


# Building a Hybrid IT Department:

How to Leverage a Managed  
IT Services Provider







**Picture this:** your IT staff is handing in the critical business reports you've been requesting for months, and the service ticket queue is empty. Your employees are happy and productive, and you're no longer worried about whether your strained IT resources are slowing other departments down.

It might seem impossible now, but this scenario has been realized by thousands of companies—thanks to hybrid IT arrangements with managed services providers (MSPs).

MSPs haven't always been considered a natural complement to in-house IT departments, but things are changing.

**Increasingly, IT leaders are electing to work with MSPs in cooperative arrangements that harness the best of both worlds.**

A hybrid IT environment combines the strengths of a company's internal IT staff with the efficiencies and specialized expertise that an MSP provides, positioning the business to meet its IT challenges without breaking stride.

There are numerous ways that an MSP can support internal IT staff, but not all MSPs are equal and not every company is a natural fit for the hybrid model. In this guide, we'll discuss which businesses should consider hybrid IT departments and how they can leverage that partnership to their greatest advantage.

# Who Benefits Most from Hybrid IT

The ideal candidate for a hybrid IT partnership is a small or medium-sized company of roughly 50-300 people. Often, smaller companies can successfully outsource all of their IT.

**Medium-sized businesses have the most to gain from managed IT services** for several reasons. One of the most common is that turnover among IT staff can hit them particularly hard because of limited resources for recruiting and training.

Retention is a challenge in mid-sized companies because the IT staff is often stretched thin, endlessly fighting IT fires and troubleshooting end user issues. This leaves them feeling burned out and unable to focus on their more fulfilling projects and responsibilities, such as helping the company improve operational efficiency and explore new technologies.

As IT employees reach their limits and move on, **mid-sized companies often end up in an endless cycle of replacing and training new IT staff**, a pattern that sucks up resources, time, and energy.

The demand for capable technology professionals is already high and rising rapidly, making it no small challenge for mid-sized companies to find and hire IT talent to fill the gaps. Most established MSPs have a deep bench of IT consultants and full-time recruiters to fill sudden vacancies in their ranks.

At [iCorps Technologies](#), we take this a step further with a “shadow rotation model” consisting of a team of consultants who understand your IT environment and needs, ensuring business continuity in spite of staff changes.

**A dependable MSP should be able to guarantee that your services won't be affected by staff turnover**, making a hybrid IT scenario ideal for clients who struggle with hiring and training reliable, skilled employees.

Size isn't the only quality that makes a business a good fit; companies often come to MSPs for help with specific needs or challenges as well. Perhaps your customer service needs are growing and a remote helpdesk would be the best solution, or

maybe you need assistance with basic tasks so you can devote your internal IT resources to compliance and risk management.

Other companies operate in particularly dynamic industries or rely on complex applications involving industry-specific knowledge. In those cases, hybrid IT solutions allow you to preserve in-house resources

for those areas, while an MSP handles necessary day-to-day IT tasks like end-user issues, firewall patching, antivirus updates, monitoring network security, and more.

# What Makes a Great Hybrid IT Partnership

The first and foremost element in a positive, productive hybrid IT arrangement is that the MSP you choose sees it as a true partnership. Be careful of any MSP with an agenda that is not in the best interest of your staff or your company's needs.

At iCorps, more than half of our clients have internal IT departments, so we experience the benefits of working with in-house IT staff every day. The experience, ideas, and operational knowledge that those fellow IT professionals offer are essential parts of how we help our clients achieve their goals.

The second key to a great hybrid IT partnership is the division of responsibilities. **The role of the MSP is to add value wherever needed, and that usually means freeing up the in-house IT team to focus on the important rather than the urgent.**



A senior network administrator or IT manager shouldn't be spending large portions of his or her schedule on time-consuming but relatively low-priority daily tasks. Chasing down driver info, patching servers, and monitoring error logs are not the best use of your IT staff's time when business-critical projects are hanging in the balance.

The day-to-day tasks don't evaporate, though, nor can they be put on hold. When

you use an MSP to handle basic IT needs, **you allow your team or IT manager to focus on responsibilities and projects that position your business for long-term, scalable growth.**

By taking the urgent off of your plate, your MSP frees up a very powerful resource to improve company profitability: you.

# How Managed IT Services Can Help

## *A Reliable and Responsive Help Desk*



At iCorps, we often hear from internal IT staff at mid-sized businesses that they struggle to respond efficiently to the frequent end user issues they face. This isn't usually the IT administrator's fault; most of the time, it's due to the skewed ratio of end users to IT assistance.

In contrast, a good MSP can provide **a fully staffed, 24/7 help desk support (or network operations center)** that acts as the first line of defense for end user issues. Working with an MSP can help you provide the required level of service to employees without the cost and hassle of planning, implementing, and staffing an internal help desk.

## *Peace of Mind Services*



With a hybrid IT environment, your company can protect itself from catastrophe with outsourced services like [disaster recovery plans](#), antivirus measures, and network monitoring. Choosing an MSP to oversee the most time-consuming tasks prevents further strain on internal IT, resulting in a department that runs more smoothly. Best of all, you and your team can rest secure in the knowledge that you'll be protected when you need it most.

## *A Predictable IT Budget*



One of the most popular benefits of working with an MSP is that your IT budget becomes much more predictable. By

allocating a monthly spend toward an MSP for preventative and maintenance tasks like monitoring network and server performance, updating firewalls, and backing up data, you place yourself in the driver's seat of your IT environment. Put simply, an MSP helps your IT department switch from a reactive to a proactive role, saving you from unexpected capital expenses and downtime.

## *Better Employee Retention*



In a high-demand field like IT, people can easily change jobs if they're bored, burned out, or frustrated. By outsourcing basic IT tasks to an MSP, your internal IT staff is free to focus on the more challenging and fulfilling aspects of their jobs, like strategy, data analysis, reporting, and process improvement.

Working with an MSP not only frees up their schedules so they can put their ideas to work, but also gives them opportunities to learn from experienced consultants. When you embrace your employees' natural interests and allow them to grow in their skills and learn new technologies, you create greater space for innovation and make your company the kind of place they'll want to stay.

## *Access to Broader Expertise*



MSPs are often accustomed to serving a vast number of clients in an array of industries, each of which has unique challenges, technology environments, and compliance requirements.

At iCorps, we have on-staff experts with a wide range of specialized skill sets and extensive hands-on experience—because we have to. Working with extremely high-performing



clients in a range of industries requires that we be on top of every industry best practice, security threat, and emerging technology.

No in-house IT department should be held to these standards; instead, you are experts in your company, industry, business model, and internal processes. By delegating certain tasks to an MSP, you can focus on the important projects that directly serve your company's long-term goals.

## *A Competent Cloud Partner*



The growth of cloud computing within the SMB space has also brought about the opportunity for MSPs with cloud expertise to offer their guidance in this area.

Recent reports predict that small and mid-size businesses will [continue to adopt cloud services](#) like Microsoft's Office 365 and Azure cloud platform at a high rate in 2016 and beyond. When implementing these technologies, effective planning and cloud knowledge is critical to avoid wasting time, money, and resources.

As cloud models evolve, an MSP that has experience in moving businesses to the cloud can work side-by-side your internal IT staff to ensure that a cloud migration is successful and that the business is gaining its full benefits from the cloud.

Over the last few years, we've observed a strong trend toward hybridized IT departments.

It makes sense—after all, most companies use numerous business services today that used to be managed internally, from payroll to waste removal.

When someone can perform an essential function more efficiently at a lower cost, the market will naturally shift in that direction; if you want to leverage this change in your favor, **choose a managed IT services provider who will be a true partner rather than a replacement.**

# About iCorps Technologies, Inc.

A pioneer in comprehensive IT outsourcing since 1994, iCorps Technologies provides IT services for small, medium, and large businesses nationwide with offices in Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Our comprehensive services and certified expertise in every aspect of technology immediately broaden your IT capabilities and resources to handle all of your technology needs and put technology to work for you. After all, technology that fits your business drives your business to be more profitable, productive, and competitive.

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