



We make **IT** work. We make **IT** easy. No excuses.

“24 Questions You Should Ask Your Technology Success Provider Before Hiring Them to Support Your Network.”

Provided By: TAG Solutions
Author: Joe Yetto

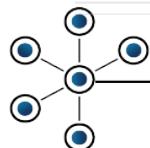
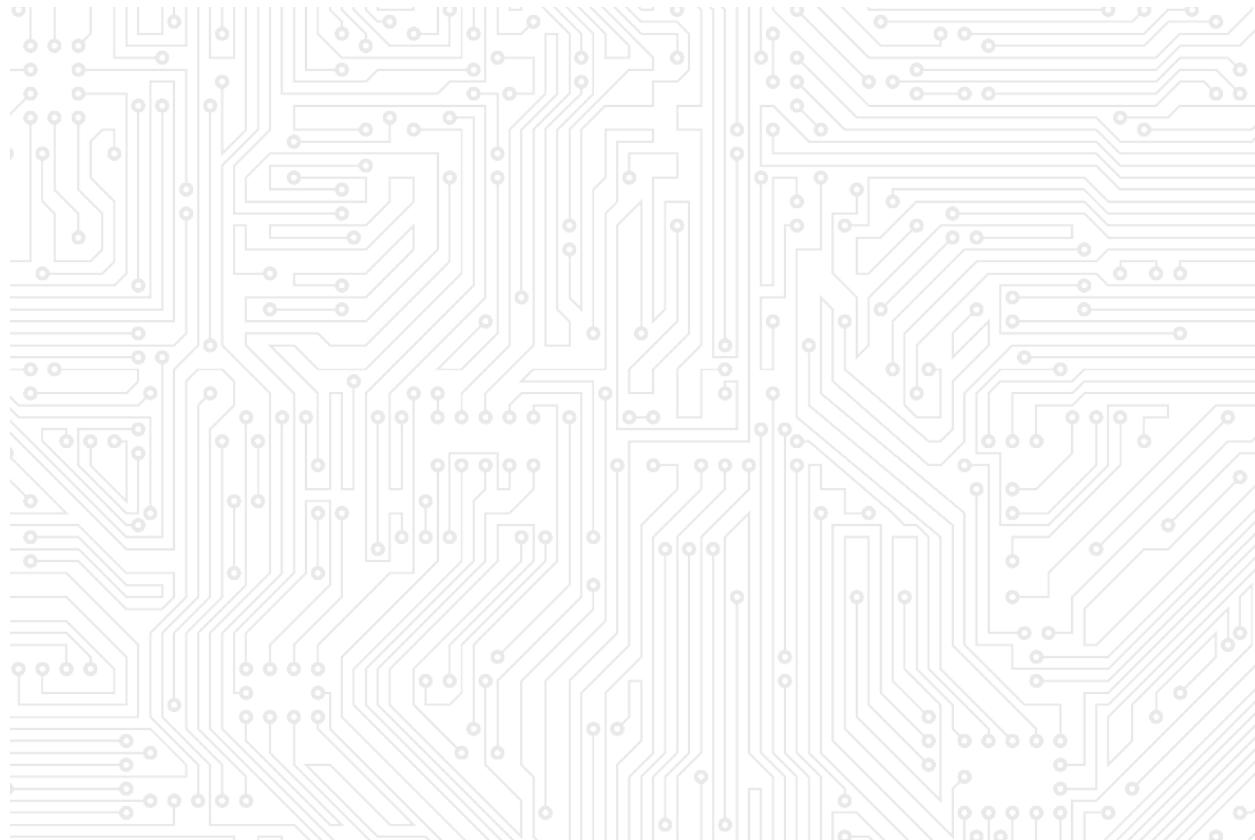
12 Elmwood Road
Albany, NY 12204

www.tagsolutions.com | 518-292-6500



Don't Trust Your Company's Critical Data And Operations To Just Anyone! This Business Advisory Guide Will Arm You With 24 Revealing Questions You Should Ask Any Technology Success Provider Before Giving Them Access To Your Company's Network

Choosing the wrong computer consultant to support your network can not only be incredibly **frustrating and expensive**, but you could end up **costing you in downtime, data loss, and expensive repair bills**, not to mention the headaches and frustration!





Read this guide and you'll discover:

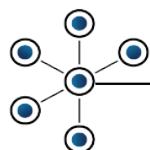
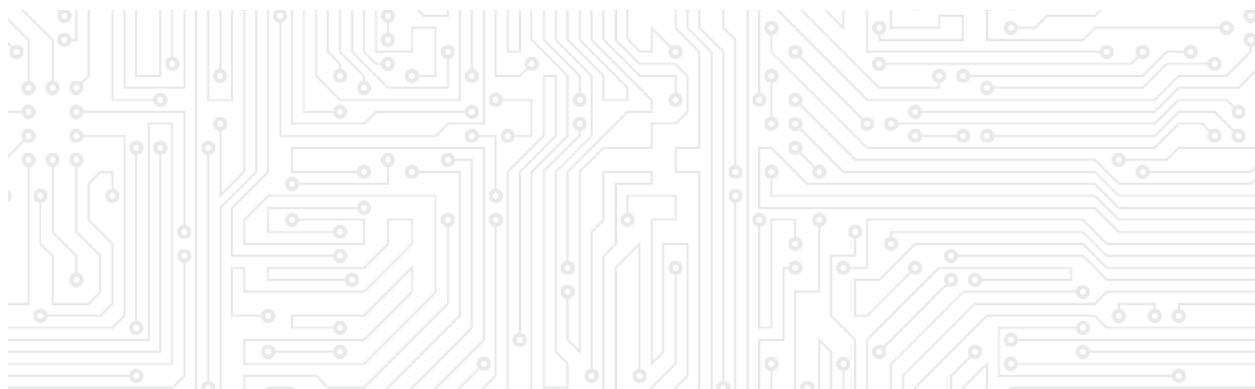
- The “dirty little secret” to the computer repair industry that most people don’t know and will never be told by their IT guy (knowing this ALONE could save you from wasting tons of money and untold aggravation when outsourcing your computer support).
- 24 Revealing questions that will help you instantly spot an unethical or grossly incompetent computer repair/support technician in minutes.
- 4 Costly misconceptions most business owners have about computer maintenance and repair; one you will need to know BEFORE even picking up the phone.
- 5 Mistakes to avoid when choosing a computer consultant.
- Why “cheap” or “lowest price” computer repair shops aren’t the bargain they initially appear to be.
- The one surefire sign that you should run – not walk – away from a computer support firm.

Provided as an educational service by:

TAG Solutions

12 Elmwood Rd, Albany NY

www.tagsolutions.com | 518-292-6500





Choosing a technology success provider isn't easy. There are no shortages of horror stories about incompetent computer repair "gurus" bungling jobs and causing MORE problems

as a result of their loose morals or gross incompetence. I'm sure if you talk to your own friends and colleagues you will get an ear-full of the unfortunate experiences they have encountered in this area.

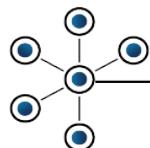
Why is this? Because the computer repair and consulting industry, along with a lot of other industries, has its own share of incompetent or unethical businesses who will try to take advantage of trusting business owners who simply do not have the ability to determine whether or not they know what they are doing. Sometimes this is out of greed for your money; but more often it's simply because they don't have the skills and competency to do the job right, but won't tell you that up front. From misleading information, unqualified technicians, poor management and terrible customer service, we've seen it all...and we know they exist in abundance because we have had a number of customers come to us to clean up the disasters they have caused.

Buyer Beware: The Computer Repair and Consulting Industry Is NOT Regulated

Here's an embarrassing (and little-known) fact about my industry: it is not regulated like many other professional service industries which means ANYONE can claim they are a "computer repair expert." **In fact, a lot of the businesses in this industry started because the owner was FIRED or laid off from their job and couldn't find work anywhere else. That means many of the so-called experts are useless and make the sleazy auto repair shops look like the pinnacle of virtue and competence.**

Automotive repair shops, electricians, plumbers, lawyers, realtors, dentists, doctors, accountants, etc. are heavily regulated to protect the consumer from receiving substandard work or getting ripped off. However, the computer industry is still highly unregulated and there aren't any laws in existence to protect the consumer – which is why it's so important for you to arm yourself with the information contained in this report.

Anyone who can hang out a shingle can promote themselves as a computer expert. Even if they are honestly *trying* to do a good job for you, their inexperience can cost you dearly in your network's speed and performance 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.





The TAG Solutions Philosophy

We believe that entrepreneurship is the foundation to our nation's economic engine. The vast array of businesses spawned from the bold and creative minds of entrepreneurs in our community depend on computer systems and other technologies to function. We believe it is our duty to alleviate the headaches and complexities associated with computer systems so that these organizations can focus on their core business, rather than the "slow computer".

Our approach is designed with a few things in mind:

Simplicity – The computer industry is the proud home of mind-numbing jargon, confusing acronyms, and a vast collection of shiny components with blinking lights. We revolt against complexity, and promote simplicity. ☺ Our helpdesk is easy to contact, and always available

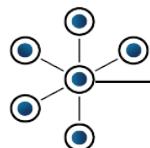
- Our technicians do not speak jargon
- Our approach is consistent and systematized
- Our networks and computer systems are simple and easy to use
- Our billing is straight forward and predictable

Service – We do not hire arrogant, condescending technicians and consultants, we **only** employee customer advocates who demonstrate a "do-whatever-it-takes" attitude and provide over the top customer experiences. ☺ Your computer frustration creates physical pain for our staff

- We have written guarantees
- We are always available, and ready to respond
- When you call for service a technical resource answers the phone and immediately begins troubleshooting your problem. We do not funnel calls through a "dispatcher" because that would only increase the time it takes to resolve your issue!

Mastery – If we cannot fix computer and network problems, then we have failed. We recognize that our core business is technology. We value professional development and training. Our technical staff has spent years mastering their skillsets and has routinely fixed problems that others could not.

- We are possess the highest levels of technical certification





- We stay current, and are constantly learning
- We have decades of professional experiences, chances are – we have done it before
- We employ over 20 full time technical resources

24 Questions You Should Ask Your Technology Success Provider Before Hiring Them To Support Your Network

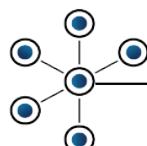
Customer Service:

Q1: Do they answer their phones live or do you always have to leave a voice mail and wait for someone to call you back?

Our Answer: We answer our phones live from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and give all clients an emergency after hours number they may call if a problem arises, including weekends and holidays. More importantly, our technicians answer the phone and are ready to start fixing computer problems immediately. Why? Because computer disruptions should be addressed immediately, there is no reason to wait for a call back – and - many of the people we support work outside normal hours. If they cannot access their computer network AND can't get hold of anyone to help them, it is incredibly frustrating.

Q2: Do they have a written, guaranteed response time to your calls?

Our Answer: We guarantee to have a technician working on a problem within 30 minutes or less of your call. This is written into every service agreement we give to our





clients because it's standard procedure. More importantly – it is supported by a 100% money back guarantee.

Q3: Do they take the time to explain what they are doing and answer your questions in terms that you can understand (not geek-speak), or do they come across arrogant and make you feel stupid for asking simple questions?

Our Answer: Our technicians are trained to take time and answer your questions and explain everything in simple terms. We do not use jargon or industry acronyms. We communicate with end users during every step of the troubleshooting exercise. You will know that we have received and understand your service request; you will know what we are doing to resolve your trouble, when we are going to do it and how long we expect the work to take. Lastly, you will know when the issue is resolved because we take the time to test functionality and verify the fix before we consider the work to be complete.

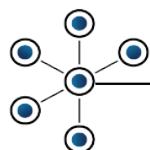
Q4: Do they consistently (and proactively) offer new ways to improve your network's performance, or do they wait until you have a problem to make recommendations?

Our Answer: We conduct monthly workshops designed to help our customers demystify the complex nature of computer networks. We discuss asset management, risk appetite, disaster recovery planning, emerging technologies and much more. Just look at what VNA of Albany Inc & Affiliates had to say:

"Russ Thomas has been a great asset to our company. His proactive approach, helpfulness, and expertise goes above and beyond just "fixing hardware and software issues." He regularly sits down with me and discusses our current issues, steps we can take to resolve them, and future projects that should be thought of. I really do appreciate the time he takes to sit down and discuss our infrastructure and improvements that can/should be made." – Brian Leamy, Controller, VNA of Albany Inc & Affiliates.

Q5: Do they provide detailed invoices that clearly explain what you are paying for?

Our Answer: We provide detailed invoices that show what work was done, why and when so you never have to guess what you are paying for. Our customers have access to an online portal where they can quickly see details about all service requests they submit, including the actual time entries logged by our technicians.





Q6: Do they have adequate liability insurance as well as workers compensation insurance to protect YOU?

Our Answer: Here's something to consider: if THEY cause a problem with your network that causes you to be down for hours or days or to lose data, who's responsible? Here's another question to consider: if one of their technicians gets hurt at your office, who's paying? In this litigious society we live in, you better make darn sure whomever you hire is adequately insured with both liability insurance AND workers compensation – and don't be shy about asking to see their latest insurance policies!

Q7: Do they guarantee to complete projects on time and on budget?

Our Answer: All projects are fixed priced and guaranteed to be completed on time, in writing. This is important because many unethical or incompetent computer guys will only quote "time and materials," which gives them free reign to nickel and dime you as well as take as much time as needed on completing a project.

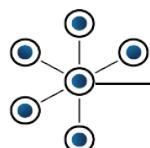
Maintenance Of Your Network:

Q8: Do they insist on remotely monitoring your network 24-7-365 to keep critical security settings, virus definitions and security patches up-to-date and PREVENT problems from turning into downtime, viruses, lost data and other issues?

Our Answer: Yes; our remote network monitoring system watches over your network to constantly look for developing problems, security issues and other problems so we can address them BEFORE they turn into bigger problems.

Q9: Do they charge extra if a technician needs to be dispatched?

Our Answer: No, we will never charge extra for a technician to be dispatched. We recognize that many times it is faster to resolve a problem remotely, but there are still situations that require a technician's local presence. In most cases, we can have a technician arrive at our customer's office within 15 minutes – no extra charge.





Q10: Do they guarantee that a technician will always be available?

Our Answer: Yes. We have over 20 full time technical resources; you will not have to wait for assistance.

Backups And Disaster Recovery:

Q11: Do they INSIST on providing a concrete and functional data backup strategy?

Our Answer: We do not allow our clients to not have a great back up strategy. By "great" we mean that the backup strategy has to incorporate critical data and systems, it has to serve the recovery objectives of the organization and it has to be tested on a regular basis. It sounds like a lot of work, but we do as part of our IT support program for no additional cost!

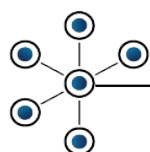
Q12: Do they INSIST on doing periodical test restores of your backups to make sure the data is not corrupt and could be restored in the event of a disaster?

Our Answer: We perform an annual "fire drill" and perform a test restore from backup for our clients to make sure their data CAN be recovered in the event of an emergency. After all, the WORST time to "test" a backup is when you desperately need it.

Q13: Do they insist on backing up your network BEFORE performing any type of project or upgrade? Our Answer: We do; and that's simply as a precaution in case a hardware failure or software glitch causes a major problem.

Q14: If you were to experience a major disaster, do they have a written plan for how your data could be restored FAST and/or enable you to work from a remote location?

Our Answer: All clients receive a simple disaster recovery plan for their data and network. We encourage them to do a full disaster recovery plan for their office, but at a minimum, their network will be covered should something happen.





Technical Expertise And Support:

Q15: Is their help-desk US based or outsourced to an overseas company or third party?

Our Answer: We provide our own in-house help desk and make sure the folks helping you are friendly and helpful. We consider this one of the most important aspects of customer service, plus we feel it's important to keeping your data secure.

Q16: Do their technicians maintain current vendor certifications and participate in on-going training – or are they learning on your dime?

Our Answer: Our technicians are required to keep the most up-to-date vendor certifications in all the software we support. Plus, our hiring process is so stringent, 90% of the technicians who apply don't make it through

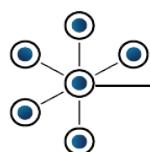
(guess who's hiring them?)

Q17: Do their technicians arrive on time and dress professionally?

Our Answer: Our technicians are true professionals that you would be proud to have in your office. They dress professionally, show up on time and if they cannot (for some odd, unforeseen reason) we always notify the client immediately. We believe these are minimum requirements for delivering a professional service.

Q18: Are they familiar with (and can they support) your unique line of business applications?

Our Answer: We own the problems with all line of business applications for our clients. That doesn't mean we can fix faulty software – but we WILL be the liaison between you and your vendor to resolve problems you are having and make sure these applications work smoothly for you.





Q19: When something goes wrong with your Internet service, phone systems, printers or other IT services, do they own the problem or do they say "that's not our problem to fix?"

Our Answer: We feel WE should own the problem for our clients so they don't have to try and resolve any of these issues on their own – that's just plain old good service and something many computer guys won't do.

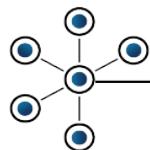
Doing Business With:

Q20: If you decide to cancel a service agreement with your computer consultant would you have to pay an expensive cancellation fee?

Our Answer: Our service contracts can be cancelled at **any time**, for **any reason** without penalty. You will not find a cancellation fee in our contract. Unlike most computer consultants, we feel the need to hold ourselves accountable and never hide behind legal jargon like "Cancellation Fees". Guess what happens? Our technicians completely understand that our clients have the freedom to choose a new computer consultant at any time, for any reason – and – that one bad experience can be all it takes for them to fire us. So... we are always on our "A Game". The lack of a cancellation policy in our contracts makes it easier for clients to do business with us and encourages our technicians to be excellent at all times.

Q21: Are your IT support cost predictable and affordable?

Our Answer: Our IT Support program offers an "all you can eat" IT support service for a predictable and affordable fixed monthly fee. We do not bill for "out of scope" services because – our program is all inclusive, everything is included! Your bill will not fluctuate from month to month; your pricing is absolutely locked in for the duration of your contract term. Finally, our programs are affordable and can scale up and down, from enterprise to small businesses incredibly easy. We are always less expensive than hiring an employee to provide IT support and we guarantee to have a lower price than our competition.





Q22: Do you receive proposals and sales quotes for things you do not want or need?

Our Answer: Our competitors will assign an aggressive and pushy sales representative to “manage” your account. They have a quota assigned to them, and will regularly look for you to spend precious dollars on hardware, software and services – that you probably do not need – just to help satisfy that quota. WE will never assign a sales representative to “manage” your account. Instead, you will have access to a dedicated Technical Business Analyst (TBA) who **does not** have a quota and **will not** try to sell you crap all....the... time. The TBA works with members of your organization to forecast IT needs in alignment with the execution of your organization strategic plan. They create a comprehensive roadmap that considers important challenges such as capacity planning, emerging technologies, security threats, asset management and much more! We do not charge extra for this service. We simply want our business relationship to be about YOUR agenda, not ours.

Q23: Is there an active and productive client feedback loop available for you to express concerns or offer suggestions?

Our Answer: We love, love, love feedback from our beloved customers. Please do not be bashful! Give us the Good, Bad and Ugly.

What we do with the “Good” Feedback:

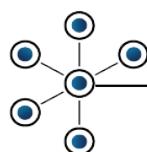
We use positive client feedback to reinforce the behaviors of our employees that create memorable customer experiences. We celebrate perceived “good work” with employee awards, company BBQs and everyday praise.

We want our staff to be crystal clear on what is we do or do not do that create “raving fans” amongst our clients.

What we do with the “Bad” Feedback:

We use negative client feedback as a fantastic and effective learning tool. Criticism remains anonymous; we do not share the source with our employees. We do however, discuss the feedback publicly and learn from mistakes. We also use this information to drive innovation efforts that will create processes, programs, and methodologies that our clients demand. A few examples of this are:

1. First Call Resolution – Many of our customers wanted to call TAG and speak with a Technician directly rather than be routed through a non-technical dispatcher.





We listened, and today all service calls are routed to available technicians and engineers who are ready to help!

2. Closed Ticket Notification – Customers were often left wondering if a trouble ticket they had opened was ever resolved. Typically, the trouble had been fixed but TAG failed to properly notify the customer. We listened and today all trouble tickets that are closed generate a Closed Ticket Notification that is emailed to the client complete with a description of what was done to resolve the original issue.

These are just a few of many examples. We hope you will help us improve by giving us feedback!

What we do with the “Ugly” Feedback

We are not sure what the delineation is between “Bad” and “Ugly” feedback... no worries, the classification does not change our intent to learn from our customers!

Q24: Does your Computer Network have to be “Certified” before eligible for support?

Our Answer: Many of our competitors will require you to pay for a “Network Assessment” **before** they will onboard you as a full time client. Some will even offer this service for free. Do not be fooled by their pitch. The

“free assessment” is a clever sales tool designed to:

1. Create a False Sense of Urgency – The report you will receive will be littered with “Critical Findings” and tons of “High Priority” recommendations. They are designed to make you feel like your computer network is a ticking time bomb, ready to explode at any minute.
2. Provide biased and subjective findings
3. Promote costly and unnecessary “remediation”

