



Support, Scalability, Value:

Thriving with Managed
Services During Recession
and Expansion



Managed services have become an increasingly important strategy for businesses to optimize performance and drive growth in any economic environment. According to **Gartner**, the managed services market is expected to grow at a rate of nearly 20% YoY through 2025, whether these years bring expansion or recession.

What does this mean for your business? What benefits does a managed services provider (MSP) offer? It may depend on how you define “managed services.” For many, this term can be vague, meaning everything from outside resources helping with a software update to outsourcing strategic management of a client’s entire technology stack.

However you may define it, you are likely right, as an MSP’s offering can be as major or as minor an engagement as a client chooses it to be. Let’s instead define it by focusing on the benefits managed services provide.

Those benefits are endless because what managed services do for each client varies based on industry, location, B2B vs B2C, current challenges, strategic goals, and so on. Regardless of what type of business environment you operate in, managed services will enable you to:



Optimize your operations to accelerate overall transformation by leveraging expert knowledge



Scale your technology when and as needed through reduced cost of hiring, training, and development



Focus on your business instead of just maintaining your systems by increasing the value of your in-house teams

Let’s look at ways businesses can leverage managed services in times of economic growth and in times of belt-tightening. Because—in both times of expansion and times of recession—managed services can serve as one of your most strategic resources in building and maintaining a high-performance business through optimized operations that enable you to drive revenue, increase efficiency, reduce risk, and stay ahead of the competition.



The case for managed services in times of recession

Let's start with the lesser, or less desirable, contexts for leveraging managed services: a recession, or the threat of recession, or simply internal cost-cutting. While there are numerous advantages, let's focus on three specific business benefits typically fueled by choosing managed services when times are tough:



Value

(which is always more than just a number)



Scalability

(it's more than adding or subtracting resources)



Support

(tactically and strategically, technologically and financially)



Value during a recession

Bridge the skills gap and gain immediate expertise

The main reason clients turn to MSPs during a slowdown is to reduce costs. For most businesses, the spend attached to hiring, training, and retaining a qualified full-time employee can equal up to nine months of that employee's salary. It's often as if you are hiring two people.

Partnering with an MSP, however, not only saves you money; it instantly empowers you with the expertise you need to fill any given role. Your MSP should meet—and beat—every requirement laid out in any job requisition and be able to address any business challenge head-on.

The value is two-fold: saving costs on hiring, and instant expertise to solve challenges more quickly and completely.

Leverage the expertise of an MSP so you can *focus on your business.*



Scalability during a recession

Keep growing for less

During a recession or slowdown, a business must be able to quickly scale down (or, sometimes, up) in response to market trends, consumer demands, supply chain slowdowns, and countless other factors typically outside an organization's direct control.

Being scalable enough to add or remove resources as needed can make the difference between hitting or missing your numbers. With a sophisticated, enterprise-level MSP, scalability is built into the service.

But it's not simply in the scalability of human resources where an MSP can make a huge difference. It's also in the scalability of solutions as well.

Maximize your technology investment by scaling solutions as well as staff.

Business technology changes at a breathtaking pace, and IT teams are challenged to keep up. And when budgets are tight, upskilling staff in new solutions and features is typically a cost most businesses prefer to avoid. But your MSP is forward-looking—immersed not just in what's being used at present, but keenly focused on what's next. They'll keep you and your team up to date on the latest capabilities in business tech, and help you take advantage of every new feature and function that serves your strategy.

In short, an MSP can help ensure scalability in both software and skillsets, helping you get the absolute best from every internal resource during slowdowns, and providing the external expertise to set you up for rapid, strategic growth post-recession.



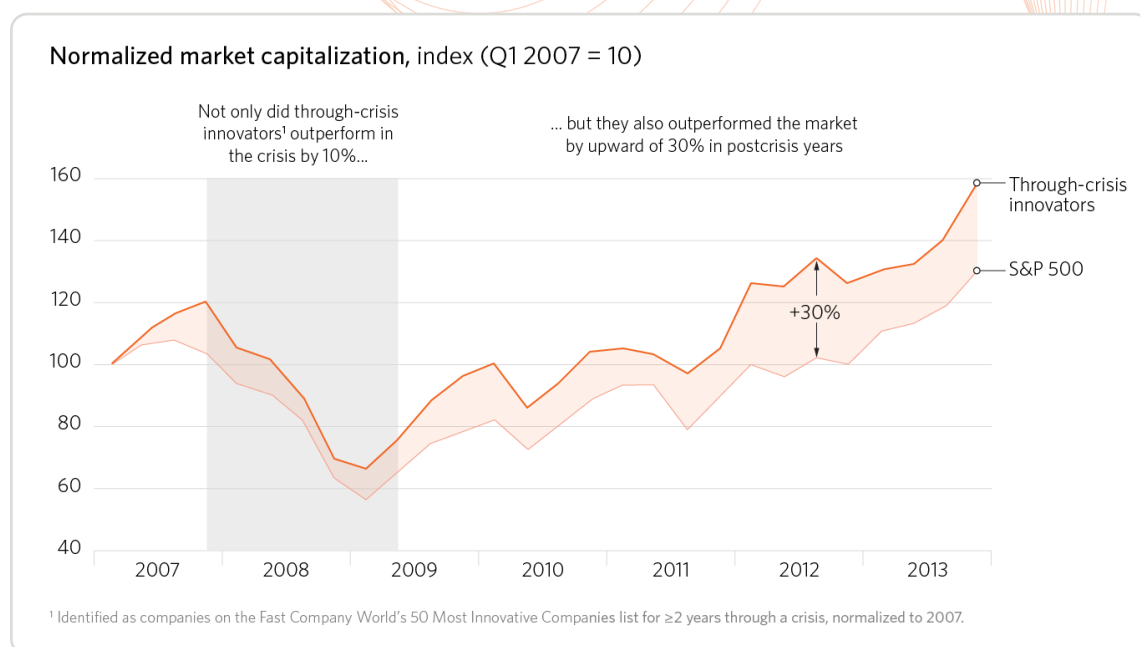
Support during a recession

Leaning into strategic projects (and people)

When times are tight, most businesses go into “survival mode,” taking a deep dive into project pipelines, identifying where time can be saved and costs reduced. Yes, it’s true, backburnering some projects during a recession can help you stay afloat, help you survive.

But why simply survive when you can thrive?

According to a [McKinsey report](#), companies that continue to invest in innovation during crises come out on top once the economy regains its footing. For example, the long-term data on companies that invested and innovated during the 2020 pandemic has yet to be collected, but the McKinsey chart below shows what happened during and after the global financial crisis of 2008.



The easiest, safest way to invest in innovation in a crisis is through the expertise of your MSP because they can provide the targeted expertise required to support business-critical projects and keep them moving forward.

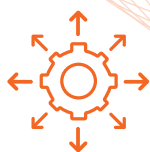
More importantly, your MSP can provide insights on new trends and technologies, bringing to the table other ideas and projects they may have seen in action that are helping other businesses do far more than simply weather the storm.

Simply put, there's never a wrong time for the right expertise.

Your MSP can also help ensure a more strategic use of existing tools and more cost-effective licensing as well. In the former case, they will ensure your platform is free from costly add-ons, streamlining applications and integrations to reduce overall costs while maximizing utilization. In the latter case, your MSP can also help reduce your internal spend on "seats" and ensure no license you are paying for goes un-used or underutilized.

Now let's discuss how managed services can help your business when the economy is swinging up.

Get the right level of support to keep your
technology at peak performance.



The case for managed services in times of expansion

Let's imagine the good news of the global economy booming and business ramping up! As markets are expanding, this makes it the ideal time to leverage managed services.

Your MSP can serve as “re-enforcements,” experts brought in to help your business move forward faster than it would with its own resources. Your MSP should deliver deep experience where you need it most: whether in business applications (e.g., ERP and CRM), finance processes, regulatory workflows, supply chain management, business automation, or any area of your business—from back-end operations to customer-facing experiences. With the right MSP, you always have an expert on your team, no matter what the business challenge or opportunity may be.

As during a recession, the benefits of working with an MSP during upswings are boundless. In this next section, we will focus on three: scalability; operational support; and strategic guidance.



Scalability during an expansion

Maximize resources to accomplish more and grow

It's easy to see how an MSP helps in terms of adding "more hands on deck" during times of growth. But not just *more* hands—expert hands. And the speed with which you can add resources via your MSP as opposed to making full-time hires is invaluable.

But scalability is about more than just more people. It's about more expertise to accomplish more business-critical tasks, such as getting more products to market more quickly while the market is hot.

Your MSP can help you maintain a laser focus on the projects that will help you take advantage of growing consumer demand, while you focus on expanding the footprint and foundations of your business. It's akin to having a team of pros on the field (MSP resources executing and optimizing) while concurrently building next year's team of pros (your own people being trained and upskilled).

Grow faster during times of expansion.



Operational support during an expansion

Peak performance and rapid innovation

A time of expansion is also the right time to choose managed services to help stabilize and optimize your business operations: the solutions, systems, and workflows that constitute your back-end needs and departments, such as finance and operations.

*Optimize operations to
seize on innovations.*

Whether you are looking to update aging business applications, audit licensing for business systems, or automate workflows, managed services can address any and all tasks tied to maintaining and optimizing infrastructure while you free-up your teams to focus on projects that build the business.

Managed services can be especially critical if you have recently added new business applications or platforms to help you take advantage of the economic expansion. With services that include systems training, IT maintenance, upgrades, updates, and customizations, your MSP will help you get the absolute best from your business applications—and from the people using them.

Also, coming out of a recession or similar crisis is often when the world's innovators truly shine, releasing new tools and technology to take advantage of a healthy economy. It's here where your MSP can help you shine as well, ensuring your organization can take full advantage of the latest innovations, without having to upskill existing staff.

As stated earlier, your MSP is forward-looking, focused on evolving business applications and empowering clients with every possible benefit that may be derived therefrom. In boom times, using tomorrow's tech today is often what helps a business leapfrog its competition.



Strategic guidance during an expansion

New insights, new opportunities

Don't take your foot off the pedal. Expansion means go-time: the race is on, and the right MSP can help you navigate toward (and past!) the finish line faster than your competitors by providing business-specific strategic guidance.

As an outside resource, your MSP can help you see beyond your business and create a clearer picture of the state of the market and the best path to success. As a business grows, it's easy to get caught up in "tactical reactivity." Jumping at every opportunity, loading up on projects, and often acting in and for the moment.

Bridge the gap between new opportunities and your ability to execute.

That's not always a bad thing as it can mean quick revenue, but more often than not it means strategy takes a back seat to tactics. Your MSP can help you act on existing opportunities while concurrently building the framework for strategic growth: increased visibility and understanding of actionable data, more integrated back-end systems and workflows, new paths to automate critical business processes. These are the kinds of strategic projects that can help cement your lead in the market.

Next up: specific managed services offerings that help address the points discussed so far.



Getting the most from your MSP during upswings and downturns

This whitepaper presented a multitude of benefits of leveraging the right MSP, some of which to seize upon during times of expansion and others to lean into during a recession. But before any of these benefits may be achieved—before beginning a working relationship with an MSP—there must be careful, detailed assessments of your business to ensure your MSP has the right expertise and can deliver results.

Assessments address a wide range of business states and processes, such as:

- Where is your business in its digital transformation journey? How does its journey compare to the competition?
- What are your core values and how do they translate into value for your customer base?
- What is your strategic roadmap? What are your KPIs?
- What technologies will help you best follow that roadmap and hit those KPIs?

Your MSP should start with such assessments that help define where you are now, where you want to go next, and exactly how your MSP will help make that happen. Which brings us back to benefits, and here is how the right managed services provider delivers on them.

1. Scalability

Scalability is really about adaptability, not simply “sizing.” Your MSP should be able to help you scale your teams, of course, but should also be able to scale your solution (adding features, optimizing licensing, etc.), and, most importantly, scale your expertise, placing both technology and industry experts exactly where you need them, and providing a range of tactical and strategic services that include:

- Production environment issue resolution
- Environment management
- Code deployment and data refreshes
- Application updates and upgrades
- Performance analysis
- Data migration
- Security management
- Change management and user adoption

2. Support

Support by your managed services provider applies to supporting your people as much as it does to supporting your business systems. This typically means educational services—such as solution-centric webinars, and proactive training on new releases and features—and a range of business application support services, including reports and dashboard development, licensing optimization, and workflow configuration.

3. Adoption

A peak-performing business solution and world-class training cannot be maximized if users do not rapidly adopt the system as intended. Ensure your managed services provider offers change management services as well. The right change management service can help move your team from the “how” of the system (processes, workflows) to the “why” (strategic application).

4. Strategic guidance

Most importantly, your managed services team should be less of a “break/fix” provider and more of a strategic partner, one you lean on as much for guidance as you do for help. Of course, you should be able to contact your MSP when you have an issue.

But more so, you should be able to lean on your MSP for the ideas and insights that help grow your business.

You want a provider with deep experience in ERP, CRM, and other business applications to enable business modernization and transformation. But far more importantly, look for proven expertise in specific vertical markets and how that provider is leveraging technology in markets relevant to you.

Good times, challenging times, anytime: your managed services provider can be right there with you, helping you reduce costs, minimize risk, drive revenue, and score every business goal.



Managed Services delivered by Argano

As your business grows, so do the complexities of your IT solutions and infrastructure. Let Argano do the heavy lifting and move towards a strategic approach to optimizing your technology environment for greater agility and scalability. With Managed Services from Argano, you get more out of your solutions by leveraging benchmarking and industry best practices to help maximize your technology investment, minimize risk, and achieve faster, better outcomes.



Find out how Argano can help you get more from your technology investment. Contact us today at info@argano.com

About Argano

Argano, the world's first and leading designer of modern Digital Foundations™, empowers companies across industries and around the world to rethink how businesses operate and unlock innovation. We steward companies to reimagine their business operations by integrating, automating, and optimizing the way data, technologies and users interact. Born from an early collaboration of world-class specialist firms, we are today a singular, pragmatic response to operational transformation. Fortune 100 to Global Fortune 2000 trust us for a faster, more reliable journey to their best digital future. Our reputation is grounded in our exclusive focus on Digital Foundations, proven methodologies, and expert communities. Learn more at www.argano.com.