



Business Awareness Guide to Choosing an Honest, Reliable, and Competent Computer Support Company

Don't Trust Your Computer System and The Irreplaceable Files on It to Just Anyone!

Hiring the wrong computer repair guy can not only be incredibly frustrating and expensive, but you could end up losing ALL of your irreplaceable files, company financials, emails, and other important documents!

Read this guide and you'll discover:

- ✓ Computer scams and rip-offs that you **MUST** be aware of.
- ✓ 5 Costly misconceptions about computer maintenance and repair.
- ✓ Viruses, worms, spyware, and hackers: what you need to know to protect yourself.
- ✓ 7 Questions you need to ask before buying any computer equipment.
- ✓ 5 Critical characteristics you should demand from your computer repair technician.
- ✓ Why you need to avoid "cheap" or "bargain" computer repair shops.
- ✓ The one surefire sign that you should run – not walk – out of a computer repair shop.

Provided as an educational service by:

Darryl McAllister, Managing Director
NetCare HelpDesk
Suite 6, 15 Terminus Street, Castle Hill NSW 2154
Tel: 9634-7736
Email: info@netcare.net.au
Website: www.netcare.net.au





From The Desk of: Darryl McAllister
Managing Director, NetCare HelpDesk

Dear Fellow Business Owner,

There are no shortages of horror stories about fly-by-night computer repair shops causing problems as a result of their unethical or incompetent behavior. I'm sure if you talk to your own friends and family you will get an ear-full of the unfortunate experiences they have encountered in this area.

You see, the computer industry, along with a lot of other industries, has its own share of unethical businesses who will always try to take advantage of uneducated buyers in their greed for easy money. Fortunately, businesses like these are the minority, but we know they exist because we have had a number of clients come to us to clean up the disasters they have caused.

Another big problem of the computer industry is that it is not regulated like many other industries. Electricians, plumbers, lawyers, real estate agents, dentists, doctors, accountants, and even restaurants (to name a few) are heavily regulated to protect the consumer from receiving substandard work or getting ripped off. However, even though the computer industry has been going for 30 or 40 years now, there still aren't any laws in existence to protect businesses like yours from receiving sub-standard or unqualified IT support.

Anyone who can turn a computer on can market themselves as a computer repair technician or shop. Even if they are honestly trying to do a good job for you, their inexperience can cost you dearly in your network's performance, down-time or in lost or corrupt data files. That is why we decided to offer this report.

The information in this Guide is provided to help raise standards within the computer repair and support industry, and to give YOU useful information to help you guard against the unethical or incompetence of some companies and technicians.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. McAllister".

Darryl McAllister



The Five Most Costly Misconceptions About Computer Maintenance and Repair

#1: If your computer is working fine right now, it does not need any maintenance.

This is probably one of the biggest and most deadly misconceptions that most computer users fall victim to. Computers are just like cars. If you don't change the oil, change the filter, rotate the tyres, 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.

There are certain maintenance checks that need to be done daily (like virus updates and spam filtering), weekly (like system backups), and monthly or quarterly (like checking for and installing security patches and updates, disk defrag, spyware detection and removal, checking the surge suppressor and the integrity of the hard drive, and so on). Your computer repair technician should be adamant that you have regular maintenance done on your machine and should offer to set up automatic virus definition updates, spam filtering and automatic system backups that involve taking the data OFF-SITE.

If your technician does not press you to let him do this for you, then RUN – don't walk – out of their office. 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 towards preventing you from needing their help on an ongoing basis.

Either reason is a good one to get as far away from that person as possible!



#2: My nephew/neighbour's son/brother-in-law knows this computer stuff and can help me solve my problems.

If only this were true. Obviously, not all technicians are created equal. Just because a person is good with computer applications (what we call a power user) does NOT mean they know how to install a critical security patch, detect and extract a deadly virus, or upgrade your machine.

Most people look for a part time “guru” to help them save money, but this often comes back to haunt them. Every month we get new clients who ring us up needing us 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. Technology advances at lightening speed and it takes constant learning and practice to master it. If your part-time technician is not working on PCs and networks every day, they probably only know enough to be dangerous.

#3: The maintenance tools provided in the Microsoft Operating System and software are all the maintenance you need.

Again, this is a terrible misconception. Microsoft does NOT include ALL of the security features to protect your data from viruses, hackers, and data loss or prevent your PC from running slowly.

Additionally, Microsoft (and other software vendors for that matter) is constantly providing critical patches and updates to their software to protect you from viruses and hackers. However, if you don't know to look for them, or if you don't know how to install them properly, you could easily end up getting burned.



#4: You can always get a better deal on computer software, equipment, or services by shopping online.

The key word here is “deal”. Sure you can always find a cheaper price if you shop online, but you might actually end up getting the short end of the stick. As with anything in life, you get what you pay for. Companies simply cannot give you dirt cheap prices AND champagne service.

If you are getting a cheap bargain, chances are you will get very little if NO service after the sale. If something goes wrong, or if you just have a question, you might find out that the client service line only goes to a voice mail box that never gets checked, or that you have to submit questions via e-mail that takes DAYS to return.

Before you buy ANY computer equipment, make sure you know the answers to these questions:

1. How long have they been in business? The last thing you want to do is buy a lemon of a computer from a fly-by-night organization. Thanks to the Internet, ANYONE can set up a website and start selling computer hardware and software. That is why you want to look for a company that has been in business for 5 years or more.
2. How do they handle returns and exchanges? Do you have to ship the defective item back to them at your cost or do they arrange to have it picked up? What is the guaranteed turnaround time for an item? This is why many people prefer to buy all equipment from a local vendor.
3. What type of help desk support do you offer? If you are like me, you want to speak directly to a knowledgeable technician when you need help. However, many companies only offer e-mail and web-based support, and charge a hefty fee for anything outside of that. Which brings me to the next question...?
4. Is your support free or charged by the minute? Make sure you are very clear on what support is free and what is fee-based.
5. Where is their help desk and client service office located? Many of the big vendors are shipping their help desk support overseas to save money. While this works out great for them, it can be incredibly frustrating when you are trying to communicate with their client support representatives.
6. Do YOU really know how to install, configure and troubleshoot this new device? If not, you may want to consider hiring a qualified technician. Quite often, drivers and software can conflict and cause problems and unless YOU have installed this device before, it might be worth the small fee to get someone else to do it for you.



#5: All computer repair shops 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. The only technicians that will work cheap are those that are just starting and they are grossly inexperienced.

With your valuable data, accounting records, emails and other irreplaceable documents at stake, do you REALLY want the cheapest technician working on your machine?

We take the view that most people want value for money and simply want the job done right. You will find that we are not the cheapest and we do not apologize for that. You will also find that we are not the most expensive. We simply feel that we should offer a good service at a fair price. That's why we have been able to stay in business for over 15 solid years.



5 Critical Characteristics You Should Demand From Your Computer Support Company

1. **Demand that they have multiple technicians on staff.** If you rely on a “one-man-band” operation, you might find yourself without any help when they go on holiday, get sick, or when they are simply too busy servicing other clients. Having multiple technicians on staff is not a guarantee of fast, reliable service, but you are far more likely to have someone to talk to when you have a problem.

Another reason you want an IT company that has multiple technicians is because no one computer guy – no matter how good – has infinite knowledge about every type of software, hardware, and platform. Multiple technicians mean multiple skill sets and a higher likelihood that your computer problem will get resolved faster.

2. **Demand someone who has a long-standing reputation.** Let’s face it; there are a lot of other computer repair technicians out there, but most are new or just getting started. You want to make sure you avoid hiring a fly-by-night technician between jobs that sets up shop one day, and is out of business within a month or a year. Only deal with computer technicians and repair shops that have a proven track record in your area. NetCare HelpDesk has been servicing clients in the greater Sydney area for over 15 years now.
3. **Demand that they have specific knowledge or expertise on solving your particular problem.** Do NOT let someone practice on your machine. If they have not worked on your problem before, they should TELL you that in advance. There is too much risk involved financially and in your data and equipment.
4. **Demand that your technician backs up your system BEFORE working on it.** This is just common sense. Don’t let them touch your machine before your entire system is securely backed up just in case something goes wrong.
5. **Demand that your machine comes back with the same settings, look, preferences, and applications that you had on it prior to the work.** There are a lot of second-rate shops with inexperienced technicians who will end up causing you more problems than you bargained for. Very frequently, these inexperienced technicians will recommend that you wipe out your hard drive and re-install Windows to fix a problem. This means you lose all of your settings and preferences, as well as losing all of the software programs you have installed. This should ONLY be done as a last resort.



Your Client Bill Of Rights

Here is what I promise to deliver if you choose NetCare HelpDesk to service your computer network:

1. When you call us with a computer problem, we guarantee that your phone call will be either answered immediately or returned within 60 minutes or less (during normal business hours) by an experienced technician who can help.
2. You should not have to wait around all day for your computer to be repaired. We understand how important your computer is to you; that is why we offer our while-you-wait priority express service where we will start working on your computer the MINUTE you bring it in. In most cases, we can fix it within 60 minutes or less.
3. You deserve to get answers to your questions in PLAIN ENGLISH. Our technicians will not talk down to you or make you feel stupid because you don't understand their "geek speak".
4. You deserve complete satisfaction with our products and services. We will do whatever it takes to make you happy. No hassles, no problems.
5. You should EXPECT that no damage will be done to your machine or your data. Before we start working on your computer or network, we will evaluate your problem and alert you to any potential risks involved in fulfilling your job.

A large proportion of our business comes from referrals from happy, satisfied clients. We want you to recommend us and we know that you will only do this if you are happy with the services we provide. That is why we work so hard to go above and beyond the call of duty.



**Don't Take Our Word For It;
Just Listen To What Our Clients Have To Say...**

Fast Support and "Owning" the Problem

"What we like most about the NetCare team is that they always answer the phone promptly and immediately deal with the issue. We are on the NetCare Platinum plan and every time we require attention the matter is 100% resolved regardless of the effort required. There is also no attempt to blame a problem on the hardware brand, the software supplier, or the ISP – once an issue is raised with NetCare they 'own' it till it's solved."

Stephen Holt, Managing Director, All Stake Supply

Friendly and Responsive

"The decision to outsource something as important as IT is never easy. What swung it for NetCare was their track record of friendliness and responsiveness over a number of years. Their experience means we have a rock-solid, stable system in place – and that's absolutely essential to us as every single architect in our team is completely dependent upon their PC and the network."

Bruce Robins, Senior Architect, D+R Architects

Impressively Fast with Peace of Mind

"We had a problem today with the loss of the connection between our two sites. I was impressed with how quickly the NetCare team was able to diagnose the issue and then attend the site with a replacement router. It's great to have the peace of mind that when I cannot solve a problem, I have NetCare there to assist."

Ben Davis, IT Manager, Quality Ingredients

New Server Installed with No Hitches and No Over-sell

"The new server installation was quick with no hitches. One day the old server was there, the next day we were all working off the new one. What's more there was no over-sell – the consultant discussed our requirements and then presented a proposal that exactly met those requirements without trying to include extra products or services."

Alan Perret, GTK Rehab

NETCARE

HELP DESK

Outstanding knowledge and friendly staff

“Our previous support company wasn’t giving us the support we needed, so we switched to NetCare and we haven’t been disappointed.

Every problem we’ve had has been sorted out quickly and efficiently. NetCare have always shown their professionalism and we have consistently found them to be reliable, responsive, friendly, and willing to go above and beyond the call of duty.”

Victor Jeries, Brendma Pty Limited

A Technology Company that Speaks Plain-English

“We have found the NetCare support team to be first class. They offer prompt professional service with a great friendly attitude, nothing is too much trouble. Even we non-technical types can understand their instructions. We have only the highest praise for them and would recommend their services without hesitation.”

Stacie O’Brien, Admin & Operations Manager, Go Vita Distributors

Initiative and knowledge saves the day

“The people working at NetCare have done a tremendous job today in getting us back up and running. They used their initiative and knowledge and were not only able to fix a critical computer in our manufacturing facility that had broke down but also provide a backup computer from an old tower we had in the office. A job well done at such short notice.”

Maurice Coco, Finance Manager, N&F Arcuili Pty Limited



Services We Offer

The focus of our business is on providing fast friendly IT support and advice to clients that enter into a NetCare support agreement with us. In addition to these NetCare service plans we also provide:

- Anti-spam software
- Application software support (MYOB, QuickBooks, Attache, Arrow and Jiwa)
- Application training
- Anti-virus software and renewals
- Backup strategies
- Cable testing
- Cabling
- Consumables (toners and cartridges)
- CRM software (ACT!, Goldmine, Microsoft Business Contact Manager)
- Data Recovery services
- Database design
- Disaster Recovery
- Domain name management
- Interstate links
- Hardware (HP, Toshiba and Sony)
- Intranet sites (internal websites for staff use)
- ISP vendor management
- IT management/advisory
- IT products provider
- Online backups
- PABX solutions based upon the internet (VoIP)
- PC and printer repairs
- Printers (HP and Canon)
- Push email/smartphones
- Remote monitoring
- Security assessments
- Servers (HP)
- Server repairs
- Site audits
- System documentation
- Warranty management
- Web design
- Web hosting
- Website filtering
- Workflow design (eg leave approvals, expense claims)