



**Solutions & Success**  
The Inside Story

# Why Do Virginia Restaurants Trust HRCT With Their IT?

You know how tough the restaurant world can be. Margins are razor thin, the daily schedule is packed from morning to night, and every day brings new challenges.

Because of this, one of the strategies of surviving—and, ideally, thriving—in such a cut-throat industry is to simply eliminate all the unpredictable, potentially dangerous variables and hope that you can deal with everything else.

One of those variables is your technology.

If you expect to be able to serve customers quickly, keep detailed and accessible records, take payments via methods other than cash, etc...then you need technology that works— as simple as that. Or, at least, it should be.

## Why Are Restaurant IT Services In Virginia So Important?

Given how hardy and longstanding some of the legacy software used in the culinary world is today, some may think it would at least be consistent. But you and I know that's not the case.

The software that helps your servers track orders and print bills will fail. Wi-Fi that your customers come to your restaurant for will cut out or—and in many people's opinions, worse—will slow to a crawl. Your debit machines will stall and refuse to connect, leaving your customers without a way to pay, and you with an unpaid check.

So, when that happens, what can you do? Get your waiter that fixed it last time to abandon their section and try to sort it out? Ask your PC-hobbyist line cook to leave the kitchen and see what he can do? Try to figure it out yourself?

Not likely. Everyone working in a restaurant has a specific duty to attend to. When one cog isn't turning in perfect alignment, the whole machine grinds to a halt.

That's why you need IT support—but then there's the matter of finding the right IT support.

# How Can You Tell If An IT Support Provider Is Right For You?

The key is in finding an IT company that knows your industry. The fact is that the culinary world is a bit of an insider's club. You've either worked in a kitchen, or you haven't—there isn't an in-between.

In the same way, while some may assume that IT is IT and tech is tech, that's not necessarily true when it comes to the technology you rely on. It's really only a few key types of IT you need to keep your staff and customers happy. If a potential provider can't give you the support you need for that tech, then you need to move on to someone who can.

HRCT is proud to offer expertise backed by extensive experience working with Virginia restaurants. We understand your industry, the work you do every day, and the technology you rely on. That's why we can deliver the solutions you need, and the quality of service you require to keep your operations optimized, your staff supported, and your guests happy.

## What Solutions Should Your IT Services Provider Support?

With some room for variation here and there depending on your model of service (*fast food, casual sit-down, fine dining*), it really comes down to a few primary restaurant-specific technologies:

### Point of Sale

Finding the right Point of Sale (POS) system isn't an easy task. Even more difficult is finding an IT services provider that can support it effectively.

The fact is that, for a POS system to run properly, you need to have the right system and supporting infrastructure in place. A potential partner in IT services should know what you're talking about when it comes to POS, and know what needs to be done.

While some providers may offer their own POS solution, it's frankly just as viable to simply work with someone who has experience in supporting a popular, legacy POS system.

Whether it's Oracle Micros, Quadranet, or another POS system you prefer, you should always vet potential IT services providers to make sure they know how to work with it.

## Wi-Fi

The other key technology is Wi-Fi, providing fast and simple Internet access for your customers while they're enjoying your food.

While it may not be an old staple of the industry, it's certainly an expected facet in many restaurants, cafes, and other eateries in operation today. When customers are spending money on your food, they don't want to be spending their limited cellular data as well.

That's why ineffective and poorly supported Wi-Fi can be so detrimental to the atmosphere in your Virginia restaurant. If people expect it and it doesn't work, it's so much worse than not having it in the first place.

Make sure your potential Virginia IT services provider can consult on a powerful, reliable Wi-Fi setup before you decide to work with them.

While it all may sound simple, it's vitally important to the way you work every day. You shouldn't have to even think about your technology when you have so many other things to worry about.

## Cloud Services

Over the past few years, productivity suites have become more and more popular with restaurants of all sizes, in a wide and varied range of industries. It's the type of solution that has something to offer everyone.

Cloud-based technologies, in general, are changing the way users like you view the capabilities of their technology—especially Microsoft 365.

# What Does Microsoft 365 Offer You?

## Access Your Apps Conveniently

You need to be able to use your tools from anywhere, any device, and Microsoft 365 gives you that flexibility. Access your email, meetings, and other services online.

Create, edit, and share Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and OneNote files online and stay up to date with everyone's changes in a file, even if they're made at the same time.

## Microsoft Teams

This chat-based workspace brings users in different locations together to collaborate, communicate, and share content, helping them work as efficiently as possible whether in the office or operating from a remote workplace.

Team members and business contacts can stay connected and share work through the suite of Microsoft solutions they're most accustomed to.

Microsoft Teams gives you the ability to host real-time meetings, staff training, and connect with suppliers, all in a direct video meeting format.

## Robust Security Features

Microsoft 365 uses a defense-in-depth approach to provide physical, logical, and data layers of security features and operational best practices.

The Microsoft 365 Cloud App Security provides insight into any suspicious activity in the program. You can investigate situations that could pose a risk and if needed, take action to address them.

You'll receive notifications of triggered alerts for any unusual activities. Then you can view what data is being accessed and used and suspend any user accounts that exhibit suspicious activity. Afterward, if you authorize, the user can log back into Microsoft 365.

Multi-Factor Authentication (*MFA*) is another way that Microsoft 365 keeps your data more secure. *MFA* requires the consumer to utilize two methods to confirm that they are the rightful account owner. By setting up these types of verification, you add an extra layer of security to your restaurant's Microsoft 365 accounts.

Microsoft 365 uses several strong encryption protocols, and technologies including Transport Layer Security/Secure Sockets Layer (*TLS/SSL*), Internet Protocol Security (*IPSec*), and Advanced Encryption Standard (*AES*).

Encryption technology is a great way to protect important data. By making data unreadable to anyone who

isn't supposed to have access to it, you can secure files stored on your systems, servers, and mobile devices, as well as files sent via email or through file-sharing services.

Built-in Mobile Device Management in Microsoft 365 Business allows you to manage access to your data securely. The built-in Mobile Device Management (*MDM*) lets you secure and manage your restaurant's mobile devices like iPhones, iPads, Androids, and Windows phones. You can create mobile device security policies, remotely wipe a device, and view detailed device reports.

## Automatic Updates

Enjoy the latest versions of your preferred apps like Microsoft Word and Excel, thanks to automatic patches and updates. No need to pay for version upgrades—updates are included in your subscription. New features are rolled out to Microsoft 365 customers regularly.

## Pay As You Go Pricing

Using Microsoft 365 is often more cost-efficient than alternatives, as you pay a low cost per month for access to the desktop, mobile, and cloud-based applications you need.

This tends to be less expensive with no upfront costs. Plus, upgrades are automatically released so there's no need to pay for new software.

## Flexible And Customizable Plans

Custom fitting your Microsoft 365 plan to your individual needs is easy with the flexible plans offered. There is no need for an IT overhaul, as you can easily fit the new services into your existing strategy.

# Could You Be Getting More Out Of Microsoft 365?

As the leading name in cloud business productivity software, Microsoft 365 offers a range of services and features designed to help you and your employees do more each day—but only if you know how to optimize your experience.

HRCT offers Microsoft 365 support geared to address the needs of today's restaurants. Our Microsoft 365 solutions are based on a tailored approach to workflow—ensuring that you have the correct version, setup, and integration of Microsoft 365.

When additional support is needed, our team of IT specialists are able to provide troubleshooting assistance or strategic advice—enabling clients to leverage the power of Microsoft 365 to their benefit.

## VoIP Services

Your phone systems, and communication capabilities as a whole, are a key part of your restaurant's success as a business. Managers need to keep in touch with suppliers and staff members. Hosts need to keep in touch with diners.

All of this calls for a user-friendly, reliable and properly scaled phone service. If you're still using outdated landlines, or if you're relying on a basic, resold VoIP solution, then you've probably encountered a range of challenges...

### Limited Accessibility

Are your phones limited to your restaurant's location? If so, that means you could be missing important calls while you're at home or even just out of earshot of the ringtone.

### Lack Of Features

As you know from the smartphone in your pocket, today's phones mean more than basic audio calling capability. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to make a video call with your restaurant's phone system when necessary?

## Lack Of Control

When something goes wrong, how long does it take your phone vendor or VoIP reseller to get it fixed? Any amount of downtime means missed calls, fewer diners, and lost business.

If you're encountering these types of challenges on a regular basis, then it's up to you to make a change, and a VoIP solution can help.

HRCT provides both traditional on-premise phone systems as well as cloud-based. Our goal is to make your restaurant's communications efficient, easy, and in most cases, help you save money along the way. With a cloud-based solution, there is no equipment to buy, and a lifetime warranty comes while on every plan

Benefits include:

### ✓ **Cost-Effective Cloud Communications**

Save money with all-inclusive pricing from a single provider. There's no need for separate products or several vendors for a series of different services so costs are reduced dramatically.

### ✓ **4.9-Star Service**

Our technicians are local and will set up, install, and train your users without downtime. Complete your installation in a single day and with our dedicated team, ensuring you'll get a seamless transition to the cloud. We'll handle all the porting of existing numbers and the ordering of new numbers.

### ✓ **Seamless Connectivity**

Desk Phones, Mobile App, and Desktop App are all at your fingertips—anywhere, anytime. You'll get 24/7 access wherever you have an internet connection. You can also manage your main number or private numbers through an easy online portal or even apps.



# IT Support Isn't Just About Technology

While the above solutions are necessary components of a robust and effective IT environment for your restaurant, keep in mind that there's more to IT than just the technologies in use. You also need to find an IT company that delivers the quality of service you require.

## Is Your IT Support Reactive?

Call it whatever you like, but it's essentially "hourly IT support". This is the traditional style of outsourced IT services in Virginia, which works by fixing your computers once they're broken.

In a nutshell, when something goes wrong—data loss, hardware failure, virus, etc.—you then get in touch with your support provider and have them fix it.

This strategy no longer works today. If you still use this method of IT service, you risk downtime that can slow you down. Reactive IT support leads to a number of problems:

### Impermanent Solutions

When they're charging by the hour, they're encouraged to focus on billable hours. It doesn't benefit them if your tech is working the way it should. You could find yourself repeatedly calling them to help with a problem that never quite gets resolved.

### Rapid Escalation

A minor computer problem can quickly turn into a disaster. This is especially true today with the increase in cyber-crime like ransomware. What starts out with just one malicious email can spread throughout your entire network, locking down your data, and your operations.

### Further Delays

It could take days to fix your problem—in the meantime, your staff members won't have access to the data they need to continue working. You're simply "bleeding money" by the minute.



## Cost Of Downtime

Your support provider starts charging you after you've already lost work time—time spent on repairs or updates can add up fast.

## Inaccurate Budgeting

It's impossible to predict how much to budget for Virginia IT services. You can't know what will happen or how expensive it might be.

# Your IT Support Should Be Proactive

Proactive IT support monitors and maintains your IT on an ongoing basis. Operationally, proactive monitoring provides a view into the health and status of IT assets.

From active monitoring and patch management to responsive on-site and Help Desk support services, fully managed support takes care of everything you need.

Advantages include:

## Freedom Of Focus

You can finally focus on running your restaurant and not on IT worries. Your IT support provider will minimize or eliminate downtime that could hit your bottom line.

## Easy Budgeting

You'll benefit from a flat-rate payment model, allowing you to budget your tech more effectively. You'll be able to plan for growth far more easily and with greater peace of mind.

## Cost-Effect

Tech maintenance from a third party is more cost-effective than relying on reactive solutions, especially when you consider the lost revenue from downtime.

# HRCT Works Proactively To Keep Your IT Optimized

Why bother putting up with reactive IT support? Proactive IT support is out there—all you have to do is find a local IT support company that can deliver, like HRCT.

With our proactive IT support services, the burden of technology is removed from your shoulders. That means you don't have to sit around worrying if an issue will pop up and derail your productivity.

With us managing your IT, you benefit from knowing that challenges are not only acknowledged and resolved quickly but are also proactively accounted for to minimize potential disruption.

HRCT is proud to offer truly effective IT support services that proactively prevent issues. If you're interested in seeing what that quality of support can do for you, get in touch with us to find out more.

## Get The Right Virginia IT Partner For Your Restaurant

In the high-paced work environment of a restaurant, every minute matters. Even minor issues with your computers—whether back office workstations or terminals used by serving staff—can cause inconvenient and costly downtime.

We can help ensure your business' computer systems stay reliable and operational with our proactive managed IT services in Virginia, which offer a variety of features that can be scaled up or down to fit your needs:

We're proud to provide IT services to a large network of clients, including those in the culinary industry. Book a meeting with our team to discover more about what we have to offer your restaurant.

