Definitive Guide On How To Select An I.T. Company For Your Business

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Dear Reader and Prospective Client…

The intent of this guide is NOT to tell you to pick Evolve Technology Group., as your IT support and solutions company…

The intent of this guide IS to provide guidance and information on cues to look for when exploring IT solutions and support companies AND to introduce you to what we have to offer in comparison to our competitors – at the end of the day, the choice is yours to make.

Top 12 Questions to Ask Yourself When Exploring IT Companies or Comparing Your Current IT Company with Other IT Companies

1. Do they answer their phone LIVE and respond to emergencies promptly (within 60 minutes)?

2. Are they easy to reach and highly responsive (responding same day) when you need them for non-emergencies?

3. Do they proactively monitor, patch and update your computer network's critical security settings daily? Weekly? At all? <u>How do you know for sure</u>?

4. Do they <u>offer proof</u> that they are backing up ALL your data, laptops and devices?

5. Do they meet with you regularly (at least once a quarter) to report what they've been doing, review projects and offer new ways to improve your network's performance instead of waiting until you have a problem to make recommendations?

6. Do they provide detailed invoices that clearly explain what you are paying for?

7. Do they explain what they are doing and answer your questions in terms that you can understand, NOT in "geek speak"?

8. Have they proactively discussed cybersecurity with you, and made recommendations for better protecting your network from ransomware?

9. Have they provided you complete network documentation, or do they hold the "keys to the kingdom" refusing to give you admin passwords?

10. Do they offer any guarantees on their services?

11. Do they arrive on time and dress professionally?

12. Do you look forward to seeing them, working with them, or do you cringe every time you have to make that call?

The 4 Most Costly Misconceptions About Computer Maintenance and Repair

Misconception #1: My computer network doesn't need regular monitoring and maintenance.

This is probably one of the biggest and most costly misconceptions that business owners have. Usually this is because they've been fortunate enough to have never encountered a major disaster; but that's like someone thinking they don't need to wear a seat belt when driving a car because they've never had an accident. Computer networks are complex and dynamic systems that need regular updates and maintenance to stay up, running fast and problem-free. In fact, it's surprising how fast a brand-new PC will slow down after a few weeks of use without proper updates and maintenance. Here are just a FEW of the critical updates that need to be done on a weekly – if not daily – basis:

- Security patches applied – with NEW viruses and hacker attacks cropping up DAILY, this is a CRITICAL part of maintaining your network
- Antivirus updates and monitoring
- Firewall updates and monitoring
- Backup monitoring and test restores
- Spam-filter installation and updates
- Spyware detection and removal
- Monitoring disk space on workstations and servers
- Monitoring hardware for signs of failure
- Optimizing systems for maximum speed

Your computer network is just like a car: if you don't change the oil, replace the filter, rotate the tires, flush the transmission and perform other regular maintenance on your car, it will eventually break down and cost you FAR MORE to repair than the cost of the basic maintenance – and a car is far simpler than a computer network!

If your computer support tech does not insist on some type of regular, automated monitoring or maintenance of your network, then DO NOT HIRE THEM. Lack of system maintenance is the NUMBER ONE reason most people end up losing valuable files and incurring heavy computer repair bills. If your technician isn't offering you these services, you need to find someone else to support your computer or network for two reasons:

1. Either they don't know enough to make this recommendation, which is a sure sign they are horribly inexperienced, OR

2. They recognize that they are profiting from your computer problems and don't want to recommend steps toward preventing you from needing their help on an ongoing basis. After all, they'll get paid MORE to remove a virus than to make sure your system is patched, updated and secured (which can be done quickly and inexpensively with good monitoring). Either reason is a good one to get as far away from that person as possible!

Misconception #2: My nephew/neighbor's kid/brother-in-law/office manager knows this computer stuff and can take care of our computers.

Most people look for a part-time "guru" for one reason: to save a few bucks. But this often comes back to haunt them. We frequently get calls from business owners who desperately need our help to get them back up and running or to clean up a mess that was caused by an inexperienced neighbor, friend or relative who was just trying to help. If the person you have working on your machine does not do computer repair and support for a living, there is a good chance they won't have the knowledge or experience to truly help you – they are a hobbyist at best. And do you really want a part-time, inexperienced person responsible for handling something as important as your data and computer network? As with everything in life, you get what you pay for. That's not to say you need to go broke to find a great technician, but you shouldn't be choosing someone based on price alone.

Misconception #3: All computer technicians are created equal. Your best option will be the one who offers the lowest price.

As we stated a moment ago, you get what you pay for. A cheap price usually means a cheap job. Really good technicians do NOT work cheap because they are in high demand just like every other professional service category. The only technicians that will work cheap are those who are just starting, and they are grossly inexperienced. And some shops will hire college kids or newbie technicians because they will work for next to nothing to gain experience, OR they allow interns to support your network because they don't have to pay them at all – but what you don't realize is that an inexperienced technician like this can end up costing more because:

1. They improperly diagnose problems, which means you're paying them to fix the WRONG thing and they STILL won't resolve your problem.
2. They could take 3 to 5 times as long to do the same repair an experienced technician could fix quickly. Again, you're paying for those extra hours.
3. They could do MORE damage, costing you more money and downtime.

With your client data, accounting records, e-mail and other critical data at stake, do you REALLY want the lowest-priced shop working on your machine?

We take the view that most people want value for their money and simply want the job done right. You will find that we are not the cheapest, but we don't apologize for that. As the owner, I decided a long time ago that I would rather explain our higher rates ONE TIME than make excuses for POOR SERVICE forever. That said, we're not the most expensive either. We simply feel that we should offer a good service at a fair price.

Misconception #4: An honest computer support company should be able to give you a quote over the phone.

I wish this were true, but it isn't. Just like a good doctor, an honest and professional technician will need to diagnose your network before they can quote any price over the phone. Think of it like this, you go to the doctor to get a diagnosis, you don't ask him for that over the phone. Imagine if he told you that you needed quadruple bypass heart surgery without looking at you to see what the issues are.

Also, some consultants will quote you a cheap rate over the phone to get in the door, but then jack up the prices once they get in your office by taking 3 times as long, selling you add-ons and up-sells, etc. And finally, reputable firms don't charge by the hour anyway – they give you a fixed-fee, flat rate.

Here's why…

One of the easiest ways to take advantage of a customer is to get them to agree to a time and materials repair. Unless you know what's wrong and how long it should take, they can soak you on the fees. And what are you going to do when they get 5-6 hours into a repair or project and then spring on you the news that it will take even longer than they anticipated to fix, costing you MORE money? Always, always, always make sure you get a flat-rate, fixed-fee quote in advance so you don't end up getting burned – and NEVER take a phone quote!

A Little About Evolve Technology Group

- We have been in business since 2015.
- We provide flat rate monthly IT services through one of our IT service packages or a customized IT package we build special to your needs.
- We provide a 60-minute response time.
- We quote projects on a flat rate basis, not by the hour.
- We have extensive partnerships with Dell, Lenovo, HP, APC, Kaseya, Fortinet, SonicWall, Microsoft, Spectrum, Optimum, AT&T, Metronet, Vexus, Ring Central, Cytracom, Cisco, Grandstream, and many other technology vendors.
- We provide true 24x7x365 coverage with our Texas-based Security Operations Center.
- We provide advanced ransomware protection as an automatic inclusion in all our service offerings. Other IT companies charge extra for this.

ETG vs. The Others

	Evolve	The Others
60 Minute Response Time	Absolutely	Eh…maybe…not likely
Transparent Weekly Reporting	Weekly Health Report Monthly Executive Summary	Not really
Flat Rate Monthly Bill	Yes. No Surprise Bills.	Flat Rate Retainer but watch out for those service call fees
Married to 1 or 2 Vendors	No. We have a diverse network of partners to offer the right solutions to our customers.	Typically married to a few vendors so pricing becomes a factor.
Texas-based Security Operations Center	Yes. Austin to be specific.	Outsource or use an overseas 3rd party company

We have a FREE OFFER…

You've read a lot about Evolve Technology Group, but you've also read a lot about what to look for in an IT support company and reviewed some common misconceptions.

WE OFFER A $500.00 (they want us to say $495, but let's be honest) NETWORK ASSESSMENT FOR FREE.

There Is A Lot Of Value In What We Offer

Like any other IT company, we have a wide array of solutions that we can offer. It is our hope that this guide has pointed you in the right direction. You don't have to choose ETG, but we ask you to challenge yourself with this: if your network were to go out tomorrow, is your IT support company going to react in time to resolve that outage before it creates a fire that becomes difficult to put out? ***Better yet…where were they to prevent it in the first place. Why did their "smoke" alarms not go off? Why were they not proactive?*** Let's turn this around and point to the business itself…**why did you not have an IT company in place to prevent this fire? Why didn't you take the appropriate steps to secure and maintain your computer network? Isn't it your ethical, moral, and LEGAL obligation?**

Cybersecurity is not optional. It is mandatory.

Did you know…
The Average Data Breach Costs $4,000,000.00
60% of Small and Medium Sized Businesses DO NOT RECOVER
Of those that do… Nearly ½ go out of business within 6 months
The average hacker has been on your network for 268 days
95% are NEVER caught

Here 5 Free Technology Tips

- Use multifactor authentication wherever possible

- Do not write down your passwords

- Use a complex password or a long passphrase
  - W3stT3x@5
  - !LiveInWestTexas2024
  - Thefoxjumpedoverthelazyriver22

- Lock your computer when you walk away…you never know who is around, and you never know if a co-worker has it out for you and will go do something intentionally malicious

- DO NOT OPEN EMAILS FROM UNKNOWN SENDERS. ALWAYS VERIFY.

Here's A Sneak Peak At Our Offerings

Guardian	Guardian+	Total IT Management
This program covers your day-to-day monitoring needs. Businesses on this plan need basic security and may not be subject to strong industry compliance requirements. This plan offers basic cybersecurity. • 24x7x365 Endpoint and Network Monitoring: Security & Health Monitoring • DNS and Firewall Monitoring • Endpoint Security / Managed Anti-Virus • Windows Patch Management • AV Daily Scanning & Alerting • Advanced Ransomware Threat Protection with Automated Isolation • Network, Endpoint, and Server Availability Monitoring All other services are available but are not packaged in with Guardian. We are simply keeping an eye out for bad things but cannot be proactive or react to them without your permission.	The Guardian IT Management Program is your go-to program for extensive, but not all-encompassing IT and cybersecurity needs. Inclusions: • All of the Guardian inclusions, and… • Automated Alert Remediation • Automated Virus Remediation & Manual Response where needed • Dark Web Monitoring • Password Management • Vendor Management • **UNLIMITED REMOTE IT SUPPORT FOR DAY-TO-DAY ISSUES** • Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace Management • Advanced Email and DNS Security • Quarterly Security Assessments	The Total IT Management Plan from ETG is the full package in terms of IT support, cybersecurity, and holistic IT needs. In addition to all of the components of our Guardian program, we add a few perks MOST IT COMPANIES do not package: • **Unlimited On-Site IT Support at No Additional Cost** • vCIO Services including project consulting, budgetary quoting, service consolidation • Advanced Attack Surface Reduction, Data and Identity Management technology, Data Loss Prevention, and Data Identification and Classification • 3rd Party Software Patching • Quarterly Phishing Simulation • Monthly Cybersecurity Awareness Training • Quarterly in-person trainings/Zoom Trainings

IT360 by Evolve Technology Group – Total IT Management & More…

IT360 by Evolve Technology Group is the **first of its kind** technology administration program where hardware and Microsoft 365 Business Premium is incorporated into your plan. This program **transforms capital expenditures to operating expenditures and that saves you on taxes.**

You pay a monthly fee just as you would for an IT Service Agreement. Your IT 360 Agreement is structured so that every 6 months your hardware is being changed out and cycled for the first 24 months. After 24 months, we coast with your hardware until you've been in the program 36-months, at which point, upon renewal of your agreement, the cycle repeats. Very few exclusions apply. You may mix and match with other IT service plans.

BENEFITS TO YOU:
- New hardware every 36 months that is included in your monthly costs and you OWN it.
- Capital Expenditure is now an Operational Expenditure.
- You no longer have to worry about budgeting to replace hardware, it is done for you.
- No more tracking assets and keeping up with old or outdated hardware or warranties.

Want to Compare Pricing?

We can tell you that our pricing will not be the cheapest, nor will it be the most expensive; however, our programs pack more value than what other providers will stack in their own packages. If you want cheap IT support, it is available to you. There are dozens of vendors ready to provide cheap IT support.

What I can tell you is this:
- You will be fully satisfied with our services and solutions, or we will give you your money back.
- We offer a 60-minute response time WITH THE OPTION TO UPGRADE TO A 30-MINUTE RESPONSE TIME.
- We will be available in person 24/7/365 – yes – Holiday's included if necessary
- The value of what we offer is well worth the price, we've even been told we undercharge.

This is the part where we get a little salesy…
CONTACT US FOR A FREE NETWORK ASSESSMENT
806-451-1405

The process is easy. It does not interfere with your day-to-day operations. It is comprehensive. It is free of charge. There is no obligation to buy anything when we are finished. If you don't like the report, it produces you can take it to your current IT company and tell them to fix it; or you *can let us fix it.* We will not tell you what to do with the report. We will give a professional recommendation. We will give you professional advice. The choice is yours.

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT…

"Patrick and his team saved us from our incumbent provider. We discovered they weren't providing good advice, in fact, they weren't providing advice at all. We found a few of our systems out of date and many others running a "home" version of Windows instead of "pro". We found out that "home" doesn't receive the same type of security updates as "pro". ETG standardized our network, implemented a true Windows domain, and set up firewalls that the previous provider didn't even mention"

-Lee Morin, Alesha Walker Law Firm

"Patrick has managed our 30+ locations in Texas and New Mexico for several years. When our IT guy passed away, Patrick and Evolve swept in to help us and ensure our security was ongoing."

-Jeff Carnell, MSMC

"I'd recommend Evolve Technology Group to anyone who wants honest IT support and advice. Patrick will not sugarcoat anything. He gives it to you straight. He's honest, sometimes overly honest. And quite frankly, he helped us out of a bind."

-Terry Hunter

This Guide

It is our hope you found the information contained in this guide to be helpful. The choice is ultimately yours at the end of the day. You can choose to give ETG a shot, or you can poke around at other IT solutions companies, but I'll leave you with this…

Take Advantage Of Our Free IT Assessment
And You Won't Be Disappointed

It's Free because we know you may have been taken advantage of in the past by your current or previous IT company. We want to show you our service before you sign an agreement…

Oh and that's the other thing…

If you sign an agreement with us and aren't fully satisfied within the first 90-days, we'll release you free and clear.

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CALL OR TEXT!