Microsoft Services Essential Support
Focus on your business instead of fighting IT fires.

"I enjoy helping customers by assisting them when they need help the most."

—*Erik Ludlow*
Technical Account Specialist

Today, IT departments everywhere are being challenged to contribute more strategically to their companies' core business. Yet many businesses continue to cut back on outside technical assistance — while adding support duties to the already substantial workload of their IT departments. The result? The technical team spends all of its time reacting to myriad problems, with little time left for implementing strategic solutions that help boost productivity and the bottom line. But now there is a cost-effective solution.

Microsoft® Services Essential Support is a family of affordable, prepackaged support offerings that can help give your people more time to concentrate on optimizing your technology solutions. With Essential Support you have priority, phone-based access to a team of Microsoft technical account professionals who offer far more than reactive problem resolution. These highly skilled experts focus on providing you with valuable proactive "how-to" guidance to keep your systems up and running smoothly. All of which helps to increase the efficiency of your IT staff — and the productive use of your Microsoft technology.

The Essentials on Essential Support

By signing up for Essential Support, your business will have access to the following:

- Two affordable, prepackaged support offerings from Microsoft

- Phone-based priority access to Microsoft technical account professionals who are familiar with your type of business environment and support history

- Rapid-response problem resolution to help minimize costly downtime

- Proactive support for design, development, deployment, and ongoing operations issues

- Full access to online information services to help keep your IT staff up to date on Microsoft technologies and products

Maximize the value of your IT investments.

Visit www.microsoft.com/ essentialsupport.

people ready

Direct Priority Access to Microsoft Technical Experts

With Essential Support your IT staff gets direct telephone access to Microsoft's skilled technical account professionals. This support team will work with you to develop an understanding of your business and technology requirements, so they can act as your advocate within Microsoft to help ensure that your needs are met. These professionals will:

- Track your technical problems throughout the resolution process and keep you informed of their status

- Facilitate the escalation of serious problems to senior engineers and product teams

- Follow up with you to help ensure that the problem was resolved to your satisfaction

- Proactively supply information, such as security alerts, patches, and technical troubleshooting articles, on your support issues.

Q: **I understand Essential Support includes support assistance and problem resolution services. What is the difference between the two?**

A: Problem resolution support is break-fix support for IT issues you encounter while using a Microsoft product, such as when you have a server down or you are getting an access code violation. Support assistance, on the other hand, is when you're looking for prescriptive advice and guidance and you don't have a specific problem. For instance, if your IT staff wanted to work with a support professional to review code or prepare a plan for migrating from one Microsoft product version to the next, they would need support assistance. Support assistance also applies to integration issues with third-party hardware and software products.

"I help customers on a daily basis by putting myself in their shoes to gain a better understanding of their issues, frustrations, and concerns."

—Asad Ali
Technical Account Specialist

Preventive Guidance and Practical Advice for Optimizing IT Systems

With Essential Support you get proactive support to help prevent problems from occurring. Whether you need help migrating from one Microsoft Windows® server platform to another or would like one of our technicians to review your code, our proactive support services offer the resources and guidance to help maximize system availability and minimize your support burden over time.

- "How-to" advice and recommendations on the operation of technology solutions based on Microsoft's own experience

- Access to expert support professionals to help ensure that systems are deployed correctly and optimized to meet your needs

- Facilitation by a phone-based Microsoft technical account professional with access to your profile and an understanding of your type of business and IT infrastructure

Q: **What does the pooled team of technical account professionals do?**

A: Technical account professionals will assist you in finding an answer to your support question as quickly as possible. Typically, your call will be routed to the first available resource. Any support professional you speak with will have real-time access to your account profile and support history. This enables the specialists to efficiently respond to your unique support situation and IT requirements as they escalate your support problem as necessary and track it through to resolution.

"One of the most important functions I perform as a Technical Account Specialist is to collaborate with my customers and Microsoft support engineers to resolve critical situations that affect my customers' ability to conduct their business. As a team, we manage these situations proactively, ensuring the technical issue is being driven to resolution and the customer's business is back online as soon as possible."

—Maureen Eagan
Technical Account Specialist

Timely Problem Resolution for a Faster Return to Business

Whether your problem is an application error message or a more critical issue, problem resolution services can help ensure that it is remedied in the shortest possible time frame. And thanks to the expedited service of your Essential Support, you may save money because your contract is based on hours, not the number of issues you report.

- Prioritized response times based on the severity of the problem and its impact to your business — as defined by you

- Response to critical problems in one hour or less, with maximum support resources applied to sustain a continuous 24x7 effort

- Escalation of critical problems as high in the Microsoft technical organization as may be needed to solve the problem

Q: **I already receive support through Software Assurance. Why do I need Essential Support?**

A: By purchasing Essential Support in addition to Software Assurance, you get an enhanced support experience that includes improved response times for your Software Assurance problem resolution requests as well as access to proactive information and the relationship with an experienced technical account professional. With Software Assurance and Essential Support, you have a comprehensive offering to support and maintain your Microsoft technology investment.

"The Essential Support team engages in a direct support relationship between our customers and Microsoft. We are here to understand your business needs through phone-based account management, customer advocacy, and case management. We pride ourselves on helping our customers realize their business potential."

—Cynthia Keough-Erdmann
Technical Account Specialist

Information and Training on the Latest Microsoft Products

With the accelerating pace of technology development, you may worry that your staff's skills and product knowledge are becoming out of date. Essential Support provides convenient access to a variety of information services to help IT teams regularly refresh their knowledge and update their skills.

- Microsoft Premier Online is a secure Web site that provides a comprehensive repository of support resources, such as exclusive Microsoft Knowledge Base articles; security bulletins, product newsflashes, and critical problem alerts; support Webcasts; and Web Response for submitting and checking the status of problem resolution requests online

- Microsoft TechNet, featuring 12 monthly issues on CD or DVD, puts a wealth of comprehensive technical information about Microsoft products at your fingertips

- Online seminars (Webinars) that your technical account professional will suggest based on your IT environment and support needs to help enrich your IT staff's knowledge

- Workshops and additional seminars that provide hands-on technical training on Microsoft's desktop and server products in the context of common business scenarios and are available for an additional fee

Q: **I already have a great technical staff. Why do I need Essential Support?**

A: Even a highly skilled technical staff might be spending a significant amount of time fixing problems that could be solved more efficiently by our support professionals. A vast majority of the problems we encounter we've seen before, and they are already logged into our internal support database. So an issue that could take several weeks for your staff to research and resolve may be solved in a matter of hours simply by tapping into our database. We also try to transfer our skills and knowledge back to your team so that they can solve issues more efficiently in the future — by proactively sending technical information that's relevant to your IT environment, by working with you and helping plan your next IT implementation, and by providing access to our online information services.

Essential Support Packages

Microsoft Services Essential Support provides easily accessible and affordable prepackaged support offerings that give your IT staff more time to focus on strategic projects — while keeping your budget lean. Premier Support is a personalized support offering that is designed for organizations with more complex support needs. This table provides a quick overview of the service packages available to you through Essential and Premier Support.

Service/Offering Details					
Offering Brand		**Essential**	**Premier Foundation**	**Premier Standard**	**Premier Plus**
Key Benefits	Key Features				
Proactive Services	Support Assistance	Fixed amount	Fixed amount	Flexible	Custom
	Custom Support Services	Not available	Not available	Not available	Custom
	Dedicated Support Professional	Not available	Not available	Not available	Available
	Dedicated Support Team	Not available	Not available	Not available	Available
	Health Check and Infrastructure Workshop	Not available	Included	Available	Available
	Global and Regional Workshops	Available	Included	Available	Included
Problem Resolution Support	Problem Resolution Support	Fixed amount	Fixed amount	Flexible	Custom
	24x7 Coverage	Included	Included	Included	Included
	24x7 Critical Situation Escalation Management	Not available	Included	Included	Included
	Rapid Onsite Support	Not available	Included	Included	Included
Knowledge Transfer	Proactive Information Distribution	Included	Included	Included	Included
	Microsoft Premier Online	Included	Included	Included	Included
	TechNet with Online Concierge	Available	Available	Included	Included
Direct Relationship	Account Representative*	Shared, not designated contact	Shared, designated contact	Shared, designated contact	Designated contact
	Remote vs. Onsite Resource	Remote	Primarily remote	Partly on site	Primarily on site
	Account Profiling and Reporting	Quarterly	Monthly	Monthly	Customized
	Case Monitoring and Escalation Management	Business hours	24x7	24x7	24x7

* In Local language

Maximize the Value of Your IT Investments

Ensuring you get the most out of your IT investments is the mission of Microsoft Services. Whether you are looking to improve your bottom line, enhance productivity, or use technology to realize new business opportunities, Microsoft is ready to assist. From business support to strategic consulting, we offer a full range of support services for any stage in your IT lifecycle.

If you are in North America (U.S. and Canada), you can also purchase Essential Support through the Essential Web Portal at http://www.buysupport.microsoft.com.

For more information

please visit the Essential Support Web site at http://www.microsoft.com/essentialsupport or contact your local Microsoft Services representative.