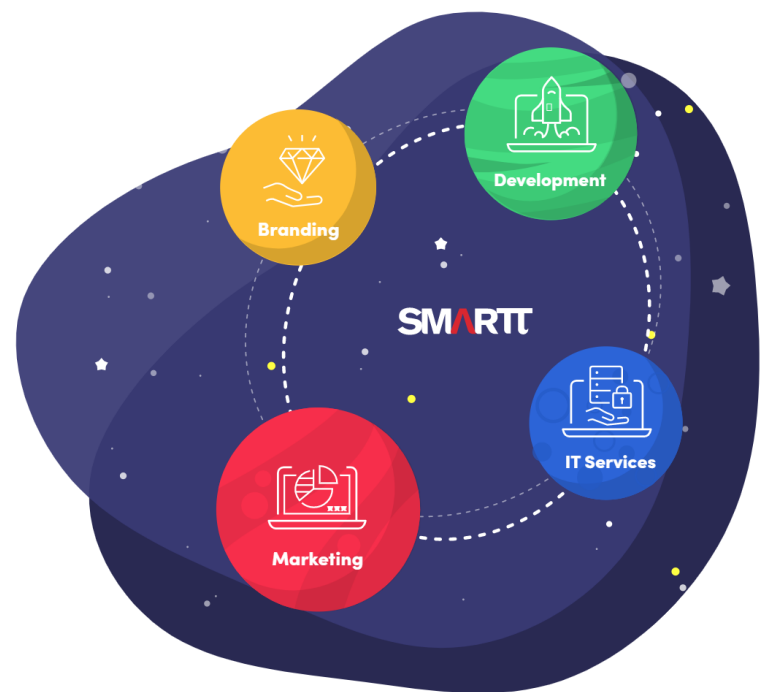Beyond the Break-Fix Model

Post-Pandemic Criteria for Finding the Right Managed Service Provider

Smartt

Overview

The Pandemic has accelerated digital transformation globally over the past few years, with many small businesses adopting digital technologies such as e-commerce, remote working, mobile, analytics, and the cloud. The catch-phrase "all companies are now tech companies" has come true, and many businesses are seeing themselves in complex IT environments with siloed vendors, systems, processes and data that are costly to manage and support in-house. As a result, many small businesses are exploring the benefits of Managed Service as a solution.

Partnering with the right Managed Service Provider can help businesses tap into expertise that are not available in-house as well as hand off tasks that can be more efficiently provided by an external vendor. To maximize the benefits of managed services, it's crucial to select the right provider. At Smartt, we believe that traditional evaluation criteria such as "what's your response time" and "do you take cybersecurity seriously" are more baseline items that should be a minimum requirement for

any modern Managed Service Provider. Instead, your evaluation criteria should be based an MSP's ability to help you generate and maximize your business value from your IT Budget, or as we like saying to help you *break barriers and orbit higher*.

1. Systems, Processes, and Expertise to Help You Move Away from Break-Fix

The right Managed Service Provider should help you move away from the break-fix model for several reasons:

Cost savings: The break-fix model is reactive and only addresses problems after they occur, which can be expensive and time-consuming. MSPs provide proactive maintenance and monitoring services, reducing the number of incidents that need to be addressed and lowering the overall cost of your IT support.

Increased efficiency: Technology and tools should be utilized to automate and streamline processes, making the delivery of IT services more simple, efficient, and scalable. This frees up time for IT staff to focus on more important tasks and projects.

Improved security: Security solutions should be proactive, with regularly software and system updates to protect against the latest threats. This helps prevent security breaches and data loss, which can be costly and damaging to a business's reputation.

Better predictability: With the break-fix model, clients can never predict when their systems will fail or how much it will cost to repair them. A proactive MSP can provide predictable pricing, maintenance schedules, and service level agreements, giving clients greater control over their IT budgets.

The Smartt Difference: Smartt uses the ITIL framework to help you improve your IT maturity, so that resources can be reallocated from break-fix activities to value generation activities that improve your top and bottom lines.

2.   Cross-Functional Expertise

In today's technology-driven business environment, IT systems and processes are integrated across multiple areas of an organization, such as operations, finance, marketing, and human resources.

Therefore, to provide effective managed services, your ideal MSP should have expertise in a variety of functions, such as infrastructure management, security, data management, marketing, and web application development. This cross-functional expertise will allow your MSP to have a better understanding of the interdependencies between your various systems and processes, which enables them to provide more integrated and effective support for your organization.

Additionally, having cross-functional expertise allows your MSPs partner to help you identify areas where you can improve their IT systems and processes in order to achieve your business goals. For example, an MSP with expertise in both security and data management could help a client improve the security of your data while also making it more accessible and usable, from marketing to finance.

The Smartt Difference: Smartt combines expertise across branding, development, marketing, and IT services to help organizations break barriers and orbit higher. Our team members are cross trained in various disciplines and our unique FlexHours approach means you can utilize our different skillsets.

3.   Agile Workflows

Your MSP should utilize agile workflow to continuously improve their overall service delivery and better meet your needs in a rapidly evolving world. With agile workflows, your MSP can prioritize and manage your IT backlog more effectively, reducing the risk of delays, miscommunications, and missed deadlines.

Furthermore, agile methodologies encourage a culture of continuous improvement, allowing your MSP to continually refine and optimize their processes and workflows to achieve greater efficiency, quality, and end-user satisfaction to serve you better.

The Smartt Difference: With a strong background in development and DevOps, Smartt uses agile methodologies internally and with clients. Your backlogs with us will always be prioritized based on business value, with frequent check-ins and alignment points.

4. Radical Transparency

Your MSP should practice radical transparency with their processes, policies, documentation, activities, and results so that mutually, you have:

Trust: By being transparent about their processes, policies, and systems, MSPs can build trust with their clients. This is particularly important when it comes to sensitive data and information that is stored and processed by the MSP.

Accountability: With radical transparency, you MSP can show you what they are doing, and why they are doing it. This helps you hold them accountable for their performance, and it make it easier for you to assess the value of their services.

Improved Collaboration: Radical transparency fosters open and honest communication between your MSP and your team. This helps to break silos, create alignment, and avoid misunderstandings so that everyone can move the needle together.

Better Decision Making: When MSPs are transparent about their operations and performance metrics, they enable clients to make informed decisions about the services they need and the outcomes they expect. This helps to ensure that the services provided are aligned with your goals and needs.

Continuous Improvement: Transparency enables MSPs to identify areas where they can improve their processes and systems, and yours.

The Smartt Difference: Smartt practices radical transparency internally and with clients. Our team are professionally blunt, our documentations are shared with clients, and backlog items are available in our web portal.

5.   Digital Native Mindset

Your MSP should have a digital native mindset because the world of technology and business is rapidly changing, and being knowledgeable and experienced in the latest developments and trends allow your MSP to use these technologies and insights to help you optimize and transform your businesses. By having a forward-thinking, digital-first approach, MSPs can help you stay ahead of the curve and take advantage of the latest advances in technology to drive your businesses forward. They should always be following the most current best practices while looking around the corner for next-practices to recommend to you when the time is right. This proactive digital native mindset will help you stay ahead of your competition in a rapidly changing market.

The Smartt Difference: Smartt's expertise in digital marketing and application development means bringing an unique digital native mindset to every client we touch. We are not just IT break-fix guys, but technologists who can bring trends and insights from other industries and help you use technology to stay ahead of your competitors. Furthermore, our FlexHours approach means the services you receive will adapt to your changing needs.

6.   Results and Metrics Driven

Your Managed Service Providers should be results and metrics driven instead of taking a "clock in, clock out" approach. The use of metrics will allows them to track their progress, identify areas for improvement and ensure they are delivering on their promises. This is especially important in the fast-paced and constantly evolving technology landscape, where every penny matters and you want to see a healthy return on each technology investment before it becomes obsolete. Furthermore, by being proactive in identifying and addressing issues before they become bigger problems, which can result in improved operational efficiency and cost savings for their clients.

The Smartt Difference: Smartt team members are geeks when it comes to metrics and measurements. It's written in our DNA – our own cloud hosting service has a 100% uptime guarantee, and this drive to measure and improve proactively has led to our optional 360 Measurement Approach for clients – where we measure only IT metrics, but relevant web metrics for clients.

7.   A Human Touch

Technology is only one aspect of your MSP's offerings – your end-users will require personalized attention and support, and it is important that your MSP can communicate and collaborate effectively.

Your MSP should be empathetic and understanding of your end users needs and concerns. This requires active listening, clear and transparent communication, and the ability to build trust and strong relationships.

And at a business level, your MSP should have the soft consulting skills to understand the context and implications of your technical issues so that they can educate and guide your stakeholders through digital transformation initiatives and other more complex technology-related projects.

The Smartt Difference: Smartt team members are selected and trained to not just be "tech guys", but to live our Principles of "Build Great Relationships" and service as service consultants. Ongoing WOW training sessions every month to improve technical, support, and consulting skills.

Let Smartt Help Your Company Break Barriers and Orbit Higher

Fining the right Managed Services Provider will allow you to focus on your core business and utilize technology to take your business to new heights. Smartt works with like-minded companies to do great things:

For the **ambitious**, we help them realize their vision and create results.

For the **frustrated**, we help them overcome obstacles and optimize and optimize their results.

For the **misfits**, we help them assures things are working smoothly the background so they can focus their energy on their true passions.

If you feel we might be a good fit for each other, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. Your success is worth a conversation!