BlueTeam NETWORKS
CYBERSECURITY & MANAGED IT



10 QUESTIONS TO ASK A POTENTIAL CO-MANAGED IT FIRM





When you go to hire a new employee, do you show up without questions prepared? **Probably not.** The same goes for interviewing a potential Co-Managed IT Firm. The more you treat it like a defined recruitment process, **the better off you'll be!**

I've been in **200+ sales meetings** with IT and other organization leaders. In this short E-book, I have compiled some of the best questions that I have been asked over the years. The criteria is not, **"these are the questions that I like to be asked."** In fact, some of these questions really put me on the spot, which is exactly what you want!

The person you are speaking to has refined their pitch and knows how to get to the **root of your problem**, especially as you move to more mature IT firms. You need to come equipped with questions that will **uncover any red flags before it's too late.**

LET'S GET STARTED

614-721-2921 sales@blueteamnetworks.com www.blueteamnetworks.com

01

DO YOU PROVIDE A PER COMPUTER OR USER DISCOUNT

SINCE I HAVE IN-HOUSE IT SUPPORT?

The fact is, having an internal IT person is going to **lighten the load** of the Managed Service Provider. The organization either already has rates that compensate for the fact that your organization has internal IT, or they are willing to provide a **credit** on the per user or per computer fee.

I don't think it should be a deal breaker if they do not come down on the per user price. In fact, **that's probably a good sign!** Either way, this is a question that needs to be asked.



WHY SHOULD WE PARTNER WITH YOUR IT FIRM?

This is the **“alley-oop.”** The rep has been waiting for this question: they have their Unique Selling Proposition ready, their metrics ready, customer satisfaction ready; **you name it, they’ve got it!**

The reality of this question? It’s the primer for the next question which is **much more meaningful.**



WHY SHOULDN'T WE PARTNER WITH YOU AS OUR IT FIRM?

I have only been asked this question **ONE** time in all the meetings that I've been in. **I loved it.** It made me really think. It's the epitome of, **"What is your greatest weakness?"**

I started writing this E-book specifically because of this question, so please, ask it! If they say, **"We are perfect",** then they are either lying or not human. Let's start the partnership off with **transparency**.

By the way, the individual that asked me that question did end up hiring us **despite our very honest answer.** If you want to know my answer to this question, feel free to set up a sales meeting and ask!



04

WHAT IS YOUR PROCESS FOR KEEPING UP WITH THE RAPIDLY CHANGING IT ENVIRONMENT?

I recently deleted or updated all blogs on our website that were over 2 years old. **The reason?** They were almost all obsolete. That is how quickly IT is changing in this new world. It takes a team of people constantly evaluating and updating best practices to **stay up to date!**

This reason alone is why I do not recommend working with a **smaller** IT Provider. If the organization is sub 5 employees, there is no way they are putting the **needed hours** in to staying up to date. Ask this question and write down the answer: see how it compares depending on the maturity of the organization!



HOW MANY CLIENTS DO YOU CURRENTLY SUPPORT THAT HAVE INTERNAL

IT SUPPORT?

This is very important. It took us some time to develop the right process in a Co-Managed IT environment. I hate to say our first Co-Managed client was the Guinea pig.... **but our first Co-Managed client was the Guinea pig.** Fortunately, we must have done a good job because we have since added many Co-Managed customers!

So, consider asking this question, but it does not have to be a deal breaker. If you are the first, that may be fine with you: just **set your expectations accordingly.**



WHAT ROLE DO YOU TYPICALLY TAKE ON AS THE OUTSOURCED IT HELP?

In our infographic on successfully transitioning to Co-Managed IT, we discuss the importance of **defining roles.** It's important to identify what aspects of the computer network the MSP will be managing. Is it the Help Desk? Servers? Backup? **Everything?**

Clearly define these roles with the provider and it will start the partnerships off **on the right track.**



ARE YOU WILLING TO PROVIDE 5 CLIENT REFERENCES THAT WE CAN REACH OUT TO?

This one does not need much of an explanation: **if the provider cannot provide 5 references, it's on to the next one.**



DO YOU HAVE A CUSTOMER PORTAL? WHAT DOES IT INCLUDE?

This is another good way to gauge the **maturity of the MSP.** Do they have a defined portal for their customers? Does this vary for Co-Managed IT customers?

If they say yes, then ask them how you would go about logging in. **If they say no**, this is a red flag and shows that they do not have their processes as defined as they should be.



IN YOUR EYES, WHAT IS AN IDEAL PARTNERSHIP WITH AN IN-HOUSE IT TEAM?

I don't have much guidance on this one, I just really like the question. **Are they sincere with their answer? Does it match well with the kind of relationship you are looking for?**



WHAT MAKES A PARTNERSHIP/ CLIENT RELATIONSHIP LESS THAN IDEAL?

An honest answer is great here. The outsourced team should be an extension of the internal IT department. You need to ask yourself whether you are ready to change your processes to accommodate the MSP or if you are going to require them to **change their processes for you.**

This question will help bring some of that to light. It's also a good opportunity to follow up with the bigger discussion of **process changes** that will need to be made from both parties!





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These questions will set you up for success with your **upcoming conversations with potential IT firms.** Make sure to write their answers down and compare answers from all providers.

Most likely, you will work with the chosen provider for many years, so it's important to do your **due diligence prior to signing up.**

I hope this is a helpful guide for you! If you have any questions or would like to consider us as one of the potential IT firms, **please contact us at:**

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