Frequently Asked Questions About IT Assist

What is IT Assist?
IT Assist is a help desk and IT support service that includes support and management of your organization's computers, servers, and other devices; maintaining your digital security; and system backups. In short, managed IT service providers take responsibility for your IT services for a fixed monthly fee to make sure your employees can work efficiently and aren't interrupted by IT problems.

What is the cost of the IT Assist service?
IT Assist service costs are dependent on the scope of the work involved. Generally, costs are fixed and charged monthly. They're based on the number of machines, servers, and locations supported as well as any additional services required, such as systems backup, data analysis, and implementation or migration work.

What type of term agreement is involved?
TechSoup's IT Assist agreement lasts 12 months and can be terminated at any time with 30 days' notice.

Why should I consider IT Assist?
Many nonprofits rely heavily on their IT services working well and consistently, but they have no in-house staff who can handle sophisticated levels of technology support and networking. Spending time away from your core mission is a poor use of resources and time, and IT Assist can save nonprofits both time and money.

If you "wait until it breaks," the resulting lower performance and reliability of your IT systems will reduce your organization's productivity and impact.

What are the common components of managed IT services?
Hardware Management
Proper hardware management ensures your desktops, laptops, servers, and other devices are properly working, networked, and backed up, and have updated security and current software updates loaded.

Security
Security includes a managed firewall, policies, and an antivirus and anti-malware suite.
Backup and Operational Continuity

Instead of dealing with changing tapes, tracking backups, and dealing with backup targets, you can take advantage of an operations continuity service, which backs up your data for you. It also provides a full operations continuity plan in case a snowstorm, hurricane, earthquake, or other event disrupts your operations.

Infrastructure and Network Monitoring

This service manages and monitors your Internet, phone circuits, VPNs, switches, wireless access points, and network room components such as servers, storage, network printers, and key network devices.

I already have an IT guy. Why do I need IT Assist?

A managed service provider can act as an extension of your IT department by taking care of routine IT tasks. That frees up your staff to focus on the strategic IT initiatives that will improve your operations.

Are all managed IT service providers the same?

No, most managed IT service providers work with for-profit businesses, so it's important to make sure that whatever managed service provider you choose is familiar with nonprofit needs and constraints.

There are different levels of service and service providers. Some are new to the business, whereas others have documented standards, best practices, and clearly defined service level agreements. Just because a company says it provides a managed service does not mean you will get what you expect. You need to check references and understand what is fully covered and what will entail an additional charge.

What are the benefits of outsourcing my IT support to TechSoup?

Focus on Your Mission

You can spend your time on your mission rather than on managing technology issues.

Reduced Stress

Dealing with areas outside your expertise is stressful, and problems in these areas may cost thousands of dollars. You can greatly reduce your stress and costs by going with a TechSoup's IT Assist support service instead.
Controlled Cost
You can budget your managed service expenses because your monthly costs are laid out yearly.

Reliable Performance
Our service level agreement guarantees responsive performance.

Efficiency of Scale
TechSoup's IT Assist team has the experience and knowledge gained from supporting many different networks. This experience cannot be gained by supporting one network.

Increased Security
IT Assist has the resources to proactively manage and maintain business-critical components such as firewalls, employee usage, and antivirus and anti-malware suites.

Full Backup and Operational Continuity
You no longer have to remember to back up media and tapes. We set up automated backup systems and operational continuity services that can restore your nonprofit to a functional state within minutes.

We Know Nonprofits!
We know that there are many managed IT service providers out there, from independent contractors to large corporations. However, none of them will understand your nonprofit the way TechSoup will. We are a nonprofit and understand your constraints, funding cycles, and board requirements. We will work with you to come up with the best solution for your organization. If we can't devise a suitable solution for you, we'll help you find someone who can.