

What Every Business Owner Must Know About Hiring An Honest, Competent, Responsive And Fairly Priced Computer Consultant

*Don't Trust Your Company's Critical Data And Operations To Just Anyone!
This Business Advisory Guide Will Arm You With 20 Revealing Questions You
Should Ask Any Computer Consultant Before Giving Them Access
To Your Company's Network*

Provided as an educational service by:

Jason Wachtel, President
Haycor Computer Solutions Inc.
101 Citation Drive, Unit 7
Concord, ON L4K 2S4
(905) 707-6775
www.haycorsolutions.ca



Jason Wachtel, President
Haycor Computer Solutions Inc.

Choosing the wrong computer consultant to support your network can be incredibly frustrating and expensive, and 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” of 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).
- 20 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 of which you will need to know about BEFORE even picking up the phone.
- Viruses, worms, spyware and hackers: what you need to know to protect yourself.
- 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.

About The Author



Jason Wachtel,
President

With 21 years of Managed IT and Cyber Security experience combined with no long-term contracts, we support professional service firms in the commercial trades industry located in the Greater Toronto Region. Our flexible, customized solutions are delivered by our in-house certified technicians and backed by our local, internal support desk. All our work is supported by our 100% satisfaction guarantee.

Haycor Computer Solutions began in 2006 when Jason Wachtel decided to apply his extensive experience, gained during a successful career with larger, well-known organizations, to start his own company. Jason's goal has always been his passion: to better serve the IT and computer needs of professional service firms, located in the Greater Toronto Area, that service the commercial trades industry.

As technology has changed and evolved over the years, so has Haycor Computer Solutions. Because we understand the needs of the industry, we have worked hard over the years to bring more innovative services to our clients, including cloud solutions, managed services, and SLA's.

Our main focus has always been and will continue to be on providing exceptional customer service. We want you to always feel like your needs are being met, and you are getting the effective and efficient results you need from your technology.

Moving forward, Haycor Computer Solutions is still as committed as ever to the customer experience, putting their needs before all else. We have taken great strides in providing the services and solutions modern businesses need to succeed, which includes moving into project management roles and overseeing a wide range of specialized IT projects such as data cabling and infrastructure. We are able to handle any or all of your IT needs, from cyber security, to backups and more.

Because you know your technology is being managed, maintained and supported by proactive professionals, you gain peace of mind. We provide the guidance and expertise necessary to make smart technology decisions and can help bridge the gap between you and your IT. Haycor Computer Solutions is focused on the well-being of your technology, so you are able to better focus on the important work you do.

We consider ourselves to be a "boutique" company, meaning we look after even the smallest needs of our clients. For every client, big or small, we take the time to build a mutually beneficial relationship. It's our goal to get to know the individual needs of a company and then cater our service offerings to meet those needs. The end result is happy clients with effective technology that helps grow their businesses.

20 Questions You Should Ask Your Computer Consultant Before Hiring Them To Support Your Network

Customer Service:

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

Our Answer: We answer our phones LIVE from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and give all our clients an emergency after-hours email address if a problem arises, including on weekends. We put a high priority on responding FAST any time, day or night. Why? Because many of the CEOs and executives we support work outside normal hours and find it the most productive time they have. If they cannot access their computer network AND can't get hold of anyone to help them, it's incredibly frustrating.

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

Our Answer: We guarantee to have a technician working to resolve your problem within 120 minutes or less of your call. This is written into every service agreement we give to our clients because it's our standard procedure.

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 as arrogant and make you feel stupid for asking simple questions?

Our Answer: Our technicians are trained to have the "heart of a teacher" and will take time to answer your questions and explain everything in simple terms.

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 2-4 annual review meetings with our clients to look for new ways to help improve their operations, lower costs, increase efficiencies and resolve any problems that may be arising. Our goal with these meetings is to help our clients be more profitable, efficient and competitive.

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. We also double-check our invoices for accuracy before they are sent to you.

Q6: Do they have adequate 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? In this litigious society we live in, you better make darn sure whomever you hire is adequately insured with errors and omissions insurance 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 rein to nickel-and-dime you as well as take as much time as they want to complete your 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 24-7-365 to constantly look for developing problems, security issues and other issues so we can address them BEFORE they can possibly affect your productivity, security, data and more.

Q9: Do they provide you with a monthly report that shows all the updates, security patches and the status of every machine on your network so you know for SURE your systems have been secured and updated?

Our Answer: Every month our clients get a detailed, yet easy-to-read report that shows an overall health score of their network and the updates to their antivirus, security settings, patches and other important network checks (like hard-drive space, backups, speed and performance, etc.).

Q10: Is it standard procedure for them to provide you with written network documentation detailing what software licenses you own, critical passwords, user information, hardware inventory, etc., or are they the only person with the “keys to the kingdom”?

Our Answer: All clients receive this network documentation in written and electronic form at no additional cost. We also perform a regular updates on this material and make sure certain key people from your organization have this information and know how to use it, giving you complete control over your own network.

Side Note: You should NEVER allow an IT person to have that much control over you and your company. If you get the sneaking suspicion that your current IT person is keeping this under their control as a means of job security, get rid of them (and we can help to make sure you don't suffer ANY ill effects). This is downright unethical and dangerous to your organization, so don't tolerate it!

Q11: Do they have other technicians on staff who are familiar with your network in case your regular technician goes on vacation or gets sick?

Our Answer: Yes; and since we keep detailed network documentation (basically a blueprint of your computer network) and updates on every client's account, any of our technicians can successfully pick up where another one has left off.

Backups and Disaster Recovery:

Q12: Do they INSIST on monitoring an off-site as well as an on-site backup, or are they letting you rely on outdated tape backups?

Our Answer: We do not allow our clients to use tape backups because they are incredibly unreliable. We make sure all of our managed clients have an image based onsite\offsite backup as well as a file level cloud backup.

Q13: Do they INSIST on doing periodic 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: Our systems perform daily “drills” 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.

Q14: 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.

Q15: If you were to experience a major disaster, do they have a written plan for how your data could be restored FAST and/or one that enables 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:

Q16: Is their help-desk North American 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 truly helpful. We consider this one of the most important aspects of customer service, plus we feel it’s important for keeping your data secure.

Q17: Do their technicians maintain current vendor certifications and participate in ongoing 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, 99% of the technicians who apply don’t make it through (guess who’s hiring them?).

Q18: 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.

Q19: Are they familiar with (and can they support) your unique line of business applications?

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

Q20: 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.

The 4 Most Costly Misconceptions About Computer Maintenance and Repair

Misconception #1: My computer network doesn't need regular monitoring and maintenance.

This is probably one of the biggest and most costly misconceptions that business owners have. Usually this is because they've been fortunate enough to have never encountered a major disaster; but that's similar to someone thinking they don't need to wear a seat belt when driving a car because they've never had an accident.

Computer networks are complex and dynamic systems that need regular updates and maintenance to stay up, running fast and problem-free. In fact, it's surprising how fast a brand-new PC will slow down after a few weeks of use without proper updates and maintenance. Here are just a FEW of the critical updates that need to be done on a weekly – if not daily – basis:

- Security patches applied – with NEW viruses and hacker attacks cropping up DAILY, this is a CRITICAL part of maintaining your network
- Antivirus updates and monitoring
- Firewall updates and monitoring
- Backup monitoring and test restores
- Spam-filter installation and updates
- Spyware detection and removal
- Monitoring disk space on workstations and servers
- Monitoring hardware for signs of failure
- Optimizing systems for maximum speed

Your computer network is just like a car: if you don't change the oil, replace the filter, rotate the tires, flush the transmission and perform other regular maintenance on your car, it will eventually break down and cost you FAR MORE to repair than the cost of the basic maintenance – and a car is far simpler than a computer network!

If your computer support tech does not insist on some type of regular, automated monitoring or maintenance of your network, then DO NOT HIRE THEM. Lack of system maintenance is the NUMBER ONE reason most people end up losing valuable files and incurring heavy computer repair bills. If your technician isn't offering you these services, you need to find someone else to support your computer or network for two reasons:

1. Either they don't know enough to make this recommendation, which is a sure sign they are horribly inexperienced, OR
2. They recognize that they are profiting from your computer problems and don't want to recommend steps toward preventing you from needing their help on an ongoing basis. After all, they'll get paid MORE to remove a virus than to make sure your system is patched, updated and secured (which can be done quickly and inexpensively with good monitoring).

Either reason is a good one to get as far away from that person as possible!

Misconception #2: My nephew/neighbor's kid/brother-in-law/office manager knows this computer stuff and can take care of our computers.

Most people look for a part-time “guru” for one reason: to save a few bucks. But this often comes back to haunt them. We frequently get calls from business owners who desperately need our help to get them back up and running or to clean up a mess that was caused by an inexperienced neighbor, friend or relative who was just trying to help.

If the person you have working on your machine does not do computer repair and support for a living, there is a good chance they won't have the knowledge or experience to truly help you – they are a hobbyist at best. And do you really want a part-time, inexperienced person responsible for handling something as important as your data and computer network? As with everything in life, you get what you pay for. That's not to say you need to go broke to find a great technician, but you shouldn't be choosing someone based on price alone.

Misconception #3: All computer technicians are created equal. Your best option will be the one who offers the lowest price.

As we stated a moment ago, you get what you pay for. A cheap price usually means a cheap job. Really good technicians do NOT work cheap because they are in high demand just like every other professional service category. The only technicians that will work cheap are those who are just starting, and they are grossly inexperienced.

And some shops will hire college kids or newbie technicians because they will work for next to nothing to gain experience, OR they allow interns to support your network because they don't have to pay them at all – but what you don't realize is that an inexperienced technician like this can end up costing more because:

1. They improperly diagnose problems, which means you're paying them to fix the WRONG thing and they STILL won't resolve your problem. Case in point: A few years ago a TV reporter went undercover to 8 computer repair shops in the city with a perfectly working PC, but simply disconnected a cable in the back (a fix that the AVERAGE computer tech would have caught in minutes with a visual inspection). Several shops improperly diagnosed the problem and wanted to charge them anywhere from \$59 to over \$275 to fix it!
2. They could take 3 to 5 times as long to do the same repair an experienced technician could fix quickly. Again, you're paying for those extra hours.
3. They could do MORE damage, costing you more money and downtime.

With your client data, accounting records, e-mail and other critical data at stake, do you REALLY want the lowest-priced shop working on your machine?

We take the view that most people want value for their money and simply want the job done right. You will find that we are not the cheapest, but we don't apologize for that. As the owner, I decided a long time ago that I would rather explain our higher rates ONE TIME than make excuses for POOR SERVICE forever. That said, we're not the most expensive either. We simply feel that we should offer a good service at a fair price. That's why we have been able to stay in business for over 14 years and have many customers who've been with us that entire time.

Misconception #4: An honest computer support company should be able to give you a quote over the phone.

I wish this were true, but it isn't. Just like a good doctor, an honest and professional technician will need to diagnose your network before they can quote any price over the phone; consider the example above where all that was needed was to plug in a simple cable. If someone brought that to us, we would just plug it back in and not charge them; but without SEEING the machine, we could have never diagnosed that over the phone.

Also, some consultants will quote you a cheap rate over the phone to get in the door, but then jack up the prices once they get in your office by taking 3 times as long, selling you add-ons and up-sells, etc. And finally, reputable firms don't charge by the hour anyway – they give you a fixed-fee, flat rate. Here's why...

One of the easiest ways to take advantage of a customer is to get them to agree to a time and materials repair. Unless you know what's wrong and how long it should take, they can soak you on the fees. And what are you going to do when they get 5-6 hours into a repair or project and then spring on you the news that it will take even longer than they anticipated to fix, costing you MORE money?

Always, always, always make sure you get a flat-rate, fixed-fee quote in advance so you don't end up getting burned – and NEVER take a phone quote!

More Mistakes To Avoid When Choosing A Computer Consultant

1. **Choosing a computer consultant based on a single phone call.** We recommend you invite them into your office and ask them for a written proposal. Be clear on what your expectations are and what type of problems you want them to resolve. As stated a moment ago, a competent professional should offer to do an audit of your network to diagnose your system BEFORE quoting you anything. After all, would you take a doctor's word that you need surgery if they hadn't done x-rays or other diagnostics? Of course not! Prescription without diagnosis is malpractice.
2. **Choosing a computer consultant that doesn't have a written money-back guarantee.** In our view, a good consulting firm should be accountable for their services and for fixing things RIGHT. If you aren't pleased with a job that was done, they should (at a minimum) make it right for free; and if they simply cannot resolve an issue to YOUR satisfaction, you shouldn't get stuck with the bill.

Plus, the fact that they stand behind their work with a money-back guarantee shows they have confidence in themselves to make you a happy client. And don't fall for the "We don't offer one because people will take advantage of us" routine. In our experience, MOST people just want an honest service at a reasonable price. If you give them that, they are happy to pay. Are there a few unethical folks out there? Of course, but they are the minority, and we would rather bite the bullet on the very few dishonest folks so we can gain the trust and confidence of the majority of clients, who just want their problems fixed fast and fixed right.

3. **Choosing a computer consultant without speaking to several of their current clients.** Check their references! Don't just take the sales guy's word that they are good – ask to speak to at least 3 or 4 clients that are similar to you in size and scope. If they hesitate or cannot provide you with references, don't trust them!

Another good sign is that they should have multiple client testimonials and success stories posted on their web site and throughout their marketing collateral. A lack of this may be a sign that they don't HAVE clients who are happy enough to provide a good reference – again, a warning sign.

4. **Choosing a computer consultant who cannot remotely monitor, update and support your network.** In this day and age, a computer consultant who doesn't do this is living in the Stone Age. You want someone to do this because it will dramatically increase your network's security and will enable them to do faster repairs. That's not to say they shouldn't come on-site; but remote monitoring and repairs make fixing problems FASTER for YOU and help AVOID problems cropping up in the first place.

A Final Word...

I hope you have found this guide to be helpful in shedding some light on what to look for when outsourcing the support of your company's network. As I stated in the opening of this report, my purpose in providing this information was to help you make an informed decision and avoid getting burned by the many incompetent firms offering these services.

If you have any additional comments or questions, we welcome them! Have an idea to make this guide even more helpful? Let us know! And, of course, if you are looking for someone you can trust to take over the care and maintenance of "all things digital" in your office, we'd love the opportunity to EARN your business.

Below you will find information on how to request a FREE Network Health Check and Diagnosis. This is, of course, provided for free, with no obligations and no expectations on our part. I want to be clear that this is NOT a bait-and-switch offer or a trick to get you to buy something. My reputation for running an honest and trustworthy business is something I hold very dear. I would never jeopardize that in any way. So why are we offering something like this for free?

Two Reasons:

1. We are simply offering this service as a risk-free "get to know us" offer to people we haven't had the pleasure of doing business with. Again, our goal is to allow you to make an informed and confident decision – and offering this is one way we can help you better evaluate us.
2. This will allow us to determine if we even CAN help you. Obviously we can't help everyone, and our services might not be a good fit for you. Conducting this Health Check enables us to do a small project for you to help you evaluate whether or not we're the right company for you without risking your money.

Looking forward to your call!

The Team at Haycor Computer Solutions Inc.
Phone: (905) 707-6775
Web: www.haycorsolutions.ca

FREE Network Health Check For All Prospective Clients Who Want To Put Us To The Test!

As a prospective customer, we would like to offer you a FREE Network Health Check and Diagnosis (\$500 value). During this health check we will perform a comprehensive audit of your entire network to look for potential problems, security loopholes, spyware and other hidden problems that will cause the computers on your network to run slow, act funny, crash and lose data.

We will:

- Review your system backups to make sure they are working properly and CAN be restored quickly in the event of a disaster.
- Scan for hidden spyware, malware and viruses that MOST antivirus tools and software can't detect or won't remove.
- Check for security updates and patches to validate that your network really IS secure.
- Review your firewall and security settings.
- Check the integrity of your server and workstations hardware. (Side note: Did you know that hardware failure is one of the leading causes of data loss that CAN be detected early and avoided with proper monitoring?)
- Audit your virus definitions and protection.
- Conduct a visual scan of your server room and cabling to make sure your network is PHYSICALLY safe and set up properly.
- Check your overall system performance, space and settings to see if your network is running as fast as it could be.

Why Should You Care About This?

Because there are literally dozens of ways hackers and viruses can – undetected – gain access to and remotely control your network, corrupt your data and use your network as a conduit for spreading spam, viruses and even illegal software.

There are numerous system checks and updates that should be done on a regular basis to ensure maximum speed, performance and security. Ignore them and your system will get progressively slower, more unstable and susceptible to viruses, spyware and hackers.

Tape backups have a failure rate of 100% – that means all tape drives will fail at some point, often without warning. You don't want to find out that your backup was not working the day after your hard drive fried.

How To Request Your FREE Network Health Check:

**Call me! Our number is (905) 707-6775
or email me at jason@haycorsolutions.ca**

What Our Customers Are Saying About Us:



Steve Switzer,
Broker and
Managing Partner
*Forest Hill
Real Estate*

They Streamlined Our Business And Saved Us Money – HIGHLY Recommend!

Haycor has really helped streamline our business. Our software was a hodgepodge of products and services from different providers, with licenses constantly expiring at different times across platforms. Haycor implemented an Office 365 solution that made sense for our business and **saved us money by eliminating unnecessary services we were previously paying for.** Their help with our security issues, network configuration and proactive approach support has been immeasurable in protecting our network and helping us recover files that were damaged in a targeted attack by hackers. I would strongly recommend Haycor to any business or any size, as **they have proven that they can tailor a solution to suit the needs of any enterprise.**



David Rudnick,
Director and
Co-Owner
*Elite Camps
Training Centre*

We STRONGLY Recommend Haycor Because They Handle EVERYTHING 'IT' For Us!

If you are looking for reliable IT infrastructure solutions, **I strongly recommend the team at Haycor!** We've used them for over ten years and they have guided and supported us through projects such as server implementation, migration to the cloud and everything else network and infrastructure related. **They help us end to end** from requirements and scope management, to implementation, project management and production support!



Rene Preotu,
IT Operations
Engineer
*Neeland Group
Limited*

Twelve Years Of PEACE OF MIND Knowing Haycor Has Taken Care Of Our Systems.

With the large amount of user computers in our environment, we have huge piece of mind knowing that the Managed Services program keeps our systems up to date with critical and security updates and patches. Haycor ensures that they understand the detailed systems that we use and **always provides cost-effective recommendations and solutions using the best tools and services available,** from data backup, disaster recovery and security. During the past 12 years that our company has been working with Haycor, they have completed many projects of all complexity and size. **They always deliver high quality service** and we continue to be satisfied with their work.

www.haycorsolutions.ca