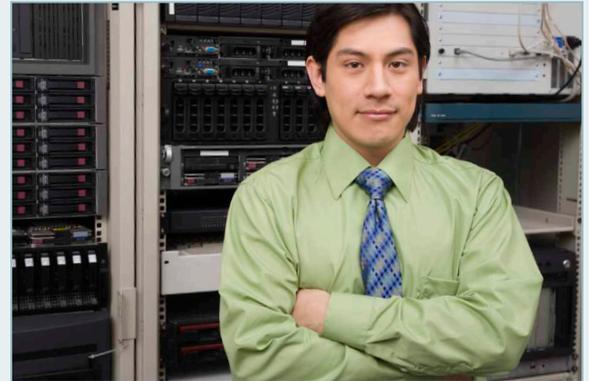
FREE REPORT

11 Questions To Ask Your Cisco Managed Service Provider

The Corporate Executives Perspective, Questions To Ask When Choosing A Cisco Managed Service Provider

1) Will you be able to remain in control once the MSP begins to manage your IT infrastructure?

Some Managed Service Provider's won't manage your IT infrastructure unless you turn over control of everything- your people, your equipment, your facility and even your business processes. With Advanced Network Products, selective outsourcing approach, your own your equipment- our experts work around the clock from our Network Operations Center to provide maximum network availability, performance, security and Quality of Service. The result is greater control and flexibility for you.



Unlike traditional outsourcing, where an outside organization takes control of your equipment and your staff, selective outsourcing allows your IT department to contract for the specific critical services needed to run your IT infrastructure, while you maintain overall control. Because a selective outsourcer like Advanced Network Products manages hundreds of networks, we apply our best practices to your infrastructure, allowing you to gain immediate benefit from new technology, there is no slow deployment and training time. The selective outsourcer handles the complexity of your technology, allowing you to enjoy the business benefits.

2) Will you have complete visibility into the status of your IT infrastructure?

While many MSP's prefer to keep you in the dark, ANP actually increases your visibility by providing you with secure access to our web portal. Using our Web Portal you have a comprehensive view of the real-time status of your entire IT infrastructure. Watch over our shoulder as we work your issues and update the portal. Unlike other MSP's that offer you historical reports through their portal, ANP offers you real time access to your performance metrics data on-demand.

Compare the way in which the MSP allows you to visualize the data that has been collected. ANP recognizes that when outsourcing there are three constituencies; the executives, the technical staff in the IT department and finally the internal financial departments. ANP caters to each group by providing simple graphical views focused on each groups agenda; executives get a high level view of availability, the IT group has a much more granular view and finally the financial team can access historical usage and trend reports. ANP also offers a small java script that runs on your PC's tool bar as a real-time ticker to notify any constituency in real-time that a process, application or device has an alert, so as a customer you don't have to visit our web portal, the information will always be on your own screen.

3) Can the MSP manage your total infrastructure from: WAN/ LAN, IP Telephony, Security, Servers and Applications?

Many MSP's originated in the hosting business and can provide server monitoring, or carriers can provide WAN performance data from generic shareware programs such as MRTG. ANP has been in the data communications business for 20 years and has expertise and tools in the WAN/LAN, Application, Server, Security and IP Telephony; ANP can cover your whole spectrum of IT infrastructure.

Consider the breadth of the MSP's offerings, once you begin to outsource you will inevitable find that there are other areas where your firm could benefit from outsourcing. ANP offers all areas of expertise, from managing your Oracle databases, to managing your IP Telephony servers and gateways; you can rely on ANP to have a complete portfolio of managed services to meet every current and forth coming need.

4) Is the MSP in a position to provide an unbiased point of view?

Many MSP's are fully or partially owned by companies with a vested interest in steering you toward their own technology, products or services. Consider the telephone carriers that offer managed services on their own circuits, or consider the hardware manufacturer that offers monitoring on their own equipment. Can you expect to get unbiased advice and counseling from a partner who has a vested interest?



ANP has complete autonomy and independence. ANP can provide advice, opinions and direction that truly reflects what is best for your company. Why pay a high price for your own telephone carrier to watch your network when you can have a competitive price from ANP who has no vested interest in the advice or support that you receive. Isn't the manufacturer or Phone Company much like the Fox watching the Hen House?

5) Will your MSP remediate all problems independently of your staff?

Many MSP's will start pointing fingers when a problem is traced to a non-covered device, how many times has your Inter-exchange carrier told your staff that the circuit problem is because of a regional bell circuit? When one of your key applications is running poorly, how often has your application vendor pointed to your WAN as the root of the problem? ANP has seen decades of vendor and IT staff finger pointing; there is a better approach.

ANP will always be a single point of accountability. ANP takes an "own the whole problem to resolution," approach. ANP has twenty years of experience coordinating efforts between hardware vendors, carriers and other companies that design and supply your IT infrastructure. We are experts at aligning multi-vendor resources to solve your problem in a time efficient manner. We measure the time it takes from problem isolation, notification and resolution, if and when a customer problem exceeds our own internally developed thresholds, we automatically expedite to higher levels of engineering talent as well as to our executive officers.

6) Do you need to purchase hardware or license software from the MSP?

Many MSP's force you to license costly management tools, followed by an installation period and integration effort. Some MSP's require that you install their appliance in your network, others require you to purchase or lease software so the MSP can poll devices in your network. Avoid outsourcers that require you to purchase their proprietary hardware and software, should you become disillusioned with their service it becomes exceedingly difficult to extricate yourself from their proprietary solution set.

ANP's remote management technology replaces more costly and less capable monitoring, management and security tools-all as part of our service, and at no additional cost. Furthermore, most of our customers are up and running within days with little to no impact on the IT infrastructure or IT personnel. ANP uses non-proprietary SNMP to poll your IT devices. In the unlikely event you cancel your contract with ANP; your network will continue to operate without any required hardware or software changes. Look for a managed solution that is as easy to leave as it is to deploy.

7) How long has the MSP been in business?

ANP had been in business since 1984, and our sole focus has consistently been IT infrastructure management. ANP has hundreds of customers worldwide, and we actively monitor and manage thousands of devices. Our engineers rarely run across a problem that they have not solved before. But when we do, the solution is applied across our entire customer base so that others will never experience the same problem.



8) Is the MSP independently owned and financially stable?

Many MSP's are young start-ups or recently purchased venture capital roll-ups. ANP is an established company with twenty years of profitability well capitalized and a great short term cash position.

9) Will the MSP transfer knowledge to your employees?

Many MSP's believe that the best way to keep clients is to withhold knowledge and maximize dependency. At ANP, we take a totally different approach. As we solve your complex infrastructure, management issues, we continuously transfer knowledge gained to your staff.

10) Does the MSP offer an SLA and also a Money-Back Guarantee?

In a world of SLAs that require a legal degree to decipher, ANP offers a straight-forward approach to its services. If you are not completely satisfied with the level of service that we offer, we will give you your money back, subject to certain limitations, and work with you to ensure that we meet our mutual goals.

11) Does the MSP offer a tiered product approach?

Many MSP's offer a single outsourced product to their customers the one-size-fits-all approach might not be what your firm needs. Look for an MSP who can tailor the service offering to your company goals. ANP offers three levels of selective outsourcing to fit virtually any budget and technical requirement.



Conclusion:

In this white paper we looked at what you should look for in a Managed Service Provider. In other white papers we examine specific benefits of outsourcing and specific deliverables from managed services including second day IP Telephony support and critical Application performance management. With remote managed services, such as those offered by Advanced Network Products, a Managed Service Provider can monitor and/or manage the network devices, servers, system software, databases, security infrastructure and applications located in your own facility, or in a third-party data center, all on a 24 hour 365 day basis from a hardened Network Operations Center.

At Advanced Network Products, we have been offering a broad range of managed and professional Services since 1984. Please do not hesitate to contact us to learn more about our specific outsourced managed services. Advanced Network Products can show you the service deliverables, demonstrate our web portal, quote you our solutions and let you speak with some of our long-term customers. Advanced Network Products offers a money back guarantee. If we don't satisfy you in any month you pay us nothing! Please call us today to learn how outsourcing can save your organization time and money.

Contact the experienced and knowledgeable IT experts at Advanced Network Products, Inc. or call **215-572-0111** or **800-572-3282** for assistance.