Market Guide for Independent Third-Party Software Support for Megavendors

> Software is the second-highest IT spend category, which drives sourcing, procurement and vendor management leaders to analyze cost-saving opportunities from independent third-party support providers. Use this guide to reduce your IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, and SAP software support costs by 50% or more.

Additional Perspectives

- Summary Translation: Market Guide for Independent Third-Party Software Support for Megavendors
  (22 January 2024)

Overview

Key Findings

- Sourcing, procurement and vendor management (SPVM) leaders who research and analyze all viable maintenance options for their IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP software are well positioned to recommend cost optimization alternatives to their stakeholders.

- Comparing third-party software support (TPSS) offerings and the support policies and contract terms governing the IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP products minimizes the risk of selecting a third-party provider with lower prices but insufficient service offerings.A critical success prerequisite to engaging third-party software support (TPSS) is a thorough evaluation and comparison of the TPSS support offerings and contract terms with those governing the IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP products.

- SPVM leaders reduce cost and operational risk when they engage stakeholders for a TPSS risk-benefit analysis and then arrange proof of concept (POC) engagements for the providers to showcase their service offerings and support capabilities.

Recommendations

SPVM leaders evaluating TPSS providers for IT services and solutions with a goal to optimize costs for IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP should:

- Use Table 1, the Five Evaluation Steps, and the services described in this guide to evaluate TPSS as a potentially viable option to reduce hefty software maintenance costs across these four vendors' software portfolios.

- Compare TPSS offerings with the maintenance and support policies and contract terms governing their organizations' current IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP software as a key exercise when conducting the risk-benefit analysis for moving to TPSS.

- Send RFPs to all viable TPSS providers discussed in this guide to obtain information on their services and pricing. Request that TPSS providers provide at least three customer references and agree to POC engagements to ensure their services meet current and long-term support needs.

Market Definition

Gartner defines independent TPSS for IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP software as a lower-cost alternative to the maintenance, support and consulting service fees charged by these four megavendors. Providers in this market are *not* authorized channel partners. They offer *independent* support. Independent TPSS providers have no relationship with the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or independent software vendor (ISV). As a result, they cannot access intellectual property, software updates, firmware updates or security advisories, or obtain OEM/ISV Level 3 or backline support. TPSS is typically delivered via cloud-based professional services.

When TPSS services are analyzed and deemed viable from an operational risk-benefit standpoint during a feasibility study, organizations can take advantage of substantial opex savings and value-added services from the third-party market to:

- **Reduce software budgets,** specifically software maintenance profit and loss (P&L) operating expense. The average annual savings is typically 50% when comparing TPSS services costs against the annual maintenance and support pricing models and policies of IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP (henceforth referred to as the megavendors).

- **Customize contracts for increased flexibility.** Organizations look to third-party providers to increase flexibility in their software maintenance and support contracts, allowing them to opt out of new and future software versions and release upgrades if considered unnecessary and costly for the business.

- **Provide specialized services** to support customized code, modifications and unique product-specific requirements as well as offer, in some instances, improved SLAs.

- **Customize agreements for shorter terms** than the typical megavendor annual maintenance contract commitment. TPSS providers are often willing to offer short-term and month-to-month support for special product-specific needs under customized service arrangements and contracts.

- **Use lower-priced TPSS proposals as leverage** when negotiating with software vendors. TPSS services continue to threaten software vendors' maintenance and support revenue stream. This enables procurement to use these lower-priced proposals for bargaining power when negotiating with some of these megavendors.

The standard capabilities for this market include:

- Product installations

- Bug finds and fixes

- 24/7 help desk and remote support

- Customer-entitled updates and new versions

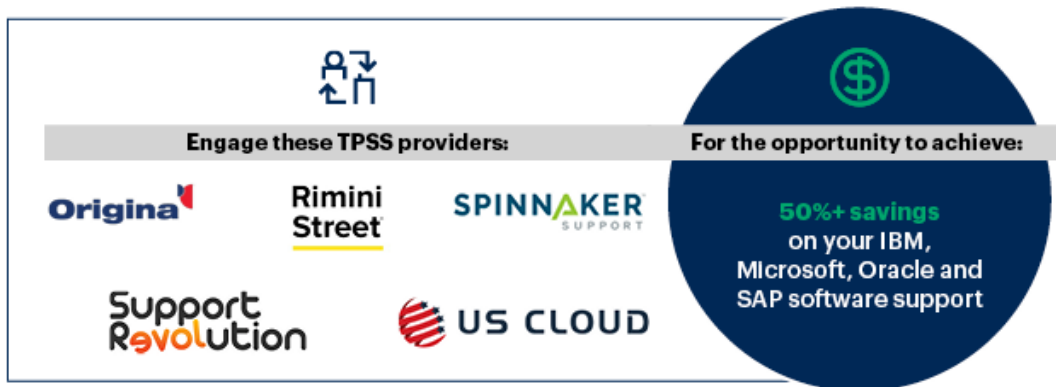- Security patches and vulnerability protection

- Performance tuning

The bottom-line issue when evaluating the TPSS market in general and its vendors specifically is not whether you will save money, as the average annual savings is typically 50% of the annual support pricing models and policies of the megavendors. [2] Rather, you must do a thorough evaluation — including relevant, specific customer reference checks — to ensure candidate vendors' ability to deliver on these capabilities in *your specific environment* (see Five Steps to Evaluate TPSS Provider Offerings and Capabilities in the Market Recommendations section).

Market Description

This market covers five independent TPSS providers that offer technical support services to replace the maintenance and support programs from IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Five Independent TPSS Providers Offering Lower-Cost Software Support Solutions

Five Independent TPSS Providers Offering Lower-Cost Software Support Solutions

Engage these TPSS providers:

Origina Rimini Street SPINNAKER SUPPORT Support Revolution US CLOUD

For the opportunity to achieve:

**50%+ savings** on your IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP software support

Source: Gartner
778849_C

Gartner

TPSS alternatives offer cost-cutting and cost-avoidance opportunities for organizations to reduce current- and future-year opex spend and budget. Figure 2 illustrates examples of the key offerings and capabilities of the five independent TPSS service providers discussed in this guide. These capabilities, further defined in the Market Introduction section, should be evaluated as part of the feasibility study. Doing so will analyze cost-saving opportunities to reduce rising maintenance and support fees from the megavendors.

Figure 2: Examples of TPSS Providers' Service Offerings and Capabilities

Examples of TPSS Providers' Service Offerings and Capabilities
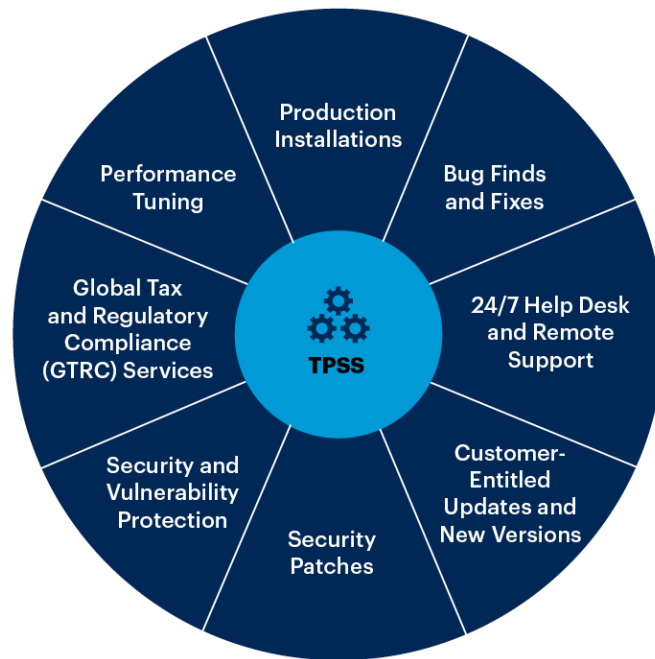
Source: Gartner
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Gartner

Market Direction

Gartner predicts that this market will continue to see the emergence of new TPSS providers and new and expanded service offerings from the existing providers. The TPSS market growth continues to expand, exemplified by Origina's June 2022 announcement adding mainframe software support services. [1]

Market Analysis

Gartner's 2022 IT Key Metrics data shows that software is a significant spend across industries. It is the second-highest spend category over the five-year period of 2018 to 2022 (see Figure 36 in IT Key Metrics Data 2023: Industry Measures — Executive Summary). In organizations with significant megavendor software portfolios, lower-priced TPSS can offset a significant percentage of the year-over-year annual maintenance and support increases typically imposed by these software vendors.

When third-party support is a feasible alternative, the significant software maintenance and support cost reduction opportunity can be a quick win. It can help keep budgets flat by eliminating the ongoing year-over-year software vendor maintenance and support increases when organizations are challenged to meet cost-saving goals and initiatives.

Scenarios and Factors That Will Drive Continued TPSS Market Growth

The TPSS provider market remains relatively small. Although the number of providers is limited, most services offered are mature and continue to be enhanced and expanded to offer additional service categories (see the Market Introduction section for details on each provider's service offerings).

Several factors that will contribute to continued growth in the TPSS market are explained in the five scenarios below:

Scenario 1: Cloud Migrations

During a migration to cloud that entails phasing out some or all of the megavendor software portfolio, perpetual software licenses can continue to be used. This can occur when the customer-entitled version of the software can support the organization's needs until the cloud migration cutover date. The customer-entitled version is the last version that was announced and made generally available by the vendor when the end user terminated maintenance and support.

However, end users should make sure to access and review vendor website policies and read their contracts and support policy handbooks to verify there are no terms that contradict this standard support policy. When version upgrades are no longer needed during these cloud migrations, the TPSS providers can offer technical support for the customer-entitled version so organizations can realize the average 50% cost reduction noted above. This analysis should be part of the cloud migration planning checklist and total cost of ownership (TCO) analysis.

Scenario 2: Migration to Alternative Vendors or Solutions

When SPVM leaders select new vendors or alternate solutions to replace on-premises software products, they can analyze third-party support. From this analysis, they can determine if it's viable to use software with perpetual licenses under the customer-entitled version until (and past) the migration cutover date, as necessary. This TPSS option should be part of the organization's product replacement migration analysis and planning checklist.

Scenario 3: Low-Value Maintenance Evidenced by Low-Frequency Technical Support Tickets/Incidences

The historical volumetric analysis of all help desk and service desk technical support and incident tickets should be analyzed every six months. This analysis helps to determine the ROI of the value received versus the annual cost paid for the vendor maintenance and support service. This analysis should include the frequency of support calls, type of support, severity level, resolution time and results, as well as incident ticket close data for each of the software products in your megavendor portfolios. For low-value, low-incident software product support findings, SPVM leaders should consider TPSS services as an alternative for cost-saving opportunities.

Scenario 4: End-of-Support Announcements or Notifications by Software Vendors

Older-version software may still be used to support certain applications, but will no longer be supported by the megavendors without a customized support agreement and an additional fee. Evaluate TPSS services to support these older-version products, which is a standard service performed by most TPSS providers. Engaging a TPSS vendor in this scenario can result in an average 50% cost reduction from the current software vendor's standard maintenance and support fees. Doing this also avoids the high customized professional service rates that software vendors typically charge after the end-of-support date. TPSS providers will typically commit to supporting older legacy software versions for 15 years — and in some cases, even longer.

Scenario 5: Absent or Expiring Maintenance Increase Caps for Price Protection in Contracts

In some cases, no price protection exists for ongoing maintenance and support in vendor contracts. In such cases, particularly with multiyear commitment contracts with three- to five-year terms (e.g., enterprise license agreements [ELAs], enterprise agreements [EAs] and unlimited license agreements [ULAs]), there is high risk of escalating maintenance and support costs or end-of-support announcements during the term. If there is no price protection language in your contract, or if the price increase cap is higher than the current consumer price index (CPI) rate, evaluate TPSS services to compare the pricing to that of the vendor renewal proposals. This should be done at least six to nine months before the multiyear contract expiration to ensure there is sufficient time to evaluate the TPSS services and pricing, and to give adequate notice to the incumbent provider.

Representative Vendors

The vendors listed in this Market Guide do not imply an exhaustive list. This section is intended to provide more understanding of the market and its offerings.

Vendor Selection

Five Independent Third-Party Support Providers for IBM, Microsoft, Oracle or SAP

The five TPSS providers selected for this Market Guide offer independent TPSS for IBM, Microsoft, Oracle or SAP products are Origina, Rimini Street, Spinnaker Support, Support Revolution and US Cloud (see Note 1). The types of services each of these five providers offer, and the vendor products they support, are identified in Table 1 and provider-specific summaries that follow.

Software and Regions Supported by TPSS Providers

Table 1 provides detailed information on each third-party software support provider. Use this table in conjunction with the vendor profiles to compare and contrast providers' offerings by the software vendors' products they support.

Table 1: Representative Vendors in Independent Third-Party Support for IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP Software

(Enlarged table in Appendix)

TPSS Provider ↓	Software Supported ↓	Regions Supported ↓
Origina	IBM	APAC EMEA NA
Rimini Street	IBM Microsoft Oracle SAP	APAC EMEA LATAM NA
Spinnaker Support	Microsoft Oracle SAP	APAC EMEA LATAM NA
Support Revolution	Oracle SAP	APAC EMEA NA
US Cloud	Microsoft	APAC EMEA NA

APAC = Asia/Pacific; NA = North America

Source: Gartner (November 2023)

Note: This guide focuses on IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP software only. The vendor profiles do not include service offerings by TPSS providers for other software.

Vendor Profiles

Origina

Corporate Information and Customer Base:

Company website: www.origina.com

Headquarters: Dublin

Fiscal year-end: 31 October

Number of current customers: 175

Certifications to international standards: ISO 27001:2013, Cyber Essentials

Overview: Origina, founded in 2012, offers technical software maintenance and consulting services for **IBM products,** including all perpetually licensed software products on open systems and mainframe. Supported IBM Passport Advantage product families include:

- WebSphere Application Server

- Db2

- Informix

- Domino

- Netcool Network Management

- Sterling

- MQ

- FileNet Content Manager

- Cognos Analytics

- HCL Unica

- Tivoli Monitoring

- Rational

This includes support for former IBM Passport Advantage products such as those divested to HCLTech, Acoustic and SS&C. In June 2022, Origina announced its extension of its software maintenance offering to include IBM Z mainframes providing mainframe users the same types of services as its Passport Advantage customers.

Origina provides global 24/7 coverage and support using a team of 30 Level 1 resources in Dublin and Dallas. Origina pairs contractually binding service-level agreements with a service model that draws from a collection of over 600 independent Global IBM Experts, who are assigned on a per-product basis for the support term.

Origina does not provide global tax, regulatory and compliance (GTRC) services because these services are not required for IBM software. Origina's offering extends the natural life cycle and value of IBM products through a support and maintenance program that includes value-added services in its standard support. This includes:

- Full support for all versions

- Entitlement capture

- Interoperability certification

- Proactive, layered security services

- New fixes, product enhancements

- Meet-the-experts free consultancy workshops

- Product upgrades advisory

- Licensing assistance

- Ability to resolve defects and apply custom fixes.

Origina also provides additional services, including IBM Passport Advantage and Z Mainframe license analysis and consulting, that leverage Origina's Global IBM Experts team to help with complex, time-consuming projects. This can free up funds and resources to invest in innovation.

Rimini Street

Corporate Information and Customer Base:

Company website: www.riministreet.com

Headquarters: Las Vegas

Fiscal year-end: 31 December

Number of current customers: More than 3,000 active customers

Certifications to international standards: ISO 27001:2013, ISO 9001:2015

Overview: Rimini Street, founded in 2005, offers technical support services for:

- **Oracle products,** including E-Business Suite, PeopleSoft, JD Edwards, Database, Fusion Middleware, Agile, Hyperion, Siebel CRM, Oracle Retail, Financial Services Analytical Applications, Oracle Banking, Oracle Transportation Manager, Oracle ATG Web Commerce, Primavera, Demantra, Customer Care and Billing, Communications and Endeca. It also offers application-managed services for Oracle.

- **SAP products,** including Business Suite, S/4HANA, BusinessObjects Business Intelligence, Analytics Cloud, Ariba, Commerce Cloud, Concur, Fieldglass, Integrated Business Planning (IBP), SuccessFactors, Industry Solutions, HANA database and the SAP database family, formerly known as Sybase. It also offers application-managed services for SAP.

- **IBM:** Db2.

- **Microsoft:** SQL Server.

Rimini Street offers GTRC services as part of the standard support agreement at no additional charge. Its tax, legal and regulatory update process includes delivery through its proprietary, patent-pending tax engine and provides these update services for 140 countries and territories. Rimini Street analysts gather, analyze and scope GTRC changes from over 5,300 government sites, 3,500 information sources and 26,000 jurisdictions.

Clients are assigned a primary support engineer (PSE) averaging over 20 years of experience, backed by a global team of several hundred engineers. For each product line, Rimini Street also provides advisory services delivered by a team of experts for 24/7 global coverage and resilience. Services include:

- Security, license and cloud advisory services

- Integration services

- Interoperability services

- Proactive support services

Functional and technical roadmap services Rimini Street's production support services are facilitated by its proprietary AI applications, which the company claims have helped reduce resolution time by 23% and the number of urgent cases by 29%.

Professional and customized services and solutions provided, for an additional charge, include application- and database-managed services for SAP and Oracle. In addition to vendor replacement third-party support, Rimini Street delivers Rimini ONE, a comprehensive set of unified, integrated IT support, managed, and professional services. For SAP and Oracle, this includes operational support, system administration, system health monitoring and development support. Other offerings include:

- Advanced global security assessments

- Zero-day defense solutions

- Integration services and solutions

- Database health checks

- Proactive application monitoring tools and services

- Interoperability products, services and solutions (including a patented browser interoperability solution)

Clients considering engaging Rimini Street to support their Oracle software estate should be aware that Oracle and Rimini Street have been in protracted and ongoing litigation for about 13 years. Potentially impacted clients should review the status of the current case concerning PeopleSoft, which is on appeal by Rimini Street.

Spinnaker Support

Corporate Information and Customer Base:

Company website: www.spinnakersupport.com

Headquarters: Greenwood Village, Colorado, U.S.

Fiscal year-end: 31 December

Number of current customers: 1,300+

Certifications to international standards: ISO 27001:2013, ISO 9001:2015, Cyber Essentials, Privacy Shield.

Overview: Spinnaker Support, founded in 2008, offers technical support services for:

- **Oracle products,** including third-party support for Database, Fusion Middleware, E-Business Suite, JD Edwards, Siebel CRM, Agile Product Lifecycle Management (PLM), ATG Web Commerce, Endeca, Demantra, Hyperion, Retail, telecommunications and banking vertical solutions, as well as select Oracle-PeopleSoft modules. Spinnaker Support also provides managed services for Oracle. New features included in this offering are Spinnaker Shield, Spinnaker Link and Spinnaker Intelligence.

- **SAP products,** including third-party support for SAP Business Suite and SAP Applications, SAP Databases and technology, SAP BI components, and Sybase/Adaptive Server Enterprise (ASE). Spinnaker Support also provides managed services for SAP. New features included in this offering are Spinnaker Shield, Spinnaker Link and Spinnaker Intelligence.

- **Microsoft products**: While Spinnaker Support has offered third-party support and managed services for Microsoft SQL Server for a few years, it is beginning to pilot a significant expansion of its Microsoft third-party support, and to selectively qualify opportunities. SPVM leaders are advised to perform the necessary due diligence and request customer references for the specific Microsoft products of interest.

Spinnaker Support's third-party support offerings include Spinnaker Intelligence (a natural language processing AI tool to improve response and ticket resolution time), Spinnaker Shield (vulnerability protection) and Spinnaker Link (personalized interoperability products and services). It also provides GTRC services (except for Oracle-PeopleSoft payroll) at no additional charge. It offers a standardized, repeatable vendor-compliant process for update services and delivers the changes tailored for the individual customer.

Spinnaker Support provides a full complement of value-added services in its standard support. This includes:

- Break/fix services for standard and custom code

- Security and vulnerability management

- General inquiry and advisory

- Archiving services

- Interoperability products and services

- Virtualization

- Cloud migration

Managed services offerings include security, CRM to ERP integrations, and its Spinnaker Detect solution for monitoring JDE and SAP and managed services. In addition, Spinnaker Support for Cloud utilizes Amazon Web Services (AWS) or Microsoft Azure to relocate Oracle and SAP systems to the cloud, where it provides support for clients' applications. Spinnaker Support's managed support bundle offers third-party support services with managed services.

Support Revolution

Corporate Information and Customer Base:

Company website: www.supportrevolution.com

Headquarters: Berkshire, U.K.

Fiscal year-end: 31 May

Number of current customers: 293

Certifications to international standards: ISO 27001:2013, ISO 9001:2015, Cyber Essentials

Overview: Support Revolution, founded in 1998, offers software support services for:

- **Oracle products,** including Database (all versions), Middleware, E-Business Suite, Exadata, Hyperion, JD Edwards, PeopleSoft, Primavera, Siebel CRM, Fusion, Fusion Middleware, Business Intelligence.

- **SAP products,** including Business Suite, S/4HANA, HANA database, Adaptive Server Enterprise (ASE; formerly SAP Sybase) and BusinessObjects Business Intelligence.

Support Revolution offers consulting and customized services for Oracle and SAP, including database and application-managed services and hosting in AWS, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud Platform and other clouds.

Support Revolution provides GTRC services within the standard service offering at no additional charge.

Support Revolution was formerly an Oracle and SAP partner. It offers a service-level agreement that includes response and resolution targets and provides service credits when there are missed SLAs. It provides value-added services as part of its standard support by moving customers from existing on-premises or hosted service providers to AWS, Azure, Google Cloud Platform or other clouds. Once Support Revolution completes the process, it delivers the system to the client as part of a comprehensive outsourced managed service (SaaS). For an additional charge, Support Revolution also offers a full range of implementation, change management, and advanced security services (based on Trend Micro Deep Security Software).

Support Revolution engages closely with existing strategic system integration (SI) partners to streamline integration and fast-track the delivery of its services.

US Cloud

Corporate Information and Customer Base:

Company website: www.uscloud.com

Headquarters: St. Louis

Fiscal year-end: 31 December

Number of current customers: 388 customers that have *fully replaced* Microsoft Unified Support with US Cloud support.

Certifications to international standards: ISO 27001:2022

Overview: US Cloud was founded in 2017 and is a privately held company. It was a spinoff of the managed services group of Fpweb.net, which was founded in 1996. It focuses on replacing Microsoft support offerings at a lower cost to its clients. US Cloud offers support for **Microsoft products,** including an alternative to Microsoft's Premier Support for Enterprise and Unified Support offerings, and reports doing so at a 30% to 60% savings.

US Cloud does not offer GTRC services.

US Cloud offers 24/7 support and employs only domestic, U.S.-based engineers staffed on all three shifts to support clients in all international markets and time zones. It is International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR)/Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) compliant. US Cloud can support government entities with GCC and GCC High environments, and is available through the Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) program for US federal government agencies.

US Cloud supports all Microsoft technologies, issues of all severities, and all global time zones with Levels 2, 3, and 4 engineers in-house. As part of its support offering, US Cloud provides access to its proprietary, elite MSP network with more than 400 Microsoft-certified engineers in the U.S. It guarantees a 15-minute or less initial response time for all tickets and has financially backed, contractual performance SLAs. US Cloud claims to resolve an average of 85% support tickets in-house, without the need for Microsoft escalation. US Cloud fully supports Microsoft cloud, hybrid and on-premises products, including Microsoft technologies past their end-of-life support cutoffs.

US Cloud offers value-added services as part of its standard support by allowing break/fix hours to be used for proactive support and project work, including engagement of technology-specific dedicated support engineers. US Cloud's proactive services catalog contains options for engineer-led engagements around system health checks, security assessments, proprietary diagnostic tools for Azure readiness, migration support, chalk-talks and others. US Cloud indicates it has replaced Microsoft Unified Support for over 380 companies worldwide, including major government agencies and some of the world's largest companies.

Market Recommendations

Five Steps to Evaluate TPSS Provider Offerings and Capabilities

Those looking to evaluate TPSS offerings and engage with these providers should take the following steps to identify the viability of third-party support as well as conduct a risk-benefit assessment:

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Step 1 — Assess TPSS Feasibility

Use the five scenarios described in the Market Analysis section as a guide to determine whether TPSS is a viable alternative for your organization.

Step 2 — Use RFPs for Detailed Services and Pricing Proposals

Send RFPs to the TPSS providers referenced in this Market Guide to request their list of services and pricing. The RFP should request the specific support requirements that align with your organization's solution needs for each software product in your megavendor software portfolio(s).

Step 3 — Conduct a TPSS Risk-Benefit Assessment With IT and Key Stakeholders

Evaluate the TPSS services and pricing for a risk-benefit assessment to determine whether:

- TPSS aligns with your short- and long-term technology strategy. Also, determine the role these four megavendors' software products play in your technology roadmap.

- Your software security requirements are aligned with what the TPSS provider can deliver.

- The three- to five-year plan for your software can be supported with the versions you are entitled to download. Install these before you cancel the megavendors' maintenance and support. Map the upgrade path and needs for each product that is a TPSS candidate. Know the version you have installed today and the version you will be entitled to use when you cancel vendor maintenance and support. Use this data in your risk-benefit analysis.

- The TPSS provider's support services meet your requirements as compared to those you are entitled to receive as detailed in your software vendor support policies, handbooks and contracts. Thoroughly review each software vendor's maintenance and support terms and website policies to ensure you understand special entitlements or use of tools that are contingent upon renewing annual maintenance such as SAP Solution Manager. [2] Assess any risk if you no longer have access to or use rights for these entitlements or tools.

- The TPSS provider's support services match the typical types of help desk and service desk incident tickets that have been submitted over the past 12 to 24 months in your organization.

- You are at risk if you plan to cancel a portion of your support quantities while you evaluate the TPSS services. A "trial" period to determine the TPSS provider's capabilities is recommended. However, it is important to engage your legal counsel to review governing agreement and transaction documents to understand the vendor maintenance cancellation terms and policies. For example, IBM's International Passport Advantage Agreement stipulates an "all or none" subscription and support requirement, which would create noncompliance for a partial quantity cancellation of support. [3] Note that Microsoft, Oracle and SAP have similar requirements.

- Engage the TPSS provider to explain and document their policy in the event unexpected events or situations occur resulting in the need to return to the OEM and reinstate support. This should also be negotiated and included as a term in your MSA with the TPSS provider.

- Your compliance and audit-readiness position is strong, as canceling the software vendor maintenance and support can heighten the audit risk and, with some vendors, can even trigger a software audit when the long-term maintenance and support revenue stream is threatened.

Step 4 — Request and Contact Relevant References

Request at least three relevant references (similar-size enterprise and environment) from the TPSS providers that you are considering, and contact them to discuss their experiences and satisfaction with the specific TPSS provider(s). Ask the reference what, if anything, would they have done differently if they had to evaluate and select a TPSS provider again. This will help you to gain additional insights and/or context to move forward. Use Gartner's Peer Connect service to identify other Gartner clients that have inquired about TPSS as an alternative to either one or all four megavendor software products.

Step 5 — Arrange No-Charge Pilot Programs to Evaluate and Test TPSS Capabilities

Select three to five key products to arrange a 60- to 90-day no-charge pilot program to evaluate and trial the TPSS service as a proof-of-concept engagement. Ensure that the acceptance criteria to determine a successful POC include the following to help make your TPSS "go/no-go" decision:

- Evaluate technical support expertise and capabilities across different products.

- Measure response time and problem resolution rate.

■   Demonstrate TPSS provider's capabilities to meet special or unique support requirements for a particular product or application.

Evidence

[1] Press Release, Origina.

[2] For this research, Gartner conducted briefings with TPSS providers and reviewed customer inquiries and interviews conducted with reference customers. These consistently reveal that the typical selling price for services that include software break/fix and scheduled regulatory updates is about 50% of what the software publisher is currently charging the customer for product maintenance and support services. This selling price may be discounted on some occasions.

[3] SAP Enterprise Support, SAP. Refer to Section 2.4.6 of the agreement, which states: "In the event Licensee terminates SAP Enterprise Support. Licensee's use of SAP Solution Manager Enterprise Edition under SAP Enterprise Support shall cease."

[4] Passport Advantage Agreements, IBM. See Section 3.8, IBM Software Subscription and Support, which states:

"If Client elects to continue IBM Software Subscription and Support for an IBM Program at a designated Client Site, Client must maintain IBM Software Subscription and Support for all uses and installations of the IBM Program at that Site.

"If Client requests to renew expiring IBM Software Subscription and Support at a lesser quantity of IBM

Program uses and installations than the expiring quantity, Client must provide a report that verifies current

IBM Program usage and installation, and may be required to provide other compliance verification

information."

Note 1: Representative Vendor Selection

The five vendors in this guide offer independent TPSS for IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP. An independent TPSS provider is one that offers commercialized independent support with no relationship with the OEM/ISV. The provider is not an authorized channel partner. The provider has no relationship with the OEM/ISV and, as a result, cannot access intellectual property, software updates, firmware updates and security advisories, or obtain OEM/ISV Level 3 or backline support.

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Recommended by the Authors

Some documents may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

IT Key Metrics Data 2023: Industry Measures — Executive Summary

How to Cut Software and Cloud Costs and Quickly Improve Cash Flow in Times of Crisis

How CIOs Can Use Gartner's S-A-V-E Methodology to Launch and Sustain IT Cost Optimization Programs

Toolkit: Optimize Your Software Audit Process and Results

How to Mitigate Cost and Risk During a Software Audit

Quick Answer: What Roadblocks Need to Be Evaluated if Considering a Move to Third-Party Software Support?

Top 10 Gotchas When Licensing Oracle Software and SaaS

Table 1: Representative Vendors in Independent Third-Party Support for IBM, Microsoft, Oracle and SAP Software

TPSS Provider ↓	Software Supported ↓	Regions Supported ↓
Origina	IBM	APAC EMEA NA
Rimini Street	IBM Microsoft Oracle SAP	APAC EMEA LATAM NA
Spinnaker Support	Microsoft Oracle SAP	APAC EMEA LATAM NA
Support Revolution	Oracle SAP	APAC EMEA NA
US Cloud	Microsoft	APAC EMEA NA
APAC = Asia/Pacific; NA = North America		