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Choose the Best Platform for Your ASP

ASPs take advantage of existing Internet connectivity to offer corporations the opportunity to outsource not only peripheral applications but also mission-critical applications. This trend will continue to escalate as customers discover that outsourcing firms can deliver mission-critical applications that meet their demands for service licensing agreements (SLAs). For ISPs and ASPs, these application-hosting responsibilities require the choice of a platform that can deliver the correct balance of performance, scalability, upgradeability and manageability.

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Review ASP Decision Criteria

Current Analysis published the results of their survey of ASP customers that ranked the major decision criteria they used to choose an ASP provider. Major factors included:

- Support Capabilites
- Hosting and Facility Experience
- Cost and Pricing Structure
- Reputation and Client Reference
- Service Level Agreement
- Past Performance
- Scalability and Completeness of Solution

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Understand How Servers Work in Your Environment

ASPs need to support content, database information, storage area networking (SAN), and file servers to truly provide well-rounded application service offerings. These "server farms" must be maintained and supported with the priority that the application demands. Remember that the design of a system and implementation of an infrastructure that will work for your company and satisfy your customers will require exceptionally careful planning and forethought.

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Content Delivery Networks and Streaming Media

Content Delivery Networks can provide more efficient service, as they can store and forward multiple formats and bit rates for streaming media. A number of companies now offer streaming media appliances:

- Midstream—www.midstream.com
- Network Engines—www.networkengines.com
- Vingage—www.vingage.com
- Vividon—www.vividon.com

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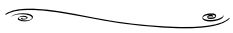
Choose the Best Storage Solution for Your Company



Six major concerns and criteria should be taken into account before deciding on the storage solution that best fits your requirements:

- Host independence
- Mixed vendor support
- Security
- Legacy support
- System availability
- Price versus performance

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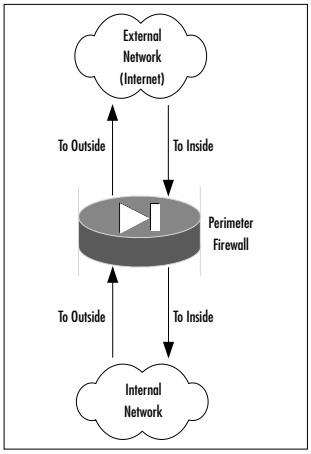
Security Components Discussed from an ASP's Perspective



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Learn the Three Main Areas of Service Level Agreements

- **Planning** Determining the wide area network (WAN) service levels.
- **Verification** Monitoring the service levels to guarantee fulfillment.
- **Troubleshooting** Isolating issues when service levels are not delivered.

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Answer Your Questions about Capacity Planning

Q: I have agreed to a Committed Interface Rate (CIR) with a client. How do I charge them if they "burst" over this agreement?

A: Most ISP/ASP companies charge what is called the 95 percentile. This is where traffic is measured in timed intervals. You will be charging the customer for whatever their usage is for 95 percent of the time.

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