

How to Compare IT Support Quotes

Why Comparing IT Support Quotes Is Difficult

- Before selecting IT support services, a number of businesses will seek quotations from several IT companies.
- At first glance, it may appear that most IT provider proposals have similar features.
- However, upon further inspection, when looking at how much technical support is included, there is quite a difference between the various proposals.
- Some providers may quote you a lower price for service and include fewer services.
- On the other hand, some providers may provide extensive IT solutions and charge a higher fee for their service
- Due to the complexity of Information Technology services, businesses will rarely receive identical quotations from multiple service providers.
- Due to this inconsistency in quotation format and difficulty in determining which option is most appropriate for a non-technical business owner, it can be difficult for a non-technical owner to determine which of several service providers is most suitable.
- The guide provides information to businesses in the UK on how to understand and properly compare IT support quotations before selecting an appropriate IT support service.

What an IT Support Quote Usually Includes

Typically, an IT Support Quote provides a blend of services that help you maintain and support the technology environment of your business.

Managed IT Services

Managed services provide on-going technical management of a client's business technology systems. Rather than waiting until an issue arises, the managed service provider continually monitors and maintains the business technology.

Help Desk Support

Help desk support provides assistance to employees who experience technical problems daily.

Typical types of help desk support include the following:

- Login Problems
- Software Problems
- Printer Problems
- Connectivity Problems

Most help desk support is provided using remote access.

Remote Support & On-Site Support

IT support is usually provided remotely, using a secure login connection to the client's network. However, there are some situations when it is required for an engineer to come to your business.

Typically, an IT support quote will include a predetermined number of on-site visits or will charge for any on-site visits separately.

Monitor & Maintain

Proactive monitoring tools allow the managed service provider to monitor system performance and address potential problems before they disrupt production.

Proactive monitoring typically covers the following:

- Servers
- Network Equipment
- Workstations
- Security Alerts

Services to Protect Your Systems from Cyber Crime

Cyber crime services will help guard your systems against threats from ransomware, phishing and other similar attacks.

Most of the service providers will offer services that follow some standard (for example, Cyber Essentials).

Backup Integrity

Backup services help ensure that your business data is backed up with a high level of data integrity and can be restored when systems fail.

This is a vital part of your disaster recovery planning process.

Microsoft 365 Support

Microsoft 365 is the email, file storage and collaboration platform that many businesses now utilise to conduct their day-to-day operations successfully.

Most IT service providers also support your 365 service by managing your configuration, licensing and troubleshooting.

Lifecycle Management and Licensing

Some IT service providers will assist their customers with hardware lifecycle planning and software licensing.

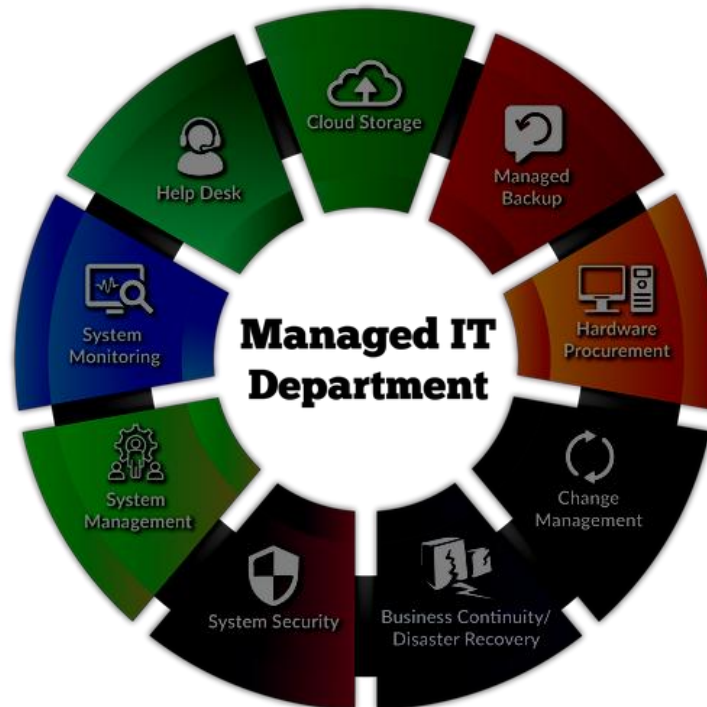
This is critical in ensuring your systems remain up-to date throughout their lifecycle.

Strategic Guidance

High-quality IT providers can provide strategic guidance to help you with your planning for future technology investments.

Examples of the types of strategic guidance:

- Infrastructure Planning
- Cyber Security Improvements
- Cloud Migration Strategies



The Different IT Support Pricing Models

Different approaches exist for how IT service providers determine their pricing structure.

To allow businesses to accurately compare different options, it is necessary to understand this different pricing structures.

Per User Pricing

Per User Pricing is based on a flat monthly fee for each user that exists in an organisation.

Advantages

- predictable cost structure
- easy to increase or reduce cost as staffing levels fluctuate

Disadvantages

- businesses that have many devices that all employees share may wind up paying more.

Per Device Pricing

The price is determined by the number of tech devices being supported.

Typically, those devices include:

- Laptop
- Desktop
- Server
- Network equipment

Advantages

- suitable for a company that has a small number of employees using fewer devices

Disadvantages

- more expensive as additional devices are being supported.

Managed Services with Fixed Monthly Billing

For businesses using managed services, they will usually pay a fixed monthly cost that covers the majority of support services.

Pros:

- Predictable budget
- Proactive support

Cons:

- May require a contract

Break-Fix Services

With break-fix services, businesses only pay when something is broken or not functioning.

Pros:

- No long-term agreement
- Only pay for what you use

Cons:

- Unpredictable costs
- No proactive service.

Hybrid Service Models

Some managed service providers offer hybrid models that include both a managed service and a project-based service.

Hidden Costs and Common Surprises

There may be additional costs included in your IT support quote that are not easy to see.

Some examples would be:

- on-site support fees,

- out-of-hours support fees,
- project work billed separately,
- software licensing fees,
- onboarding fees,

Understanding these will allow you to compare IT supports quotes more accurately.

Questions to Ask Before Choosing a Provider

There are some very important questions that businesses need to ask providers.

Here are some examples of these questions:

- what services are covered in the monthly fee?
- how quickly do you respond to support requests?
- what cyber security services are provided?
- how are backups monitored and tested?
- what will happen if I want to switch providers later?

IT Support Quote Comparison Checklist

- ✓ Services included with the monthly payment
- ✓ SLA's and Response Time
- ✓ Cybersecurity protection included in the services
- ✓ Backup and Disaster Recovery Solutions
- ✓ Monitoring and Maintenance Services
- ✓ Onboarding/Transition costs
- ✓ Length of Contract and Exiting Terms

Mistakes Businesses Make When Choosing IT Support

Here are some common errors made by companies when looking at IT Support options.

- Companies that choose the lowest bid without researching what they are getting.
- Cybersecurity is lacking in bids
- Contract terms were never reviewed.
- Companies did not check for hidden fees and costs.

By taking the time to analyse your proposal or bids, you can make sure that you won't run into all of these errors.

FAQs

1. What are the Average Prices of IT Support in the UK?

The average price for IT support in the UK varies significantly depending on your size and type of business. Managed IT support can cost anywhere from roughly £30 to £100+ per user per month.

2. What will my business receive with IT Management Support?

Your business will typically receive a number of services, including help desk support, network monitoring, security operations, backup monitoring and servers, and system maintenance.

3. Why are there so many variations in IT Support Quotes?

The primary reason there are so many price fluctuations for IT support quotes is that different providers offer different services, along with different security tools and different levels of services.

4. Is choosing the Cheapest IT Support Provider Right for Your Small Business?

Not necessarily. If you go with the cheapest option, you may miss out on receiving many of the services that are crucial to your success.

5. What Should Businesses Look Out for in IT Support Contracts?

When evaluating IT support contracts for your business, you should always consider length of contract, notice periods for contract termination, and if there are additional charges that apply.

About This Guide

Computer Support Centre has created this guide so that UK small and medium companies can get a better understanding of how to compare quotations for IT services.

When companies put forward proposals to different IT suppliers there may be large differences in price, level of service and amount of support, making it difficult for businesses to determine which IT services provider delivers the best value for them.

This guide presents general information about what is included in an IT service quotation, the pricing models that are common in IT services as well as the main things that businesses need to think about when selecting a supplier. It is written using concise, practical language and is aimed at all businesses, both large and small, that want to make an informed decision about their IT services provider.

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Conclusion

It can be difficult to compare quotes for IT support because each proposal may contain different pricing structures, services, and levels of support. Two similar-looking quotes could, in fact, present different types and amounts of protection, monitoring, and assistance.

By thoroughly reviewing what is included in the quotation, understanding how different pricing models function, and asking the necessary questions, businesses will be able to make a fair comparison between providers. By doing so, businesses will be able to find an IT partner who can provide reliable support to their business and help them with their technology needs while also providing protective measures against cyber threats and proactive technology management.

Most Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are not focused on finding the lowest-priced option but rather selecting a provider that will provide the necessary level of support for the technology they use, protect their critical systems and allow them to grow with assurance that their technology will continue to support their success.