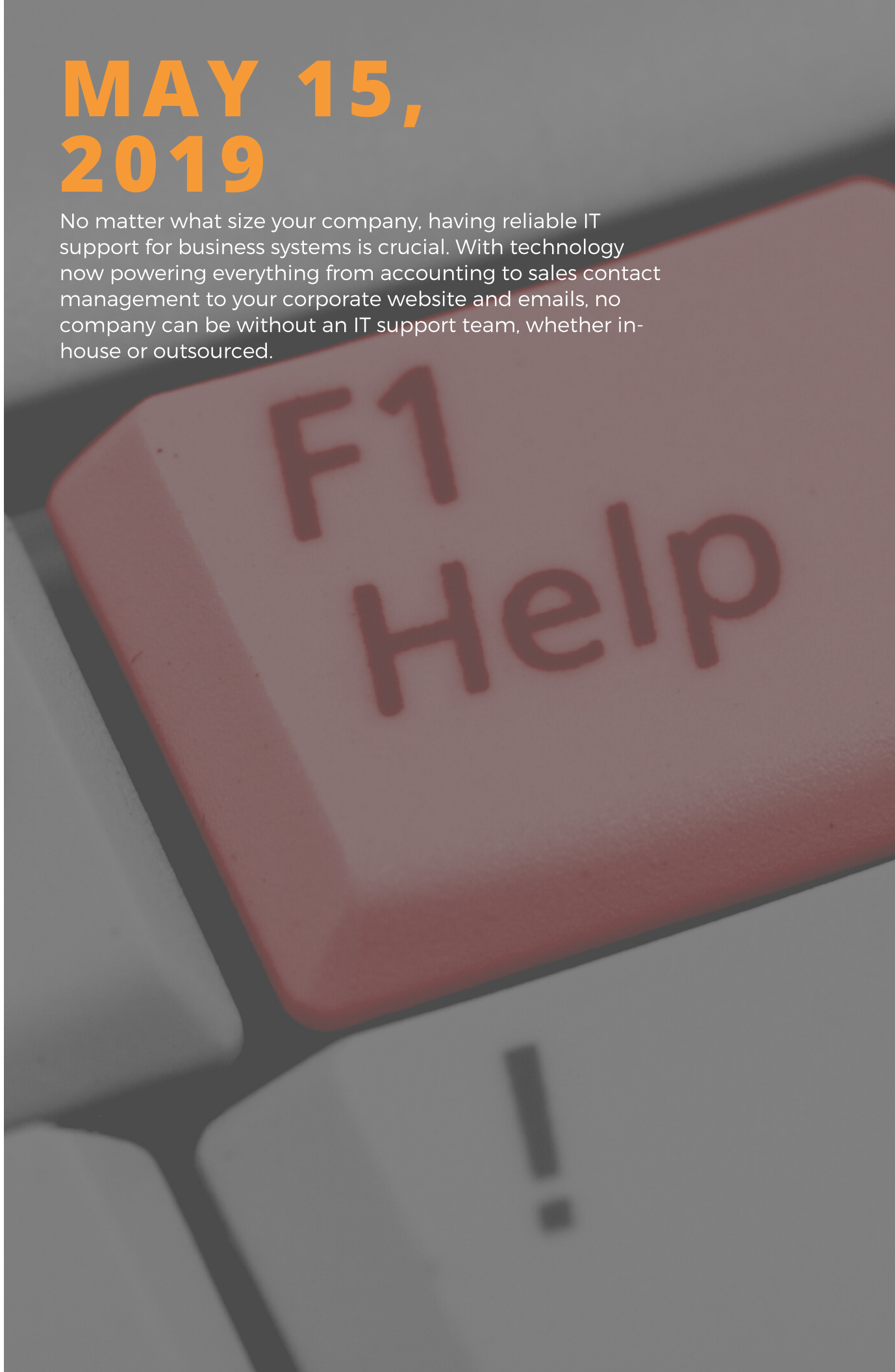




Security First IT

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FINDING COST-EFFECTIVE IT SUPPORT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Helping to make the right choice for your business.

No matter what size your company, having reliable IT support for business systems is crucial. With technology now powering everything from accounting to sales contact management to your corporate website and emails, no company can be without an IT support team, whether in-house or outsourced.

When computers or networks go down, it costs businesses money in a number of ways. There is the cost of lost employee productivity, lost business if customers are trying to find you on the web, but can't, and other costs that can include overtime to accomplish work that was delayed. The costs can add up as each minute passes and are often higher than a company may realize.

According to NETWORKComputing, a study by IHS showed that IT outages cost business enterprises \$70 billion per year. Some of the eye-opening statistics include:

- Average annual downtime costs for a medium business: \$1 million
- Average annual downtime costs for a large business: \$60 million+78% of downtime costs were from lost employee productivity
- 17% of downtime costs were from lost revenue
- 5% of downtime costs were for corrective fixes for the issue

So, getting ahead of an IT issue through proper support and monitoring and having expert IT support that can solve it fast and get everyone back to work means a lot to your bottom line.

After they've suffered downtime costs, many businesses hire an IT solutions provider that can constantly monitor their systems to catch issues before they cause problems. These firms also perform regular maintenance and install patches and upgrades to keep technology running on track and less susceptible to outages.

What to Look for in IT Support for Business

Whether you have an in house IT department or not, it's good to have a relationship with an expert IT services firm. If you have in house IT, they can provide support when needed for an absence or holiday and also offer training for new team members.

Many businesses find it cost-effective to outsource all their IT to a technology support company, because often that company can function as an "off-site" IT department for a lot less.

When you're searching for the right provider, you want to make sure you don't just go with the first IT firm in the Google results, it makes sense to check out a few different companies and evaluate them using some standard questions.

Tip #1: Check Their Experience

- 1.What IT support services do they provide?
- 2.What IT support services don't they provide?
- 3.What is the response time for an IT issue?
- 4.Is someone available 24 hours per day? Weekends?
- 5.Who are some of their references for companies similar to yours?
- 6.Do you get a dedicated IT technician?
- 7.How does their pricing structure work and is there a limit on service calls?
- 8.Does their contract lock you into a particular timeframe?
- 9.Do they have both remote support and on-site support?
- 10.What type of training do their technicians have?
- 11.Do they have any guarantees or warranties?
- 12.Have they worked with many businesses like yours?
- 13.Do they offer hardware and software or only IT services?
- 14.What made them open an IT services company?
- 15.Do they provide remote or on-call support when your team is traveling?
- 16.What are some of their most memorable successes?

The main thing you want to look for is a company that you feel comfortable with and that you feel fully understands your needs. Make sure they also take the time to explain an IT issue to you, rather than just talking in “tech speak.”

Be sure to call their references (too many people skip that step) so you can hear first-hand what their other clients think of them. This will give you a great feel for how they do business and how they’ll support your company’s IT needs.

What Certifications Should I Look For?

There is a whole “alphabet” of different IT certifications out there. It’s not always easy to know which ones to look for when you’re trying to find a firm that provides professional IT support for business.

PC World has an excellent reference article on the “IT Certifications That Matter.” An IT service firm doesn’t have to have each and every one of these, but if they at least have a few of these key certifications, it’s a great sign that they know what they’re doing and take the time to train their technicians.



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<https://securityfirstit.com/blog/>

Microsoft Certifications

- Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE)
- Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist (MCTS)
- Microsoft Certified IT Professional (MCITP)

CompTIA Certifications

- CompTIA A+
- CompTIA Network+
- CompTIA Security+
- CompTIA Linux+

Cisco Certifications

- Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP)
- Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)
- Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE)

Apple Certifications

- Apple Certified Support Professional (ACSP)
- Apple Certified Technical Coordinator (ACTC)

Specialty Certifications

- Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
- Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA)
- Project Management Professional (PMP)

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Conclusion

Having an outsourced IT services provider on hand whenever you need them can actually cost less than you think when you factor in the dollar savings from avoiding computer issues that cost you big in lost productivity. The key is to take your time during your evaluation phase of an IT solutions firm so you feel completely comfortable putting your vital technology in their hands. The best IT firms can become a regular part of your company, there whenever you need them, saving you time, money, and frustration.

A top-down view of a person's workspace. A silver laptop is open, displaying a website with red flowers. To the right of the laptop is a white smartphone. Further right is a white cup of coffee with a latte art design. In the foreground, a person's hands are visible; one hand is on the laptop trackpad, and the other is holding a pen over a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook has a decorative cover with the word 'Passion' in cursive. The desk is made of dark wood. In the background, there are several pens and a white cable.

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