

The Tech chronicle

What's New

The road out of isolation is being stepped on trepidatiously, starting this month on 08 March 2021



Though return to the office for the majority of employees could still be a while off (if at all) preparation for moving forwards is key.

IT Genie are on hand to assist with keeping your employees together while socially distanced in the office or beyond with communication solutions and virtual collaboration software.

Talk to your IT Genie Account Manager or [contact us](#)



March 2021



Gino Choucair,
Managing Director
IT Genie.

Our Mission: Help businesses best deliver their solutions through innovative use of technology. From our (socially distanced) HQ in the heart of the Gatwick Diamond we support businesses through their challenges and build the right solutions to enable them to succeed.



3 Questions You Should Ask Any IT "Expert" Before Letting Them Touch Your Computer Network

There are seemingly countless IT services providers to choose from these days, and it can be challenging to tell one from another. However, not all IT services providers are created equal. Some offer independent services, while others are part of larger firms. Some are new to the field, while others have been around for years. There are also companies that put out slick marketing to grab your attention but make it hard to tell if they really live up to the hype.

Well, we're here to help you cut through the clutter. You want to hire someone who knows what they're doing and will take care of your business the right way. To do that, there are a few questions you should ask every IT expert before you let them anywhere near your network - to ensure you'll be in good hands.

1. What's Your IT Experience?

Education, certifications and hands-on

experience are all important. You want to know your "expert" is actually an expert. It's all too easy for someone to pass themselves off as an expert when they really have limited experience, so you should never hire an individual or a company without vetting them first. After all, this person (or team) will be handling EXTREMELY sensitive hardware and data essential to the operation of your business. This isn't the time to take risks or give someone the benefit of the doubt.

When you work with an IT services company, or MSP, you can generally expect that the people you work with are educated and experienced, but you should **always** ask. It's okay to dive in and ask them about their certifications, how long they've been doing their job and how familiar they are with your industry. And if you aren't sure what

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certain certifications are, feel free to ask follow-up questions. There's a very good chance they'll be more than happy to answer all of your questions, especially if they're a true professional who knows what they're doing!

2. What's Your IT Approach?

There are different approaches to IT and network security. You have the old-fashioned **break-fix** approach and you have the modern **proactive** approach. The break-fix approach used to be the staple of the IT industry – it was the business model of just about every IT support firm in the 1990s and early 2000s. This approach is pretty straightforward: something breaks, so you hire someone to come in and fix it. If many things break or something complicated breaks, you could be looking at a pretty hefty bill – not to mention the costs associated with downtime.

Today, most MSPs take a proactive approach (and if they don't, look elsewhere). They don't wait for something to break – they're already on it, monitoring your network 24/7, looking for outside threats or internal issues. They use advanced software that can identify trouble *before* it strikes. That way, they can go to work, proactively protecting your business so you avoid those hefty bills and long downtimes. These are companies that are willing to collaborate with you



and your business to make sure you're protected, your IT needs are met and you're getting your dollars' worth.

3. What's Your GUARANTEED Response Time?

This question often gets overlooked, but it's one that can make or break your business – and it can make or break your relationship with your IT services provider. You need to know that you won't be left in the dark when something goes wrong within your network. If you're experiencing a cyber-attack, or a power surge has taken out part of your server, the cost to your business can be catastrophic if your IT services provider can't get to you right away. The longer you have to wait, the worse it can get.

You need to work with someone who can give you a guaranteed response time in writing. It should be built into their business model or, better yet, the contract they want you to sign when you hire their services. They should be doing everything they can to instill confidence that they'll be there for you when you need them. If you're working with an IT company that doesn't have your full confidence, you may need to rethink that relationship.

“If you're working with an IT company that doesn't have your full confidence, you may need to rethink that relationship.”

Do you rely on each employee to manage their own email signature?



Email remains the primary form of business communication, so professional email signatures are required to consistently deliver your brand message.

Relying on end users to individually update and manage their signatures, is inefficient and, through no fault of their own, liable to inconsistency & errors. It's no less stressful or time consuming to task an IT admin to this role.

With a managed email solution from IT Genie we can ensure consistent presentation of your message, and the ability to deliver focused branding, targeted offers, and topical content - **Get control of your email signatures!**

Request your “10 Benefits of a Managed Email Signature Solution” guide - [click here](#)

Meet The Geek



This month's Meet the Geek feature brings you the 'chief-geek' - **Technical Director, Stuart Black.**

Geek or Nerd

Geek – A big fan of IT and a collector, often there are more computers in my home than family members! – When we moved in to our current house my first job was to cable a network point in to every room!

What do you do for IT Genie clients?

I keep up to date of the new trends in technology and make sure our service offering is current and relevant for our clients.

I'm the architect of high end solutions and sense check project plans, I work as the presales link between sales, project delivery and service desk.

Best advice ever given

Don't eat yellow snow! Sorry seriously . . .

Always be honest and upfront if something isn't going to plan communicate, communicate, communicate and get in front of any issues. You can't fix a situation if you don't have the facts.

Most useful software

Draw.io great for network diagrams & recently MS teams

Cannot live without gadget

Fitbit Versa2 – have to get those steps in!

Currently Listening to

Planet rock radio mostly, if not Metallica, Linkin Park, ACDC or Eminem....

Currently reading

Pluralsight's Managing Microsoft Azure Networking

First Proper Job

Estate agent, Freeman Forman Heathfield – Until they twigged I knew how to fix a computer.

Favourite spare time activity

Running, rock & roll, Chelsea FC & Warhammer 40,000 impossible to pick a favourite.

Claim to fame

When working as an estate agent I once visited, front man for The Who, Roger Daltrey's trout farm... (Lame)

To reach Stuart Black call 0345 0945 353, email stuart.black@itgenie.com or follow on [LinkedIn](#)

Making & Keeping Customer Connections In A Digital Era

Make the value that you give your customers so high it doesn't matter what the price is. Based on the experiences your brand consistently delivers, your customers should have no idea what your competition charges. You don't need to raise your prices. You need to bring value and better service. This includes employee training – and be sure they understand how to build and keep relationships.

3 Strategies To Dominate The Relationship Economy

- Use technology to allow employees to focus on what's most important: building relationships that result in higher customer loyalty.
- Build a culture that creates emotional connections with your employees.
- Create relationship-building training for new and existing employees.

Things That CAN Be Trained:

- Authenticity
- Insatiable curiosity
- Incredible empathy
- Great listening skills

The 1 Thing That CANNOT Be Trained:

- The ability to love people

Let's focus on what can be trained and what these traits look like.

Authenticity:

- You love what you do, and it's obvious.
- You're transparent – if you have bad news, don't hold it back.
- You are as committed to the success of your customer as they are.
- You know your clients' top three goals for the year.
- Your customer should not be able to imagine a world without your business in it.



Insatiable Curiosity:

- You're dying to learn about others.
- You want to know about both familiar and unfamiliar subjects.
- You're willing to meet as strangers but leave as friends.

Incredible Empathy:

- You look at things from the customer's perspective.
- You put yourself in your customer's shoes.
- You listen and think from the other person's point of view, allowing their message to become much clearer.
- You're wary of empathy fatigue and able to reset yourself.

Great Listening:

- You give them fierce attention.
- You ask a question and then more questions.
- You don't defend questions and instead explore new ones.
- You bounce questions back.
- You fight the urge to reply before you finish listening.

Every employee should possess these four traits, and you should be willing to train your team to deliver on these traits. When you successfully bring these four elements together, you are set up for success and have the foundation to build and maintain strong relationships with your customers.



Leah Tobak is a Project Manager with Petra Coach. With a background in public relations and marketing, she's done a lot of work building relationships with customers and prospective customers. Outside of the corporate landscape, Leah is an international model and is known for her work in front of the camera.

Top 4 Security Certifications You Should Have In 2021

GIAC Security Essentials (GSEC)

Ideal for those who may not have an extensive background in IT security and networking but who work in an IT security (or similar) role and want a baseline certification. No prerequisites. Learn more at [GIAC.org/certification/security-essentials-gsec](https://www.giac.org/certification/security-essentials-gsec).

(ISACA) Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)

Less technical and more managerial. Ideal for those in IT and risk management roles that are not strictly technical. Prerequisites for certification include five years experience in information security (including three years as an information security manager). Learn more at [ISACA.org/credentialing/cism](https://www.isaca.org/credentialing/cism).

(ISC)² Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)

A high-level certification aimed at those with an extensive and knowledgeable IT security background. This certification is in

very high demand by companies around the world. Prerequisites include five years experience in a position related to CISSP (or one year of experience plus a four-year degree). Learn more at [ISC2.org/certifications/cissp](https://www.isc2.org/certifications/cissp).

(ISC)² Certified Cloud Security Professional (CCSP)

Ideal for those experienced in IT security with an emphasis on cloud-based solutions. Prerequisites for certification include a minimum of five years of full-time IT experience (with three years in information security). Learn more at [ISC2.org/certifications/ccsp](https://www.isc2.org/certifications/ccsp).

Infosec, Dec. 22, 2020

The Scientific Reason Your Employees Value Opinions Over Facts

The research is clear: people have a habit of putting more value on opinion rather than fact. It's because it's easy! This is discussed in Daniel Kahneman's best-selling book, *Thinking, Fast And Slow*, and in numerous research papers. Accepting opinions requires less thinking than evaluating facts.

Data-driven companies need to take this into account when it comes to their teams. According to Kahneman, some people are "type 1" thinkers or fast thinkers, and opinions mean more to them. Others are "type 2" or slow thinkers – they take their time and evaluate what they hear.

Michael Schrage, research fellow at MIT Sloan School's Center for Digital Business, says you can't just switch between the two types of thinking automatically. It's more fundamental – you have to change people's mindsets over time. His suggestion is to incentivize analytical, fact-based thinking and recognize employees who take this approach. *Inc., Oct. 29, 2015*

3 Simple Yet Effective Ways To Boost Employee Morale

1. Focus On Mental Health. Whether it's your own mental health or the mental health of anyone on your team, make sure everyone has the time and space they need to take a break and refocus their energy. Make sure anxiety and stress are recognized and addressed in a positive way.

2. Be With Your Team. Simply being present and available for everyone on your team goes a long way. Have regular one-on-one chats just to see how things are going and to ask if they need anything. When they do need something, do what you can to help (and be sure to follow up).

3. Recognize Your Employees. Recognize their work and reward them. Everyone should be aware of the effort individuals and teams put into their work. At the same time, make sure they have ownership over their work and give credit where credit is due. *Inc., Nov. 4, 2020*

