

The City and County Manager's Guide to IT Support Services & Fees

A comprehensive handbook on what every city and county government Manager, Administrator and decision maker MUST know about IT support services and fees.

Provided as an educational service by:
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The City and County Manager's Guide to IT Services & Fees

Are you the manager of a local government in the southeastern US and currently looking to outsource some or all of the IT support for your organization?

Read this guide and discover:

- The 3 most common ways IT support companies charge for their services, and the pros and cons of each approach.
- An IT billing model that puts ALL THE RISK on you, the customer; you'll learn what it is and why you need to avoid agreeing to it.
- Common exclusions, hidden fees and other "gotcha" clauses some IT companies put in their contracts that you don't want to agree to.
- How to make sure you know exactly what you're getting to avoid unanticipated disappointment, frustration and added costs later on.
- 21 revealing questions to ask your IT support firm BEFORE giving them access to your computer network, e-mail and data.



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A Note From the Owner, Hastin Slaton

I am Hastin Slaton, President and Owner of Capital Data Service, Inc., and author of 'The City and County Government Manager's Guide to IT Support Services & Fees.'

My team at Capital Data Service has been providing IT services to local governments in the southeastern US for over 20 years. You may not have heard of us before, but I'm sure you're familiar with one or more of the other local governments who are clients of ours. Check out some of their reviews by [clicking here](#).

One of the most common questions we get from new prospective clients is "What do you guys charge for your services?"

This is such a common question, and a very important one to address! To help create a better understanding of why this is the wrong question to ask, **I wrote this eBook providing government managers and administrators with:**

Never ask "What do you charge for your services?"
Instead you should ask
"What will I get for my money?"

- An easy-to-understand resource for answers to this question, as well as more information about the most common ways IT support companies package and price their services, and the pros and cons of each approach.
- Important "industry secrets" about IT service contracts and SLAs (service level agreements) that few city or county managers know to ask about when evaluating IT service providers - including possible hidden fees and terms locking you into a lengthy contract with a provider that is unwilling or unable to deliver the quality of service you need.
- A strong informed basis to select the right IT support company for your specific situation, budget and needs. This must be based on the VALUE the IT company can deliver, not just the price - high or low.

In the end, my purpose is to help you make the most informed decision possible so you end up working with someone who helps you solve your problems and accomplish what you want in a time frame, manner and budget that is right for you.

Dedicated to serving you,

Hastin Slaton

Comparing Apples to Apples: The Top IT Service Billing Models Explained

Time & Materials aka 'Break-Fix'

Essentially, you pay an agreed-upon hourly rate for a technician to fix your problem any time something breaks or has an issue.

Paid hourly

Possibility to negotiate discounted rate for pre-purchased block of service hours.

Scope can vary greatly, from simple virus removal to entire network upgrade.

Does not always have a specific beginning and end date clarified.

Some companies offer staff augmentation and placement under this model.

Managed IT Support Services

The IT service provider serves the role of your 'IT Department', managing and supporting all network devices and related issues.

Regular, predictable monthly billing

Unlikely to encounter unexpected costs and fees, as everything is usually negotiated upfront.

Scope is often all-inclusive, supporting everything from servers and devices, to managing data backup and network security.

When more complex issues arise, the IT service provider will help resolve everything, not just bits and pieces. Because they manage all aspects of your IT, you can feel confident that the issue will be resolved more completely across the board.

Software Vendor-Supplied Service

When a software company offers IT support for their customers in the form of a help desk or remote support for an additional fee.

Fees can vary

No options available for additional network support or security.

Scope is limited only to troubleshooting directly involving the software provided by that vendor. If issues occur outside of this, they will refer you back to your internal IT Department, leaving you to sort out any remaining issues.

No support offered for any other devices, applications, or other network functions.

May be valuable for certain application-specific issues, but is not enough support for what most businesses need to stay running and protected.

When looking to outsource your IT support, the two service models you are most likely to end up having to choose between are the "Managed IT Support Services" and "Break-Fix" models.

To determine what's best for you, let's dive into the risks and benefits of these two options and their typical fee structures. But first, let's take a look at the importance of ongoing network maintenance.

Why Regular Monitoring & Maintenance is Critical for Today's Computer Networks

Have you ever heard the Benjamin Franklin quote "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,"? When it comes to IT services, this idea is so significant.

Think about your network for just a moment. How dependent is your organization on the existing IT systems and the data held within them? If you're like most local governments, you likely store an ever-increasing amount of critical, private and possibly confidential data in your systems.

This growth in the amount of sensitive data we store in our systems has given rise to very smart and sophisticated cybercrime groups that work around the clock to do one thing: compromise your networks for illegal activities.

These compromising activities vary in severity and can include any of the following potential scams:

- Identify theft
- Credit card fraud
- Sending illegal spam
- Hosting pirated software
- Spreading network-wrecking viruses, spyware and malware
- Making entire networks inoperable while demanding ransom in exchange (ransomware)

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."
Benjamin Franklin

In order to protect your network against these types of attacks, you must remain vigilant in maintaining updates for firewalls and anti-virus solutions.

Another consideration is the possible occurrence of common "disasters", such as:

- Rogue employees
- Lost devices
- Hardware failures (THIS is the #1 reason for data loss)
- Fires and other natural disasters
- and many other issues that can interrupt or outright destroy your IT infrastructure and its data.

Additionally, **many organizations must maintain regulatory compliance** for hosting or touching credit card or financial information, medical records and even client contact information such as email addresses.

When you consider all of these risks, the importance of ongoing maintenance becomes clear.

So how do the two most common methods of IT support stand up to this challenge? Read on.

Consider the Risk: The Break-Fix Model

Most IT service companies selling Time & Materials (aka Break-Fix) services charge between **\$125 and \$150 per hour*** with a one-hour minimum. In most cases, you can negotiate a **discount of 5% up to as much as 20%** on their hourly rates if you agree to pay for a block of hours in advance.

Unless you currently have a competent IT person or team in-house proactively managing your computer network, **break-fix models can leave your network and it's security neglected**. The customer doesn't want to 'use up' the pre-purchased service hours for something that still seems to be working, and often does not understand the importance of ongoing maintenance or the associated risk by not updating regularly.

If you do have a technology person or team in-house, but need help completing an IT project by a certain date or require expertise that your in-house team cannot provide (such as a network upgrade or installing a backup solution), quoting for a specific, time-bound project can be beneficial.

Fees can range widely based on the scope of work outlined. **When quoting for a specific project, make sure you demand the following** from the service provider:

- **A very detailed scope of work that specifies what success is.** Be specific about what your expectations are in performance, work flow, costs, security, access, etc. Detailing your expectations up front goes a long way in avoiding miscommunication and additional fees later on.
- **A fixed budget and time frame for completion.** Agreeing to this upfront aligns your agenda and the service provider's. Be very wary of loose estimates that allow the consulting firm to bill you for "unforeseen" circumstances.

It is your IT service provider's responsibility to accurately assess and quote a project. You should not have to pick up the tab for a consultant underestimating a job or their inefficiencies. A true professional knows how to take into consideration those contingencies and bill accordingly.

Additionally, when considering the Break-Fix model for general IT support, you must recognize that there is a fundamental conflict of interest between you and the IT service provider.

Because they get paid hourly, they have little incentive to stabilize your network or resolve problems quickly. This can lead to **increased costs due to unforeseen circumstances**, scope creep, learning curve inefficiencies due to junior technician assignment, inaccuracies in time management, etc. Because of the billing structure, **this risk is now shifted to you.**

The bottom line is this: when it comes to specific outsourced projects supported by an in-house representative or team, Time & Materials services can be beneficial. Outside of that specific scenario, that approach is not a good idea for general IT support for one very important, fundamental reason: you'll ultimately end up paying for a pound of "cure" for problems that could have easily been avoided with an "ounce" of prevention.

*Quoted prices are industry averages based on a recent IT industry survey conducted of over 750 different IT firms. This does reflect our specific pricing model or approach.

Consider the Benefit: Managed IT Services

Most managed IT services firms will quote you a **monthly fee** based on the number of devices they need to maintain, back up and support. In the Southeast, that fee is somewhere **in the range of \$75 to \$100 per server, \$40 to \$50 per desktop and approximately \$20 per smartphone or mobile device.***

Why not just hire a full-time IT Manager? In most cases, **it is not cost-effective for local governments** with under 100 employees to hire a full-time IT person. Why? Because you can outsource this function of your organization far cheaper and with a lot less work. By truly understanding the cost of your time, and factoring in employee productivity, **the managed IT services model is** the best solution overall, and **considerably less expensive over time** than the "break-fix" model.

If you sign up for monthly managed IT services, here are some items that should be included:

- Security patches applied weekly, if not daily, for urgent and emerging threats
- Anti-virus 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

The following services may NOT be included and will often be billed separately. This is not necessarily a "scam" or unethical UNLESS the service provider tries to hide any of these fees:

- Hardware costs, such as new servers, PCs, laptops, etc.
- Software licenses
- On-site support

Warning! **There can sometimes be gray areas of "all-inclusive" service contracts.** In order to truly compare the "cost" of one managed IT services contract to another, you need to **make sure you fully understand what IS and ISN'T included**, as well as the SLA (service level agreement) you are signing up for. It's very easy for one IT services provider to seem far less expensive than another until you look closely at what you are getting. **In the next section, we'll review 21 questions to help you ensure you're getting the value you really want** from your managed IT service provider.

The bottom line is this: preventing network and security issues, and keeping your systems up and running is what managed IT services is all about. Rather than waiting for something to break or an emergency situation to occur (Break-Fix), your service provider works regularly to update and maintain your network. With the right IT service provider, you should be able to rest assured that your network - and your budget - will remain safe and on-point.

*Quoted prices are industry averages based on a recent IT industry survey conducted of over 750 different IT firms. This does not reflect our specific pricing model or approach.

21 Clarifying Questions to Ask Your IT Service Provider Before Signing a Contract

These questions will clarify exactly what you're getting for your money and how to ensure your needs for critical items, such as response time, adequate insurance, and uptime guarantees are met to your satisfaction.

These Questions will help you:

- Learn what you don't know to ask about the services your IT firm should be providing.
- Know exactly what you're getting to avoid unanticipated disappointment, frustration and added costs later on.
- Gain a better understanding of all aspects of IT service including customer service, network maintenance, backups & disaster recovery, and technical expertise & support.
- Feel more confident by learning the best practices of top IT service providers and why these practices are so important to the successful maintenance of your IT network.
- Fully understand how your needs will be met by your IT servicer and why you **MUST** get this in writing.



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What You Don't Know: 21 Clarifying Questions to Ask Your IT Service Provider

Customer Service:

1

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 24/7/365 and give all clients the company owner's personal cell phone in case an emergency arises - even on weekends. Why? Because many of the City and County Managers 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.

2

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

Our Answer: We guarantee to respond to a problem within 15 minutes or less of your call. This is written into every service agreement we give to our clients because it's standard procedure. Here is what one of our clients has to say about our response time:

"Using **Capital Data Service** has allowed us to stop the worry. All we have to do is pick up the phone and make a call. The team at Capital Data Service understands when we call we need assistance as soon as possible and it is **comforting to know we will be responded to quickly**. You can't go wrong with Capital Data Service! You have nothing to lose by choosing them as you IT provider."

Rebecca Marshall, Gilmer County Tax Commissioner

3

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.

4

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 quarterly 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.

21 Clarifying Questions, Continued

5 **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.

6 **Do they have adequate liability insurance as well as workers' compensation 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? Here's another question to consider: if one of their technicians gets hurt at your office, who's paying? In this litigious society we live in, you must make sure whoever you hire is adequately insured with both liability insurance AND workers' compensation — and don't be shy about asking to see their latest insurance policies!

True Story

A few years ago Geek Squad was slapped with multimillion-dollar lawsuits from customers for bad behavior by their technicians. In some cases, their techs were accessing, copying and distributing personal information they gained access to on customers' PCs and laptops brought in for repairs. In other cases, they lost a client's laptop (and subsequently all the data on it) and tried to cover it up.

Bottom line:

Make sure the company you are hiring has proper insurance to protect YOU.

7 **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 completing a project.

Maintenance Of Your Network:

8 **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 to constantly look for developing problems, security issues and other problems so we can address them BEFORE they turn into bigger problems.

21 Clarifying Questions, Continued

9

Do they provide service ticket management and tracking of your issues?

Our Answer: We keep a log of every issue that is received so that we can identify recurring issues and eliminate them. We also give you access to all tickets so that you can receive status reports for open and closed issues, and see what the resolution was for each. This also allows you to easily track the amount of time it takes us to resolve your company's network problems.

10

Is it standard procedure for them to provide network documentation detailing devices 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 in written and/or electronic form at no additional cost. We also perform a quarterly update 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 network.

Warning!

Never allow an IT person to have all the control over you and your organization. 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!

11

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 and updates on every client's account (basically a blueprint of the computer network and maintenance), any of our technicians can pick up where another one has left off.

12

When they offer an "all-inclusive" support plan, is it TRULY all-inclusive, or are their "gotchas" hidden in the fine print?

Our Answer: Our **Open Umbrella** all-inclusive support plan is just that: all-inclusive. You can depend on reliable service, fast response time and no unexpected fees.

One of the more popular service plans offered by IT providers in general is an "all-inclusive" or "all-you-can-eat" managed services plan. These are actually a good thing because they'll save you a lot of money in the long run. However, make sure you REALLY understand what is and isn't included. Some things to consider are:

- Is phone/e-mail help desk included or extra?
- What about network upgrades, moves or adding/removing users?
- Is hardware and/or software included?
- What about 3rd-party software support? (We recommend that this IS included.)

21 Clarifying Questions, Continued

- What are the costs/consequences of early cancellation?
- What if you aren't happy with their services? Do they offer a money-back guarantee?
- If the hardware and software is included, what happens if you cancel the contract?
- Are off-site backups included? To what degree?
- If you have a major disaster, is restoring your network included or extra?
- What about on-site support calls? Or support to remote offices?
- Are home PCs used to access the company's network after hours included or extra?

The interpretation of "all-inclusive" can vary greatly from one IT firm to another, so make the details are clear and concise. We have easy-to-read agreements so that you can feel confident in understanding what you are getting. We also do not have long-term agreements. If you are not happy with us in the first month for whatever reason, you pay us nothing. If our response is not within 15 minutes of you calling in an issue, your next month of service is on us. GUARANTEED!

Backups and Disaster Recovery:

13

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 tape backups are incredibly unreliable. We make sure all of our clients have an onsite backup solution, and we couple that with offsite backups to our secure data center.

14

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: We perform a monthly "fire drill" and perform a test restore from backup 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.

15

Q15: 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.

21 Clarifying Questions, Continued

- 16** **If you were to experience a major disaster, do they have a plan for how your data could be restored FAST and/or enable 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

- 17** **Is their help desk US-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 informed. We consider this one of the most important aspects of customer service, plus we feel it's important to keeping your data secure.

- 18** **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. Our engineers hold a variety of certifications from Microsoft, VMware, Sonicwall, IBM among many others. We are a member of **Tech Select** which is a small group of peers that receive biannual training on the latest technologies in the market. Membership to Tech Select is by invitation only. Plus, our hiring process is so stringent, 99% of the technicians who apply don't make it through. (Guess who's hiring them?)

- 19** **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 and 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.

- 20** **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 the liaison between you and your vendor to resolve problems you are having and make sure these applications work smoothly for you.

- 21** **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.

Next Steps...

Take control of your costs.

Request a FREE IT Optimization Plan

It is very common for governments to be unhappy with the quality of service and support from their current IT firm, but they tolerate it simply because they don't know who else to call, or they're just too busy to find someone else.

Take control of your IT costs & security today

Press or click here!

Request an Optimization Plan if:

- You have a nagging suspicion that your current IT provider is not delivering the quality of service you're paying for.
- You're experiencing chronic issues with your computer systems that your IT provider just never seems to resolve.
- It has become easier to find a work-around or try to fix issues yourself, than to call your IT provider.
- You're sending a check every month for IT services, but still don't really know what you're paying for. Is your network backed up in case of emergency? Is it being maintained for optimal security?
- You have started feeling like your needs have outgrown your current IT provider's service capabilities.
- You just want to double check that you're network is running at optimal performance, is backed up, and being maintained properly.

www.capitaldatainc.com/ITsurvey

Find out more and what's included in the FREE Optimization Plan.



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The IT Optimization Plan: Creating Value For You and Your Team

Why would we provide a 57-Point Security & Performance Assessment and IT Optimization Plan for FREE? For one simple reason:

We believe that providing extreme value in advance is the best way to showcase our services and commitment to helping each of our customers.

We stand by this principle and are confident that we will provide significant value to you and your organization. After reviewing your customized IT Optimization Plan, if you feel we wasted your time and did not find a way to dramatically improve your situation, **we will send you a check for \$100 immediately.** Why? Because your time is your most valuable asset and I respect that.

So How Does This Process Work?

Step 1: Visit the website below to complete a simple survey telling us a little more about your organization and the type of assistance you need.

www.capitaldatainc.com/ITsurvey

Step 2: Once we've received and reviewed your responses, someone from our office will call you to set up a time to meet that works for you. This meeting will last between 30 - 60 minutes so that we can initiate our 57-Point IT Systems Security & Performance Assessment.

Step 3: After our initial meeting, we'll prepare your customized **IT Optimization Plan** and a 'Report of Findings'. Together, these **will reveal any vulnerabilities** in your backups and security, as well as **show you opportunities to increase productivity** for your entire team through IT optimization.

Request your FREE custom
IT Optimization Plan now

Press or click here!



Your Experts in City & County Government IT Operations

We know that working with IT firms can be frustrating. When it comes to understanding your needs and providing timely critical support, you can rely on the Capital Data Service team to resolve matters quickly, always keeping customer service top-of-mind.

10 Reasons to Choose Us for your IT Support

- 1 We are experienced in Government operations.** Supporting local governments for over 20 years, we have developed relationships with the software providers that support each different department within your organization. We act as the liaison between you and your software providers, returning your focus to serving your community.
- 2 We understand the complexity of Government networks.** With so many departments and unique needs for each, government networks can be complicated, requiring complex security. Our certified, experienced network engineers and security experts make sure each department has the resources needed to perform their duties while maintaining complete security of your organization's data.
- 3 Response time.** We respond to you within 15 minutes of you notifying us of a problem. Many times an engineer is able to start working immediately on your issue at the moment you call in. For Open Umbrella customers, we guarantee this or give you the next month of service at no charge.
- 4 Your uptime is our incentive.** Other IT vendors will bill you for a time blocks or hourly. That means the more problems you have, the more money they make. Our incentive is to make sure you have fewer issues. In fact, we are structured so that when you have computer problems, it actually costs us money. And that's the way it should be!
- 5 Unlimited IT Consultation.** As your full time IT consultant, we will help your organization in areas such as developing a disaster recovery plan, data backup, and determining Cloud and VoIP feasibility.
- 6 We help you budget for IT support expenses.** Our Open Umbrella program allows you to budget what you will spend on IT support each year. With monthly invoices, your costs will not increase for any reason over the course of your budget year.
- 7 Only one throat to choke.** We support Windows, Linux and even IBM iSeries (AS400). This gives you one IT support company to deal with and eliminates finger pointing when there are problems. If something on your network is causing an issue, it is our responsibility and we own it.
- 8 No long term contracts.** Many companies lock you into a long term agreement. Whether you like the service or not, you're stuck. We GUARANTEE if you are not 100% happy with our service, simply give us a 30 day notice and we will help make plans to transfer your services to another company of your choice.
- 9 We believe in thorough documentation.** Do you know every piece of your IT investment and who has the usernames and passwords for access? When you bring us on we document your entire network in detail and every device username and password. We then give you a copy and keep record of it in our system. If there are changes to usernames or passwords, we edit those and document them in our system. If you ever need them, simply ask and we provide them to you.
- 10 Customer Service Oriented.** To join our team a person must prove themselves to be customer service oriented. We continually strive to rise above the stereotypical IT persona by being engaging and friendly from the first moment you contact us, providing an enjoyable IT experience.

Our Customers Say It Best:

Reviews from Local City & County Governments

My office provides service to taxpayers whom are my constituents. It is very important that I keep our operations up and running for the 8 hours we are open to the public. **I have always received prompt and professional service from your company.**



If someone was on the fence about choosing an IT firm I would definitely recommend your services.

Buddy Nesmith, Tax Commissioner, Twiggs County

Since 2005, we have been able to depend on Capital Data Service, Inc. for **quick and reliable IT support**. I can always call on them in an emergency or not and know I will not have to sort through a phone tree to get someone working on my problem.



Their expertise in network security is especially better than others.

If you are wanting a partner with a business that has the knowledge and capabilities of larger firms but gives support on a personal level then there is no reason to look any further than Capital Data Services, Inc.

Keith Wilson, IT Director, City of Acworth

Using **Capital Data Service has allowed us to stop the worry**. All we have to do is pick up the phone and make a call. The team at Capital Data Service understands when we call we need assistance as soon as possible and **it is comforting to know we will be responded to quickly**. You can't go wrong with Capital Data Service!



You have nothing to lose by choosing them as your IT provider.

Rebecca Marshall, Tax Commissioner, Gilmer County

For additional reviews and more information about Capital Data Service, Inc. visit:

www.capitaldatainc.com

About the Author: Hastin Slaton

President & Owner, Capital Data Services, Inc.

Hastin Slaton started with the company in May, 1992. He was hired on as an Account Executive with the sole purpose of selling computer hardware to companies and government entities. He was basically given a list of cold leads, a telephone and a small desk in a closet transformed into an office and told to start dialing. It was tough work but Hastin related it to fishing and he loves to fish. "You never know when you will bring in the big one," is what he always said.

After almost 4 years of working hard developing a client base the original founder of the company, Dave Cash, approached Hastin asking his assistance to help sell the company off to a local competitor. Hastin agreed to help Dave with his request and went home that night to ponder what had just hit him. After thinking over all of the possibilities Hastin decided that he would offer to purchase the company himself. He was 26 years old and only had his car, a home, 2 dogs and a wife. Buying a multimillion dollar company was not exactly something he could afford.

Hastin sold Mr. Cash on the idea and so Hastin started on a journey to gather funds to fulfill the tall order. To make the deal happen Hastin brought in a partner, Chip Reynolds, who was the Operations Manager for the company. Hastin and Chip put everything on the line in April, 1996 and lived a great business partnership together for 8 years. In 2004, Chip Reynolds decided it was time to move on to other business ventures and sold his half of the company to Hastin. They remain very good friends to this day.

During all of this time, Hastin worked closely with city and county governments in Georgia providing hardware maintenance and upgrade services. He learned quickly that many of these government entities were using the same software companies, leading Hastin on a path to develop relationships with these software companies. Too often software and hardware companies point fingers at each other when there is an issue. Hastin sought to prevent that from happening to his clients and he succeeded.

Today Capital Data Service, Inc. has come a long way from providing computer hardware maintenance and hardware upgrades to companies and government entities. They have become a one stop shop of IT solutions for city and county governments in Georgia. Working closely with city and county government clients, Capital Data Service has developed an all-inclusive IT support program called Open Umbrella. This program guarantees that city and county governments in Georgia will stay within their budget each year for IT support with no surprises.

For more information on how your organization can begin having predictable IT support costs each year with no long-term contracts or obligations contact Capital Data Service, Inc. by calling **(770) 277-9406** or emailing **info@capitaldatainc.com**.

For more information about our services and the latest in IT news visit:
www.capitaldatainc.com