

TEN CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING THE WEB HOSTING PROVIDER THAT IS BEST FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. PHYSICAL LOCATION OF SERVICE PROVIDER
2. STABILITY AND SECURITY
3. FLEXIBILITY OF SERVICES OFFERED
4. EXPERIENCED SUPPORT STAFF
5. QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE
6. FULLY REDUNDANT DATA CENTRES
7. PERSONALIZED PRICE PLAN
8. BREADTH OF CLIENT BASE
9. CLIENT REFERENCES
10. CANADIAN PRIVACY LEGISLATION COMPATIBILITY

1. PHYSICAL LOCATION OF SERVICE PROVIDER

Where will your database be physically located? Can you personally access your database if necessary/desired? What is the facility like? Is it well monitored and secure?

2. STABILITY AND SECURITY

How stable is the hosting environment? Size does not mean stability or security. With size, frequently personal and prompt service can get lost in red tape. Ask about the hosting environment – how long has it been in service, any past significant concerns with security or down time? What physical security is in place for your system/database? What about fire safety?

3. FLEXIBILITY OF SERVICES OFFERED

Explore with the hosting provider what types of services it offers – does it offer dedicated, managed or unmanaged hosting or shared hosting - these all have benefits, and you will want to choose what is best based on your business needs.

4. EXPERIENCED SUPPORT STAFF

Can you speak to someone with experience for technical support? How quickly is the provider's response time and how will they respond – by telephone, email or in person?

5. QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Do they understand your business and your service needs? Are they available to respond when you need attention? Is there a systems administrator or other more technical support staff that you can reach when needed?

6. FULLY REDUNDANT DATA CENTRES

Ask if the service provider's hosting environment is fully redundant in terms of power and internet connectivity. Is the connection running at maximum capacity? (If so, it might be slow). Is there redundant power to the servers to ensure no down time in the event of power failure. Is there a generator on site?

7. PERSONALIZED PRICE PLAN

You will get what you pay for. Take time to fully explore the options needed for your business and obtain a fee quote outlining the different elements of support being offered. Identify what is or is not included in your price plan and different alternative options. When will you be billed an "extra charge"?

8. BREADTH OF CLIENT BASE

Ask the service provider what types of business are currently being supported/serviced. Do any of these have similar configurations to your business needs?

9. CLIENT REFERENCES

Are any of the service provider's clients willing to provide a reference of their experience with the service provider? Do they have any particular success stories, areas of concern?

10. CANADIAN PRIVACY LEGISLATION COMPATIBILITY

Be aware of the requirements of Canadian privacy legislation and potential incompatibility with foreign legislation. For example, the US Patriot Act permits the US government to force US located service providers to provide access to otherwise confidential information in client databases where these are physically located on US soil, which is contrary to current Canadian legislation, where this information would remain confidential without proper consent to such disclosure. Therefore your organization, if its database is physically located in the US, may be exposed to penalties or fines under Canadian laws if such access occurs.