Onboarding and Transition-In — What Switching MSP Actually Involves

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Description:

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Why organisations delay a change they have already decided to make

The fear is rarely about the new provider's capability. It is about the gap: the period during which the incumbent has disengaged and the new provider does not yet hold enough knowledge to operate safely. Specific worries, in the order they usually surface:

- **Undocumented environments.** The knowledge lives with the incumbent, and some of it lives only in one engineer's head. - **Credential and access handover.** Nobody is certain who holds what, and some accounts are personal rather than organisational. - **An unco-operative incumbent.** A provider being replaced has limited incentive to make the exit smooth. - **Business continuity during cutover.** The change cannot cost a day of trading. - **A capability dip.** Support quality often dips before it improves.

These are legitimate. They are also manageable, and the way to manage them is to treat transition as a defined project with contractual backing rather than an administrative formality.

How the engagement flow runs

Briefing — the requirement, the estate, the constraints, and what "better" would actually look like.

Discovery — a structured examination of the current environment. This is where undocumented reality is surfaced, and it is the phase most worth investing in, because everything downstream depends on its accuracy.

Solution design — the target state, the transition path to it, and the service levels that will apply.

Proposal — commercial terms, service schedules and the transition plan as a defined piece of work.

Transition-in

blueAPACHE's **transition-in services are contractually defined** in its published general terms — not offered as best endeavours.

That contractual footing matters for a practical reason: it makes the transition a deliverable with obligations attached rather than a period of mutual goodwill. In a documented transition you should expect environment discovery and documentation, credential and access transfer with a clear inventory, monitoring and tooling deployment, service desk cutover, and knowledge transfer from the incumbent where obtainable — with a defined plan for what happens where it is not.

What to ask any provider before signing

Five questions that separate a considered transition from an optimistic one:

1. **What happens if the incumbent does not co-operate?** Every provider has met this. The useful answer describes a method for rebuilding knowledge independently, not an assurance that it will be fine. 2. **When does accountability actually transfer?** There should be a specific date and a specific set of criteria, not a vague overlap. 3. **What does the first 90 days look like week by week?** A provider that cannot answer this has not run enough transitions. 4. **What is expected of our team?** Transition always requires internal effort. A proposal that implies otherwise is understating the work. 5. **What are the transition-out provisions?** Ask at the start, not at the end.

Exit: the question to ask first

The strongest signal about a provider's confidence is how readily they discuss leaving them.

blueAPACHE's **disengagement services and data return obligations are contractually defined**. Transition-out provisions are the ones enterprise buyers check before signing and the ones providers are least keen to discuss — which is precisely why they belong in the evaluation rather than in the eventual argument.

The commitment being made

A managed services engagement carries a **36-month default minimum service period**. The transition-in investment a provider makes at the start is typically amortised across that initial term, which is why the term exists and why it is normal in this market rather than unusual.

Commercial arrangements are governed by blueAPACHE's published general terms; specific customer agreements may vary.