

Rhyme

IT BUYING GUIDE



A Practical Guide to Building the Right IT Strategy
Built for today's IT environment—security, support, & strategy aligned.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Understand your options, evaluate your environment, and plan your next steps with confidence.



04 – Where Are You Today?

Understand your current systems, challenges & risks

06 – Why Businesses are Rethinking IT?

What's changing & why traditional approaches fall short

08 – What Managed IT Really Means

Break-fix vs. in-house vs. managed services, simplified

10 – Is Managed IT Right for You?

When it makes sense & what to consider

11 – Co-Managed vs. Fully Managed IT

Choosing the right level of support for your team

12 – What to Expect from the Right Partner

What great IT support should look like

14 – How an IT Assessment Works

Your first step toward improving your IT environment

16 – Infrastructure, Hardware & IT Strategy

Planning for performance, lifecycle & long-term success

18 – Understanding Pricing

What drives cost & how to evaluate it

20 – Your Next Step

Start with an IT Assessment

Not sure where to start? You're in the right place.



WHERE ARE YOU TODAY?

UNDERSTAND YOUR CURRENT SYSTEMS, CHALLENGES & HIDDEN RISKS

Technology plays a role in nearly every part of your business but managing it isn't always straightforward.

For many organizations, IT has evolved over time with quick fixes, added tools, and growing demands. What starts as a few simple solutions can quickly become complex, difficult to manage and harder to support.

COMMON CHALLENGES:

- Frequent IT issues or unexpected downtime
- Slow response times when problems arise
- A mix of systems, tools & vendors that don't work well together
- Limited visibility into your network, security, or overall performance
- Internal resources stretched thin trying to keep up with day-to-day support

THE HIDDEN COST OF IT

The purchase price of technology is only a small part of the overall investment. Over time, the cost to maintain, support, and update your systems can be four times higher than the original purchase price.

These costs often show up in ways that aren't immediately obvious:

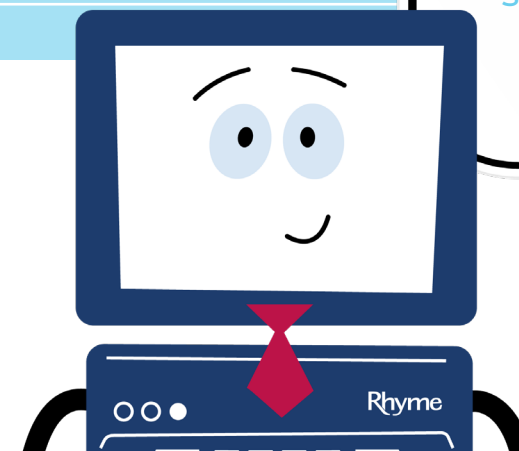
- Time spent troubleshooting issues
- Lost productivity during downtime
- Ongoing updates, patches & maintenance
- Security risks & potential breaches
- The need to replace or upgrade outdated equipment

A QUICK SELF-CHECK

Take a moment to consider your current environment:

- How are IT issues handled today?
- Do you feel confident in your network security?
- Are systems proactively maintained or only addressed when something breaks?
- Do you have clear visibility into your IT costs?
- Is your current approach helping your business grow or holding it back?

If any of this sounds familiar, you are not alone.



WHY BUSINESSES ARE RETHINKING IT

WHAT'S CHANGING & WHY TRADITIONAL APPROACHES FALL SHORT

Technology has become more essential and more complex than ever before.

What used to be manageable with occasional support now requires ongoing attention, planning and expertise. As businesses grow and rely more heavily on technology, the way IT is managed has had to evolve.

THE SHIFT FROM REACTIVE TO PROACTIVE

Traditionally, IT support has been reactive—issues are addressed only after something breaks.

But by the time a problem is visible, the impact has already been felt:

- Downtime disrupts operations
- Productivity is reduced
- Data may be lost or compromised

Today, more organizations are moving toward a proactive approach—identifying & resolving issues before they affect the business.

GROWING COMPLEXITY

Most IT environments don't stay simple for long.

Over time, systems are added, updated, and layered on top of one another. Without a clear strategy, this can create:

- Inconsistent systems & configurations
- Gaps in security or oversight
- Increased reliance on multiple vendors or tools
- Difficulty managing updates, integrations, & performance

INCREASED RISK

With more technology comes greater responsibility to protect it.

Cybersecurity threats continue to evolve and businesses are expected to maintain secure, up-to-date systems. Without consistent monitoring, maintenance, and user awareness, the risk of disruption or breach increases.

A NEW APPROACH TO IT

Because of these changes, many organizations are rethinking how IT is managed.

Instead of treating IT as a reactive service, it's becoming a strategic function—one that supports growth, improves efficiency and reduces risk over time.



WHAT MANAGED IT REALLY MEANS

BREAK-FIX VS. IN-HOUSE VS. MANAGED SERVICES, SIMPLIFIED

There are a few different ways organizations manage their IT & each comes with its own trade offs.

Understanding the differences can help you determine which approach best supports your business today & in the future.

THREE COMMON APPROACHES:

1. BREAK-FIX (REACTIVE SUPPORT)

With the **break fix** model, support is only used when something goes wrong. This approach can seem cost-effective upfront since there are no ongoing service fees. However, costs are unpredictable and often higher over time due to emergency repairs, downtime, and lost productivity.

Because support is reactive, issues are addressed after they occur—when the impact has already been felt.

2. IN-HOUSE IT (INTERNAL RESOURCE)

Some organizations rely on internal staff to manage their IT environment.

An **in-house** resource can develop a strong understanding of your systems and day-to-day operations. However, IT has become broad and complex, and it can be difficult for one person or small team to effectively manage everything, including infrastructure, applications, security, and long-term planning.

This approach is also typically the most expensive, requiring salaries, benefits, ongoing training, and additional resources to support growing technology needs. Support coverage may also be limited outside normal business hours, making 24/7 support and monitoring more difficult to maintain internally.

3. MANAGED IT (PROACTIVE & ONGOING SUPPORT)

A **Managed Service Provider (MSP)** takes on the responsibility of maintaining and supporting your IT environment.

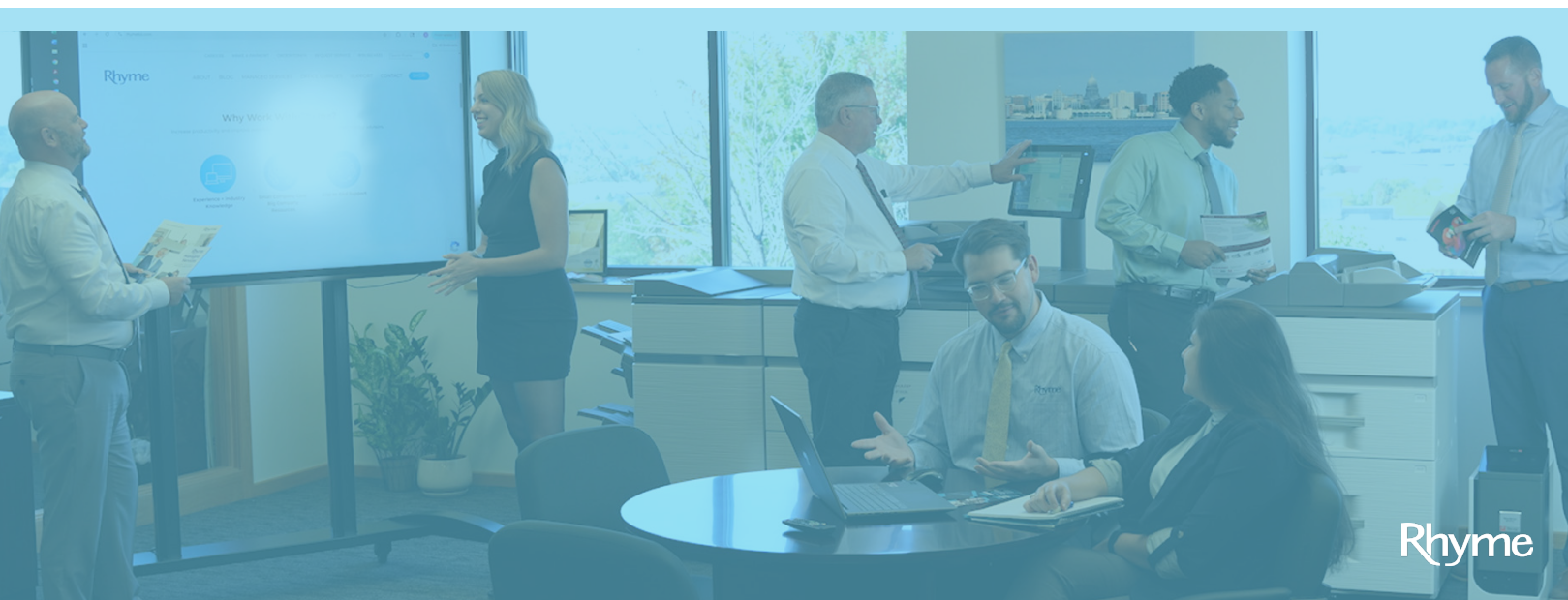
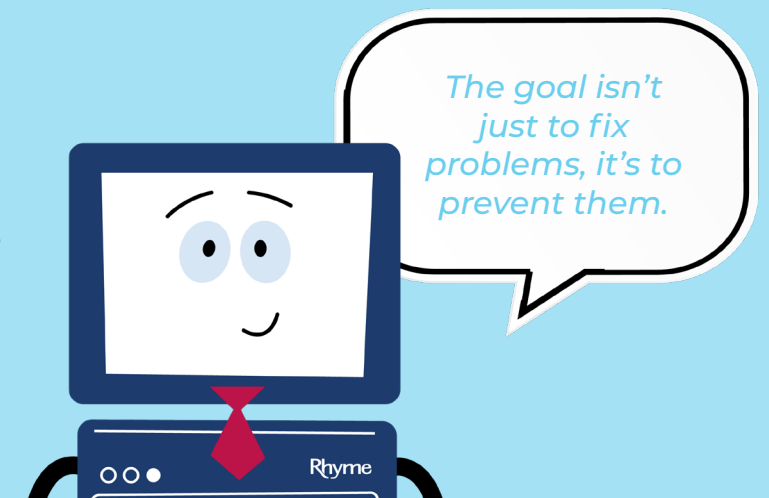
Instead of reacting to issues, the focus is on proactive monitoring, maintenance, and continuous improvement. The goal is to identify and resolve potential problems before they disrupt operations.

This approach provides access to a team of specialists, predictable costs, and a more strategic way to manage technology over time.

A DIFFERENT WAY TO THINK ABOUT IT

With a managed approach, IT becomes more than just support—it becomes part of your business strategy.

Rather than fixing problems as they arise, the focus shifts to stability, planning, & making sure your technology supports your long-term goals.



IS MANAGED IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

WHEN IT MAKES SENSE & WHAT TO CONSIDER

Every organization's IT needs are different. The right approach depends on your internal resources, how your systems are used, and how much technology impacts your day-to-day operations.

MANAGED IT MAY BE A GOOD FIT:

- Your team relies on technology to stay productive & connected
- Downtime or IT issues create disruptions to daily operations
- Internal resources are spending too much time troubleshooting
- You're looking for more consistency & predictability in IT costs
- Security, backups, & system performance are ongoing concerns
- You're planning for growth & need a more scalable approach

IT MAY NOT BE THE RIGHT FIT IF:

- You already have a fully staffed IT team managing everything effectively
- Your environment is very small with minimal technology needs
- You prefer a break-fix approach & are comfortable with variable costs

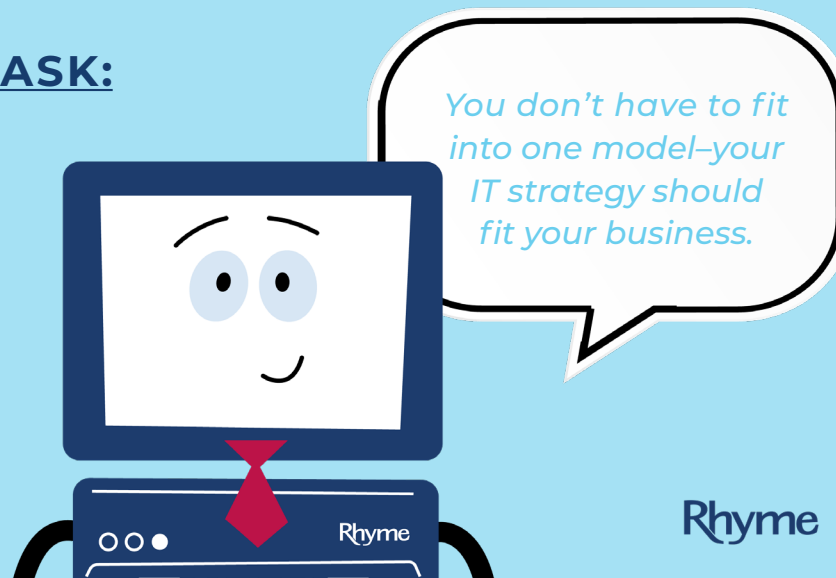
A BETTER QUESTION TO ASK:

Instead of Asking:

"Do we need IT support?"

Ask:

"Is our current approach helping our business move forward or holding it back?"



CO-MANAGED vs. FULLY MANAGED

CHOOSING THE RIGHT LEVEL OF SUPPORT

Not every organization needs to fully outsource IT. Many benefit from a flexible approach that supports their existing team while filling in gaps where needed.

CO-MANAGED IT

Designed to work alongside your internal IT resources.

BEST FOR ORGANIZATIONS THAT:

- Have internal IT staff but need additional support
- Want help with specific areas like security, monitoring, or help desk
- Need to free up internal resources for larger projects
- Are looking to expand capabilities without increasing headcount

WHAT IT PROVIDES:

- Shared responsibility between internal, & external teams
- Access to additional tools, support & expertise
- Flexibility to scale support as needs change

FULLY MANAGED

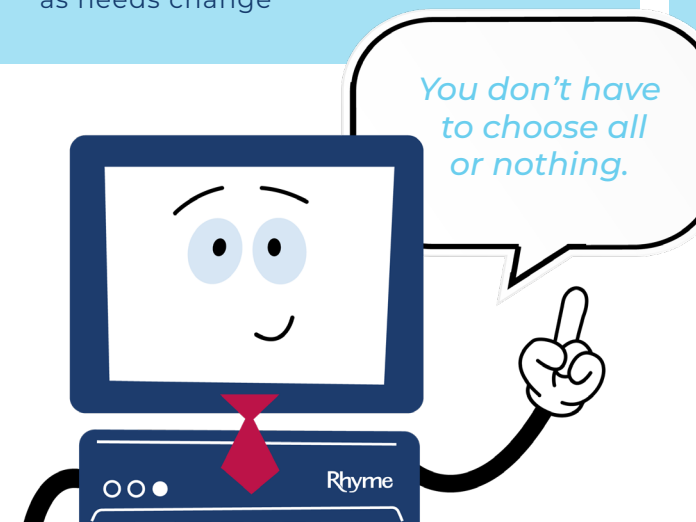
A complex solution where your IT is fully supported & managed by an external team.

BEST FOR ORGANIZATIONS THAT:

- Do not have internal IT staff
- Want a single partner to handle all IT needs
- Need consistent, proactive support & monitoring
- Prefer predictable monthly costs & simplified management

WHAT IT PROVIDES:

- End-to-end IT support
- Proactive maintenance & monitoring
- Ongoing guidance & long-term planning



FLEXIBLE BY DESIGN

Many organizations start with one approach & evolve over time. The right solution should align with your current needs while allowing for flexibility as your business grows.

WHAT GREAT IT SUPPORT INCLUDES:

The right partner should bring structure, consistency, and a proactive approach to managing your technology, while aligning with your goals as your organization grows.

PROACTIVE SUPPORT & MAINTENANCE

Issues are identified and resolved before they disrupt your business. Ongoing monitoring, updates & maintenance help keep systems running smoothly and reduce unexpected downtime. Systems are continuously monitored **24/7/365**, so potential issues can be addressed before

RESPONSIVE HELP DESK SUPPORT

When something does come up, support should be easy to access and quick to respond. Your team should have a clear, reliable way to get help, without long wait times or complicated systems. Support should be available anytime, with direct access to a live, local team that understands your environment.

STRATEGIC GUIDANCE & PLANNING

IT should support where your business is going, not just where it is today. A strong partner helps plan for future needs, recommends improvements, and aligns technology with your long-term goals.

TECHNOLOGY PLANNING FOR GROWTH

As your business evolves, your technology should scale with it. This includes planning for equipment lifecycles, system upgrades, and the tools your team will need as it grows, so you're not forced into reactive decisions or unexpected costs.



SECURITY FOCUSED APPROACH

Protecting your systems and data is a critical part of modern IT support. This includes regular updates, monitoring for potential threats, and helping your team stay aware of common risks.

CLEAR PROCESS & ONBOARDING

A smooth transition and structured onboarding process set the foundation for long-term success. You should know what to expect in the first few weeks & how your environment will be supported moving forward.

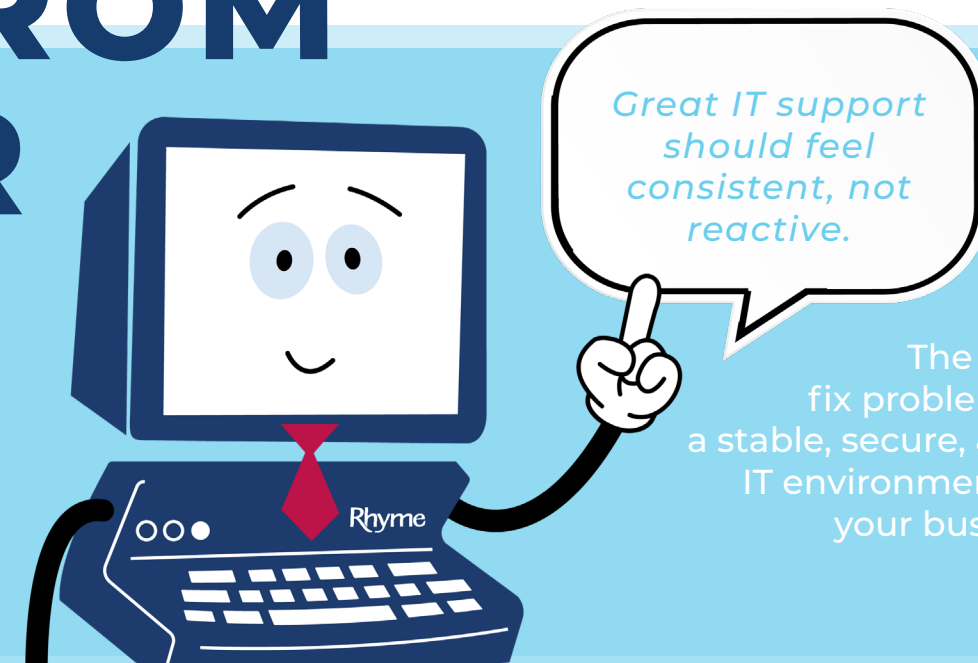
THE RIGHT FIT

Beyond services & tools, your IT partner should feel like an extension of your team. Communication, responsiveness, and overall approach should align with how your organization operates.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE RIGHT PARTNER

WHAT GREAT IT SUPPORT SHOULD ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE

Choosing an IT partner isn't just about solving day-to-day issues—it's about finding a team that supports your business over time.



The goal isn't just to fix problems—it's to create a stable, secure, & well managed IT environment that supports your business every day.



HOW AN IT ASSESSMENT WORKS

WHAT IS AN IT ASSESSMENT?

An IT Assessment is a structured process used to evaluate your current environment and identify opportunities for improvement.

It provides a clear understanding of your systems, how they're being used, and where there may be risks, inefficiencies, or gaps.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Identify potential risks
- Plan for upgrades or growth
- Understand true costs
- Make informed technology decisions

An IT Assessment brings those details into focus so you can move forward with clarity.

A STARTING POINT FOR BETTER DECISIONS

The goal isn't just to gather information—it's to give you a clear, actionable understanding of where you are today and what steps make sense next.

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

An IT assessment looks at the key components of your environment, including:

- Number of users, devices, & systems
- Server infrastructure & configurations
- Network setup & connectivity
- Business applications & how they're used
- Data storage, backup & recovery
- Security risks, vulnerabilities, & gaps
- Overall system performance & reliability

WHAT YOU GET:

At the end of the IT assessment, you'll have:

- A clear picture of your IT environment
- Visibility into risks
- Areas for improvement
- Visibility into current IT-related expenses & resource allocation
- Recommendations aligned with your business goals
- A road map to help guide next steps

BUILT AROUND YOUR BUSINESS

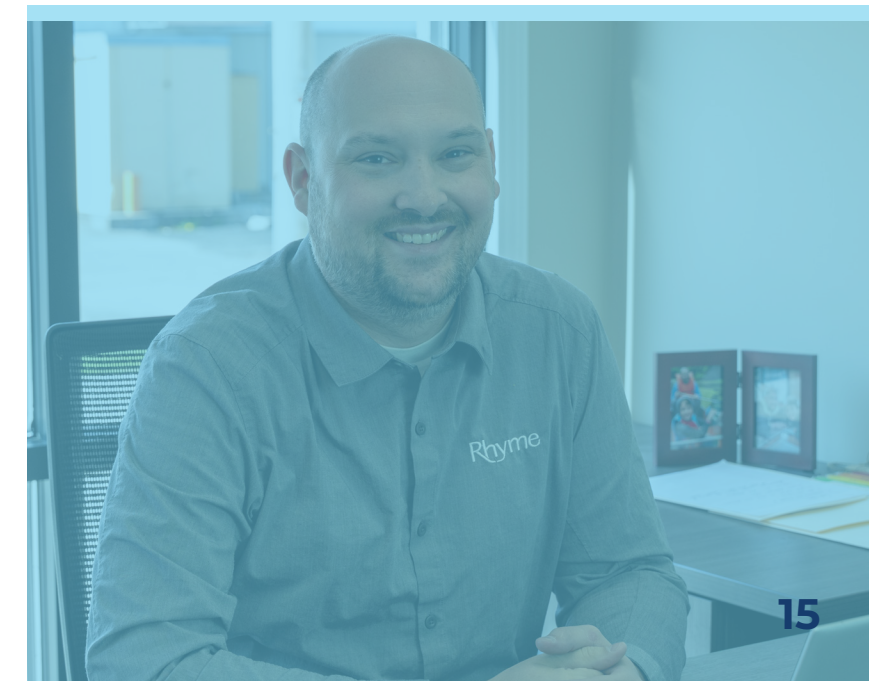
EVERY ORGANIZATION IS DIFFERENT

The assessment process is designed to align with your environment, your priorities, and how your team uses technology.

In addition to reviewing systems and infrastructure, time is spent working directly with end users—understanding the tools they rely on, how they use them, and where challenges exist. This creates a more complete picture of your business & helps ensure recommendations are practical, not just technical.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Once the assessment is complete, you can decide how to move forward, whether that's making improvements internally or partnering for ongoing support.



INFRASTRUCTURE, HARDWARE, & IT STRATEGY

PLANNING FOR PERFORMANCE, LIFECYCLE & LONG-TERM SUCCESS

A STRONG FOUNDATION MATTERS

Your IT environment is only as effective as the foundation it's built on.

From servers and networks to devices and applications, each component plays a role in overall performance, reliability, and security.

MORE THAN JUST EQUIPMENT

Technology decisions aren't just about what you have today—they're about how those systems will perform over time.

Without a plan in place, equipment can become outdated, unsupported, or unable to keep up with growing demands.

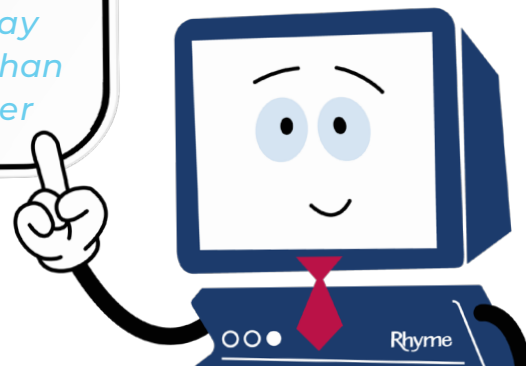
PLANNING FOR THE FULL LIFECYCLE

A structured approach helps ensure your technology continues to support your business as it evolves.

This includes:

- Understanding the age & condition of existing equipment
- Planning for regular updates & replacements
- Avoiding unexpected failures or emergency upgrades
- Aligning technology investments with business needs

The right plan helps you stay ahead rather than reacting later



HARDWARE APPROACH & FLEXIBILITY

FLEXIBLE OPTIONS FOR MANAGING HARDWARE

There are different ways to approach hardware & infrastructure and the right choice depends on your goals, budget, and long-term plans.

PURCHASING EQUIPMENT

Buying equipment outright can provide full ownership, but it often requires larger upfront investments and planning for future replacement cycles.

LEASING OR SUBSCRIPTION-BASED MODELS

Options like leasing or hardware-as-a-service (HaaS) allow organizations to spread costs over time & keep technology more up to date.

These approaches can:

- Reduce large upfront expenses
- Provide more predictable monthly costs
- Make it easier to refresh equipment on a regular schedule

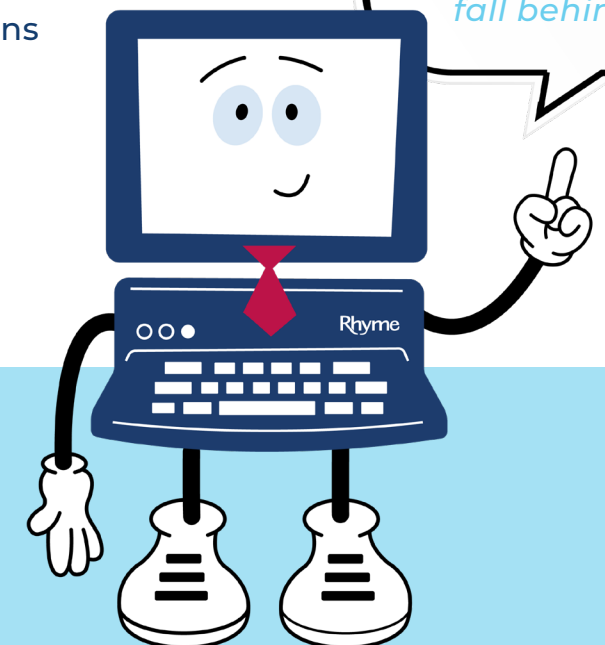
FINDING THE RIGHT APPROACH

There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The right strategy balances performance, cost, and long-term planning, ensuring your infrastructure supports your business today while staying flexible for what comes next.

HOW IT CONNECTS BACK

The insights gathered during an IT Assessment help guide these decisions—ensuring infrastructure strategy is based on real data, not assumptions.

Technology should evolve with your business—not fall behind it





UNDERSTANDING PRICING

WHAT DRIVES COST & HOW TO EVALUATE IT

SIMPLE, PREDICTABLE PRICING

Managed IT pricing is designed to be consistent and easy to plan for. Instead of unexpected costs tied to individual issues, most services are structured as a monthly investment based on your environment and support needs.

WHAT IMPACTS COST

Pricing can vary depending on several factors, including:

- Number of users & devices
- Server infrastructure & complexity
- Data storage, backup, & recovery requirements
- Security needs & risk profile
- Level of support required (co-managed vs fully managed)
- Expected on-site & remote support needs

BUILT AROUND YOUR ENVIRONMENT

No two organizations are the same.

Your pricing should reflect your specific needs—based on how your systems are used, how your team works, & what level of support makes the most sense.

COMMON PRICING APPROACHES

Most Managed IT solutions are structured in one of two ways:

1. PER USER

A monthly cost based on the number of users (employees) supported.

This is the most common model and works well for organizations where each user relies on multiple devices or systems.

2. PER DEVICE

A monthly cost based on the number of devices being managed (desktops, laptops, servers, etc.).

This approach may make sense in environments where device usage is more consistent and predictable.

FLEXIBLE BY DESIGN

Some organizations use a hybrid approach—especially when combining internal IT resources with external support.

The right structure should align with how your business operates and be flexible as your needs evolve.

A RANGE TO EXPECT

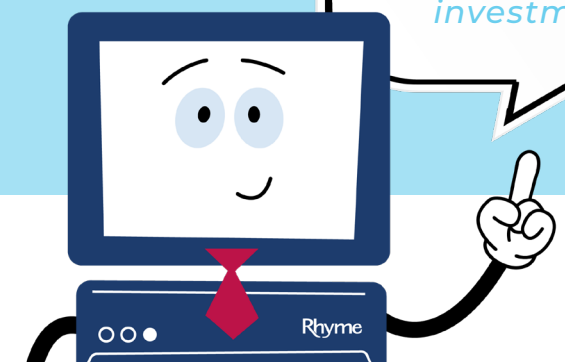
While pricing varies based on your environment and support needs, most Managed IT solutions are structured as a monthly investment per user.

As a general guideline, organizations can expect a range of:

- \$150-\$300 per user, per month

Your IT Assessment helps define the scope—ensuring pricing is aligned with your systems, security needs, & long-term goals.

No surprises. Just a clear, predictable investment.





Rhyme

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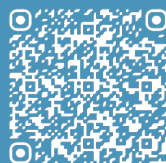
YOUR NEXT STEP STARTS HERE

Rhyme delivers Managed IT built around your business—not a one-size-fits-all solution.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT:

- 24/7 Support & Monitoring
- Co-Managed & Fully Managed Options
- Strategic IT Planning
- Security-First Approach
- Local Team. Long-Term Partnership

Start with an IT Assessment



Get a clear picture of your IT environment and where to go next.

[Rhymebiz.com](https://rhymebiz.com)
800.362.4333