

Should You Hire Internal IT Staff Or Outsource to an External Service Provider?

Most small business owners handle all aspects of their businesses, including acting as the information technology department. This will work for as long as you remain a small business without employees. When you grow and start hiring staff, will it make sense to use your business-building time on IT issues?

Unless you are an information technology service provider yourself, chances are your time will be much better spent marketing your products and/or services, establishing relationships with your clients, providing exceptional customer service and just otherwise growing your business.

How do you know when it's time to get IT help? If the information technology demands are affecting your day and negatively impacting your actual business related activities - it's definitely time to consider finding an IT resource. If you start adding new employees and computers, it's probably a good time to look into adding IT help, as well.

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When you make the decision to find an IT resource, your first decision will be whether you need to hire one or more staff to fulfill the role, or if you're going to outsource IT services. Having dedicated IT staff means they are 100% committed to your business. They're not splitting their time among numerous clients the way a contracted company might. One of the benefits of having an IT department is that the staff develops a strong understanding of your unique business needs and should be in a good position to manage your short and long term IT requirements. With your own IT staff on payroll, you know you've always got someone available (unless they're out sick or on vacation!) should an emergency or urgent situation present itself.

The primary disadvantage of hiring IT staff is that you'll be paying for their benefits, their training, and a variety of other costs associated with hiring a new employee. Not to mention, you have to pay them the agreed upon salary regardless of how much IT work you end up having, which means you may be overpaying based on workload!

There are a variety of advantages of outsourcing to an IT service provider over hiring staff. You can choose to outsource your information technology needs to a flat rate IT service provider and reduce your monthly and overall costs. Having a virtual IT department lets you focus more on running your business rather than the technology that supports it. You aren't stuck paying employee benefits or other employee costs,

and you aren't responsible for making sure the IT team remains up to date with their training and knowledge.

The Bottom Line

Finding the right information technology help for a growing business needs is challenging. When you think strategically about your business' unique IT requirements, you can make sound decisions that further promote its growth and profitability.