



Revamp Your IT in 2015

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Client Spotlight:

AES

Advanced Electronic Services is a relatively new web design and hosting client. Based in Mount Airy, NC, they specialize in circuit board repair but also now provide industrial electronic, hydraulic, pneumatic and motor repair services as well as equipment sales, logistics, vendor managed inventory and on-site repair services. They also have an in-house engineering team to ensure the best quality repair possible.

AES technicians are well trained with over 20-30 years of experience and are regularly trained on specific OEM equipment. They also utilize state of the art equipment to test and troubleshoot down to the component level. They offer rush repair service as well.

They first began repairing electronic circuit boards in 1992 and their focus continues to be providing prompt, reliable repairs and competitive pricing. They are committed to retaining a small company feel with large company capabilities.

Advanced Electronic Services
101 Technology Lane
Mount Airy, NC 27030
866-386-1001
Website: www.aesintl.com
Email: aes@aesintl.com

Your Company's Secret Weapon: a Skilled IT Team

Skilled IT pros do so much more than put out help desk fires. In companies big and small, they're responsible for maintaining basically everything that plugs in -- computers, servers, printers, phones and beyond.

When something breaks or a virus strikes, it's their job to fix it and fast. When it's time to switch to new hardware or software, it's their job to find it, install it and train every employee on it. And that's only scratching the surface.

U.K. Microsoft training consultancy Best STL has put together a list detailing what you should expect from your IT team and how to ensure they're properly trained.

Whether you are looking to augment your current IT personnel, you are starting from scratch to hire internally, or you are looking at a Managed Service Provider solution; these are very relevant tips to help you choose skilled technicians for your team.

Skills to look for:

- Data Storage and Integrity – Technicians must be able to manage data and understand how to support and integrate new storage devices.
- Database Design – In-House database management via an IT team can be more cost effective.
- Security – Companies face threats from denial of service attacks, malicious software, compromised information and spyware. You need to be protected.

Other very important skills within your IT team include:

- Abstract and Algorithmic Thinking
- Network Support
- Consistent Naming Conventions
- Software Development and Support
- Communication



The Pronets team encompasses all these skills and is ready to assist our clients with all their technology needs.

Adapted from <http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/241991>

“Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face.” -- Victor Hugo

Did you know...

...You can beat the "back to work blues" and keep your productivity at a peak now that the holidays have passed?

It is easy to get off track at work but these sure fire tips will keep you from wasting precious time.

1. **Make a to-do list.** At the start of each day, enumerate the things you must get done by the end of the day, and then do them. Prioritize according to importance and work on low intensity tasks when your concentration lags. Revise your list throughout the day.
2. **Stop checking your emails randomly.** Email can be a distraction when you're trying to meet a deadline or finish a project. Set aside specific times to check your messages unless you're expecting something truly important.
3. **Do not multi-task.** Contrary to popular belief, you don't get more done when you multitask. If you do two tasks at once, it actually takes longer to complete them than if you tackled them one at a time. Multi-tasking divides your attention between tasks and as each gets less attention, it takes longer to finish them.
4. **Divide your time into chunks.** Schedule similar activities together and don't jump from one to another without finishing the first task. When you group like activities, your brain can function more efficiently.

Adapted from tinyurl.com/p5os5gf

CR&D

Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home.
Edith Sitwell

7 Questions to Ask When Hiring a Web Developer



Web Developers often do it all, from designing the website to search engine optimization (SEO) to daily maintenance. So, you need an adept, creative multitasker whom you can trust with the keys to your website.

How can you find someone who's up to that tall task? Here are 7 important questions to ask potential web design companies to try to ensure you're hiring the right one:

1. **Where can I find current and past examples of your work?** Experienced candidates should readily share links to examples of their work that clearly demonstrate their capabilities.
2. **May I have a list of your current and past clients?** Candidates should readily provide contact information for existing and past clients.
3. **Which publishing, design and content technologies would you use to build and maintain my website?** Webmasters should be able to describe the major publishing, design and content scheduling tools, give the pros and cons of each, and explain which they would suggest for you based on your budget and scope of work. "For instance, if they incorporate a blog within your website, would they use WordPress or Drupal, or would they code one from scratch?"
4. **How will you optimize my website for search engines?** Lisa Lopuck, author of *Web Design for Dummies* (Wiley, 3rd edition, 2012), suggests asking candidates how knowledgeable they are about SEO tools and techniques. "Ask them to explain which strategies and methods they'll use to boost your rankings in all of the major search engines," she says. They should also be experienced with Google Analytics to track website traffic and user behavior statistics and gauge the effectiveness of their SEO campaigns.
5. **What kind of special features can you integrate into my site?** A static website simply won't do. Customers have come to expect extras features like video, social media feeds and banner ads. Be sure the candidate has the skills and resources to provide them. Can they easily add a contact form, blog, Flash animation, and Facebook and Twitter feeds to your site?
6. **How well versed are you in copyright issues?** It's critical for webmasters to be up-to-date on web-related copyright concerns. They will likely be charged with copyrighting all of the text, images and other media on your website. Asking them where they'll obtain the photos and graphics they'll use on your site could help you avert potential legal woes. For example, will they use paid commercial stock photo licensed images?
7. **What are your fees and payment terms?** It's crucial to establish from the outset all of the fees for designing, publishing and maintaining your website. You'll also want to know if the webmaster prefers to be paid by the hour or on a monthly retainer. If the webmaster is designing a new site for you, find out whether you'll have to pay for hosting and domain name registration charges.

Adapted from *Entrepreneur.com* – 10 Questions to Ask When Hiring a Webmaster



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For Website Solutions: pronetsweb.com

PRONETS • 307 Meadow Street • Galax, VA 24333

Call: 276-236-8226

Email: info@pronetsinc.com

