

What to ask a partner.

Finding the Right Certified or Gold Certified Partner: A checklist

Choosing the right IT partner for your business can sometimes be confusing. Especially when there are a large number of companies providing IT services to customers.

Before enlisting the services of an IT company, get to know who they are, and what they can do for your business. You want to make sure they have the resources needed to implement the IT solutions your business requires.

To help you find the perfect partner for your business, consider the following questions when contracting the services of an IT company.*

A Microsoft Partner Company Snapshot

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1. How long has your organisation been in business? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Notes: |
| 2. What level of Microsoft Partner are you? (Registered, Certified or Gold Certified) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| – What other companies or organisations are you a partner of? (i.e. Citrix, HP, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 3. Are you a publicly listed company in Australia or overseas? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| – What is your company's revenue of turnover for the last 3 financial years? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 4. Are you a local or global organisation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 5. How many people work for your organisation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| – How many of these are Microsoft Certified Professionals or certified by other organisations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 6. What percentage of your business is run with contractors? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 7. How long have you (as a sales manager) been working for this organisation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Company Experience

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|
| 8. What IT specialisations or Microsoft Competencies does your company have? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Notes: |
| – How can these specialisations or Microsoft Competencies help my business needs? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 9. What industries are your existing clients in?
e.g. Financial, Telecommunications, Medical. | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| – How do you see your solution working for the industry my business is in?
(if applicable) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 10. On average, how large are the businesses you currently offer solutions to? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

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Customer References

11. Can you supply customer references/case studies for similar projects to my needs? **Notes:**
- Would you be happy to supply contact details for at least two of these customers so I can contact them?
12. Describe a previous customer implementation inc. achievements and outcomes.
- What business requirements did the project solve for your customer?
- What was the primary benefit for the customer?

Implementing the Solution

13. What are the steps your company takes when deploying your service? **Notes:**
14. What would be the processes involved for you when managing my business' project?
- Would my project be managed by a certified professional?
15. How many people would be working on the implementation of the solution for my business?
16. What is your Service Level Agreement (SLA) for this project (if applicable).
17. What after sales support services and technical support do you offer?

Benchmarking

18. How do you measure your success as a company? **Notes:**
19. How do you set yourself apart from your competitors?
20. How do you compare against industry standards?
21. How can your organisation add value to my business?
- How does this compare with your competitors?

Terms and Conditions

22. What are your standard payment and contract terms? **Notes:**
- Fixed/Variable rates.
23. How do you deal with out of scope work/variations?