



10-Point Checklist on How to Find the Best Colocation Provider

- 1) **Evaluate the Colocation Provider's Data Center Infrastructure.** Take a data center tour and check out the “bells and whistles.” Ask questions about the data center's physical security, cooling infrastructure, redundant power, back-up power, stand-by generators and IP network redundancy. Most qualified colocation providers will have documentation supporting their data center in regards to cooling, power and network. Top-notch providers should offer redundant data centers outside of their primary data center location. If they do not, you should look elsewhere.
- 2) **Ask for Data Center Certifications.** Many of your clients today, and down the road, will require compliances like SSAE 16, SAS70, HIPPA and PCI. If you are looking for a quality colocation provider, these are must-haves.
- 3) **Evaluate the Colocation Provider's Technical Support.** While on tour, ask the data center technicians (not the salesperson) any specific questions you might have regarding your operating system needs or other managed service requirements. Also, try calling or emailing technical support before signing a contract to see how responsive they are. Try contacting technical support after hours as well to determine the competence level of technicians on the second and third shifts. Some data centers are only staffed with “reboot” technicians at these times. Will that work for your business colocation hosting requirements?
- 4) **Evaluate the Colocation Provider's Past Experience with Colocation Services and Managed Services.** Seek a colocation provider with past experience offering dedicated servers, managed hosting and managed services. Stay away from the “pure play” colocation providers who just recently released a colocation package.
- 5) **Compare Local Colocation Data Centers to Well-known Options like Equinix or Verizon.** Local colocation providers in your geographic area may offer more options and flexibility than the big national colocation options. Many local data centers offer “hybrid colo” options in which clients can have dedicated servers, collocated servers and cloud services all in one package. Others local colocation providers will allow clients to “showcase” their data center to potential clients or venture capitalists.

- 6) **Ask About Migration Services.** Many of the larger colocation providers only provide “do-it-yourself” type service options. In many cases, new colocation clients require migration assistance because they don’t have the time and necessary technical personnel on staff. If you need migration service, find a colocation provider that offers professional and other managed services to assist you in developing a strategy and timeframe for the entire process. Even if you don’t require migration services at the start, it is a nice to have in case the need arises in the future.
- 7) **Read the Fine Print on the Service Level Agreement (SLA).** Spend the money upfront and have an attorney read through the contracts. This will be money well spent. Make sure both your IT department and marketing personnel are in agreement on the SLA terms before signing a contract.
- 8) **Analyze the Colocation Providers Entire Service Offering.** Do they offer both open rack and secure rack options? Do they offer hybrid colocation options? Even though you may only want a single U of space today, tomorrow you may require a more complicated and secure colocation solution because of customer requirements. What is their infrastructure road map for new products and managed services (ie.) cloud hosting?
- 9) **Pick a Provider Who Uses Well-known Technology Vendors.** A colocation hosting infrastructure is only as good as the hardware and network gear it resides on. Pick a provider who uses industry leading vendors like Cisco, HP, VM Ware and EMC. If the provider doesn’t offer brand names in their platform, keep researching and find more options. You will sleep better at night!
- 10) **Go with your Gut and Work with Someone you Like and Trust.** Make sure you are comfortable with the colocation provider’s sales and the IT team. Depending upon your requirements, implementing a colocation project can be a long process. Pick a provider that you trust, one that you are comfortable with and one that understands your business and specific colocation hosting requirements.

For more information or to set up a free 10-minute consultation with a colocation specialist, please call 888-400-5732 or email info@quotecolo.com.