

Top 10 Tips for Selecting a Managed Hosting Partner

We believe that service and security are the most important issues to consider when selecting a partner to outsource your website or application hosting to. To help you make sure that you get the service, support and security you require we've put together a quick Top 10 checklist.

1	Meet the People	Most hosting companies offer an SLA, but at the end of the day the SLA is not going to deliver you the service you and your business needs, it's the people. We have found that strong personal relationships are the most important aspect to the delivery of solutions which meet your expectations – so that we know what you want and you know how we deliver the service. When selecting a hosting provider make sure that you meet them; speak to the people who will be managing your servers, and find out how passionate they are about what they do. After all, service levels are down to them.
2	Hosting Focus	Delivering the security and reliability needed in today's 24*7 global economy takes expertise and focus. Make sure that you choose a specialist whose core business is delivering managed hosting solutions. By choosing a specialist you will get access to the technical expertise and support teams that truly understand your needs.
3	Data Security	The security and integrity of your data should be the #1 priority for your provider. Delivering a secure solution isn't just about technology, it's also about the people and processes. Any hosting company will have firewalls and physical security controls. Truly serious providers however also focus on the people and processes needed to ensure your solution stays secure. Industry standard certifications like ISO27001 are a independent sign that the provider takes security seriously.
4	24*7 Support	You should always be able to speak to the people delivering your service when you need them. 24*7 support is essential to ensure that your needs are met. Support should also be backed up by an Account Manager who understands your business and can help suggest solutions to help you.
5	Flexibility	Your provider should be flexible to provide you with a contract that fits with your business needs – not theirs. You should want to stay with a provider because of the quality of service, not the terms of a contract.
6	Scalability & Reliability	The solution you need today may not meet your needs as your business grows. Make sure that you choose a partner that has the knowledge who can help you architect a solution that will grow with you and has the capacity to increase the capacity of your solution when you need it.
7	Financial Stability	How long has the hosting provider been in business? How many customers do they already have? How many people to they employ and are they profitable? Make sure you discover the financial stability of the provider and that they will still be around in 12 months time.
8	Network Resiliency	There should be no single point of failure within the data-centre and network infrastructure used to deliver your service. Your provider should use more than one network provider and have redundant network infrastructure to insure against downtime. No network means your server is not available to your customers.
9	24*7 Monitoring	Your provider should know at all times what is happening with your solution and be able to take preventative action if they see something starting to go wrong, whether it is with the hardware or software, regardless of the time.



10 Customer References

You shouldn't just have to take the providers word for things. Upon request you should be able to speak with existing customers to hear what they feel about the service. Case studies should also be available for you to read what other companies think of the provider.