

Ten Things to Look for in a Colocation Facility - IO



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February 16th, 2010 / admin / 0 comments

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To achieve service improvements and business efficiencies, a growing number of businesses are deciding to colocate their server, network and storage equipment at an off-site data center.

But before signing up with any colocation provider, it's important to know whether it has the resources and commitment necessary to fully meet your company's needs. Here are the ten things you should look for:

Location. The colocation provider's proximity to your main business site should be an important, but not overriding concern. You'll also want your provider to be situated in a place with a favorable business climate and in a location that is unlikely to be affected by service-threatening natural calamities, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, brush/forest fires and earthquakes.

Real Estate Configuration. How your equipment is housed is as important as where it's located. Look for a provider that offers a wide variety of configurable "cages" for each tenant's equipment.

Network Security. With Internet-based threats on the rise, look for a provider with a managed firewall network service that includes a comprehensive set of hardware, software and licensing components as well as the configuration, installation and day-to-day maintenance elements necessary to protect your network.

Site Security. Physical threats pose as great a danger to your equipment and service as hacker attacks. That's why you'll want to look for a provider that protects its customers' installations with multiple layers of physical access controls, such as a 24x7 on-site security staff, mantraps, biometric screening and closed circuit TV (CCTV) surveillance. Also be sure to check out the provider's fire detection and suppression technologies.

Power Systems. Power is the lifeblood of any colocation facility. Scrutinize

the provider's primary (utility-based) and backup power sources (including USP and PDU offerings). Aim for a 100 percent uptime service level agreement (SLA).

Environmental Systems. A less than optimal operating environment will inevitably lead to premature equipment failure and service interruption. Check with the provider to see how it handles such critical environmental tasks as heat removal, air movement, humidification/dehumidification, air filtration and leak detection.

Carrier Neutrality. You don't want a provider to lock you to a specific carrier, so look for a partner that offers access to a wide range of tier one carriers yet maintains a strict neutrality policy.

Cross Connect Service. Expect your provider to supply a cross connect service that offers high reliability, redundancy and low-latency characteristics. This service should come at no additional cost.

Scalability. You'll want to select a provider that can easily meet your business' growing service needs with easily scalable physical space and support resources.

Price. Assuming that all other conditions are met, work with the provider to arrive at a fair price structure that reflects both services offered and market realities.

Tags: colocation, colocation facility

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