CR&T

Computer Research & Technology

CONSUMER AWARENESS GUIDE

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHOOSING AN IT PARTNER

You're faced with a barrage of confusing jargon, complex support agreements, and simply bad information. From low price contracts that seem to cover everything <u>except</u> the services you need, to high price contracts that simply don't deliver on their promises, how do you find a qualified, competent, professional IT support company?

You start by reading this guide. We created this guide to help you understand IT support services and agreements. With this information you can make an informed and intelligent decision.

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PARTNER

AND HOW TO CHOOSE A _GREAT_ IT PARTNER!

YOU BASE YOUR DECISION SOLELY ON PRICE

"The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of a low price is forgotten"
- Ben Franklin

It is impossible for any business in any industry to offer the cheapest price, have the highest quality and provide the best service all at the same time. Quite often with IT purchases a client will get quotes from multiple vendors but the only thing that really gets compared is the bottom line.

We'll get to the differences between IT companies later, but for now all you need to know is that when you ask for a quote "for a server" from multiple IT companies, you will almost never get identical quotes in terms of server functionality and performance. The same goes for computers, printers, photocopiers and most other IT equipment.

Great IT Partners produce IT systems planned, built and serviced by specialist professionals using quality components. Not surprisingly, this costs more.

YOU DON'T GIVE THE DECISION THE ATTENTION IT REQUIRES

By not acknowledging that IT forms a large (if not critical) part of most organisations these days, you run the risk of being at the mercy of a poorly performing IT system day in and day out. Skimping on the IT budget may save some dollars initially, but it will cost later as employees sit around waiting for programs to open, and cause frustration when clients are on the phone and information is taking forever to be pulled from your accounting system.

Allocate a little time to talk with your IT Partner about your needs and plans now and for the future. Let your IT Partner explain how their solution will grow with you and be a business enabler, not a business detractor.

A great IT Partner doesn't just see you as another potential revenue stream. They'll also give your IT system decision the attention it requires.

YOU PUT TOO MUCH STOCK IN TECHNO JARGON

The kid around the corner probably knows a lot about overclocked, liquid-cooled, twin SLI'd gaming rigs, so that must mean he's handy enough to have a look at your work computer right?

Wrong!

There is an art to producing and servicing business IT systems. Qualifications are important – a good technician knows a lot about computers, but a great technician knows how IT systems are used in business and respects that IT systems are critical to productivity.

Great IT Partners aim to educate and empower clients, not create dependence by sprouting constant techno jargon to keep the client in the dark.

YOU WANT DROP-EVERYTHING SUPPORT ON EQUIPMENT YOU'VE PURCHASED ELSEWHERE

Price is important, and a lower price will almost always be found online or with a large national chain than with your local IT provider. But after sales service should also be considered.

Computers have an innate ability to fail at the worst possible time. And when that cheap computer that was purchased online fails right as an important business deal is closing, who is going to drop everything and rush to get it back up and running?

You might think that if an IT Partner wants your business badly enough, that's exactly what they'll do. But the fact is that a good IT Partner has enough loyal customers that they don't need to cater to price shoppers.

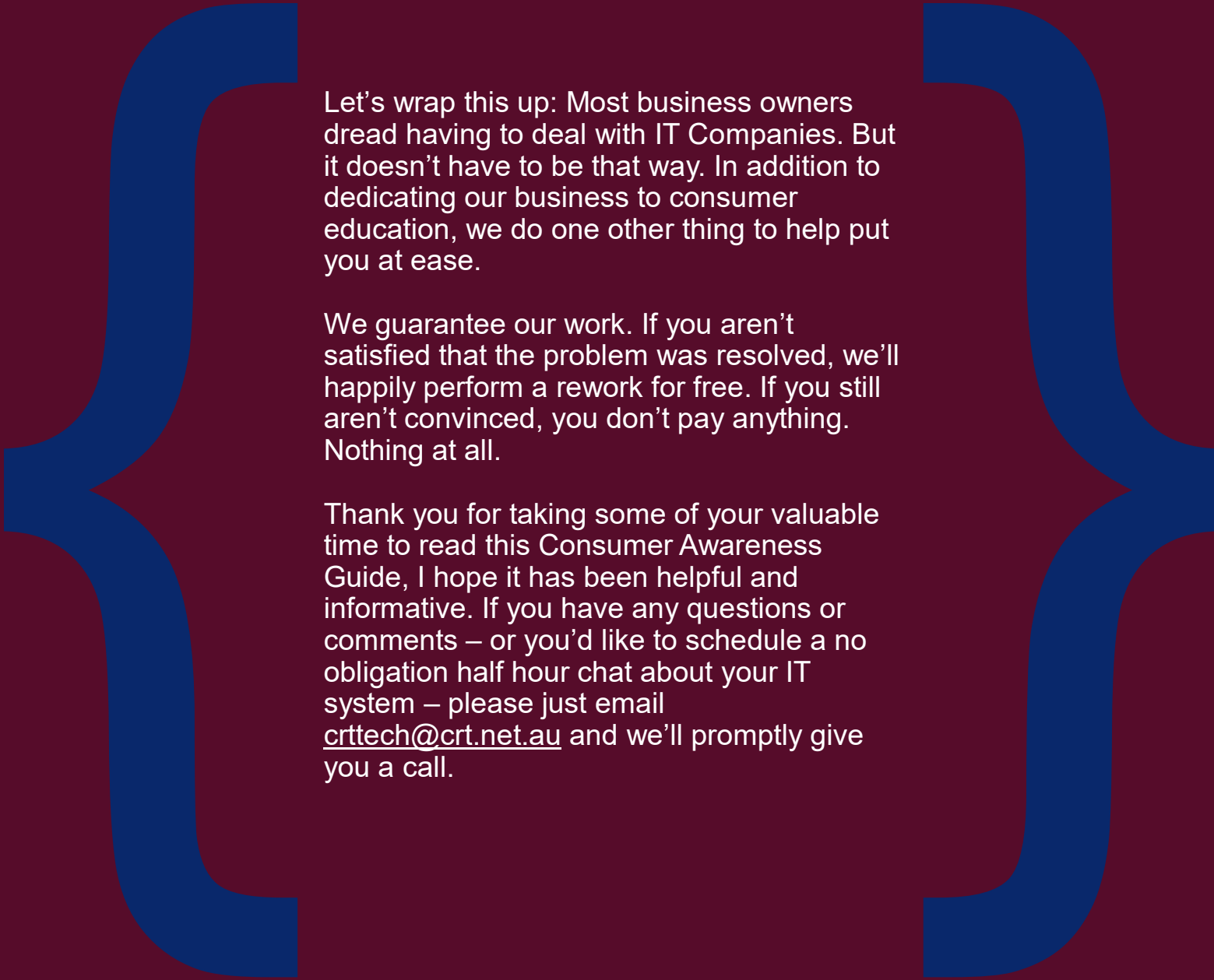***A great IT Partner will be loyal to you if you are loyal to them.***

YOU THINK ALL IT PARTNERS ARE THE SAME

Unfortunately, almost every business has been burnt by a maverick IT Partner. Many a shady character has gone into IT to make a quick buck, and on the other side of the scale many a computer enthusiast has failed to turn a hobby into a career. The result is poorly thought out IT systems and jaded business owners.

Look for an IT Partner that has an established history so you can trust they are going to be around for years to come. Choose an IT Partner that has a pool of talent with years of experience and proven results. And how do you do that?

ASK!

A great IT Partner should be proud of its history, staff and systems implemented for existing clients.

Let's wrap this up: Most business owners dread having to deal with IT Companies. But it doesn't have to be that way. In addition to dedicating our business to consumer education, we do one other thing to help put you at ease.

We guarantee our work. If you aren't satisfied that the problem was resolved, we'll happily perform a rework for free. If you still aren't convinced, you don't pay anything. Nothing at all.

Thank you for taking some of your valuable time to read this Consumer Awareness Guide, I hope it has been helpful and informative. If you have any questions or comments – or you'd like to schedule a no obligation half hour chat about your IT system – please just email crttech@crt.net.au and we'll promptly give you a call.