Six reasons to implement Managed Services

Managed services is the practice of aligning the goals of Information Technology (IT) with the goals of the business. Within this scenario, IT management tasks and functions are automated and performed remotely with the intention of eliminating unnecessary on-site visits; providing increased system reliability; and, providing pro-active maintenance; which in turn decreases the cost of overall service fees. Thus, in this context, managed services can be considered 'green'.

As a direct result of the way that managed services interacts with the business systems, the technology utilised is lightweight and very efficient, making it excellent value for clients, regardless of whether it is a managed and unmanaged environment.

There are at least six reasons to implement managed services. These include:
- Reduced IT expenditure as there is no on-site administrator and monitoring/support is available 24/7, thus eliminating expensive costs for 'not-on-site days';
- Minimal downtime, as most remote support can be done without interrupting the users and operations can be managed proactively, thus moving away from a break-fix or re-active model. This includes preventative maintenance that can be done on all workstations and servers on a monthly basis, regardless of the workstation or laptop location;
- Improved response times as there is unlimited remote and telephone support from the help desk;
- The automation of IT management tasks including the availability of up-to-date audit and inventory reports and the creation of other relevant outputs;
- Consistent software across the organisation that ensures standardised applications and applications versions across the organisation, as well as the latest Microsoft security and software patches; and,
- No staff training.

MCI's Managed Services include:
- Audit and Inventory: Log any hardware, software or system changes and be alerted when changes are made to individual systems;
- Software Deployment and Update: Software is automatically updated as new versions are introduced and approved;
- Patch Management: Detects vulnerability and ensures that all systems are protected, including remote users on laptops and workstations;
- Agent Procedures: Provides pro-active service delivery capabilities that result in increased productivity, consistent service levels, increased utilisation of staff, expanded service capabilities and cost reduction;
- Monitoring: Proactive monitoring of servers, workstations, remote computers with instant notification of problems or changes;
- Help Desk Ticketing: Provides a comprehensive and integrated help desk and ticketing system that helps easily track and resolve issues quickly; and,

- Reporting: Complete, integrated management reports can be scheduled for automatic distribution.

The use of managed services has now been well proven in practice and should be utilised by all organisations as the ROI more than speaks for itself.

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Editors note

MCI is a dynamic business information systems consulting firm based in Johannesburg, South Africa specialising in providing IT solutions to medium and large companies across various industries in South Africa, Africa and abroad.

MCI offers a complete solution, which can include project management, consulting services, installation, training and support, packaged software implementations, hosted solutions, product development, including e-commerce and mobile solutions, hardware supply and network and communications services.

MCI's superior performance and reputation is attributable to its passionate, dedicated team and dynamic skill pool of consultants.

MCI's approach is to continuously provide solutions to meet its clients' changing requirements. MCI prides itself in delivering excellent customer service and building long-lasting partnerships with its clients.