Consultants Network

Hire a Consultant
Frequently Asked Questions

Who are members of the Apple Consultants Network?
Members of the Apple Consultants Network are independent consultants with technical expertise in the set up, use, and maintenance of Apple and related third-party products and solutions. There are approximately 1,000 members throughout the U.S., Canada and Latin America. They offer a wide variety of services, from setting up an office or network to developing digital video and publishing solutions.

What are the advantages of hiring a member of the Apple Consultants Network?
Membership in the Apple Consultants Network demonstrates a dedication to professional development. To ensure the highest quality of customer service, all members are required to hold at least one certification in Mac OS X from Apple.

Many members are also certified in other Apple technologies and third-party applications. Consultants not only receive valuable training and the latest technical information about Apple and related third-party products and services, but they also have access to other resources that help them stay on the cutting edge of technology. As part of a large network of consultants, they benefit from the knowledge and experience of other members as well as exchange referrals to help clients find a proper fit.

What is the required certification of an Apple Consultants Network member?
To help ensure that customers receive the highest quality of consulting services, all members are required to hold at least one certification in Mac OS X. These certifications include:

> **Apple Certified Help Desk Specialist (ACHDS)**
> A consultant holding this certification has a verified foundation in Mac OS X client software.
>
> **Apple Certified Technical Coordinator (ACTC)**
> A consultant holding this certification has a verified foundation in Mac OS X and Mac OS X Server.
>
> **Apple Certified System Administrator (ACSA)**
> A consultant holding this certification is a full-time professional administrator and/or engineer who manages medium-to-large networks of systems, utilizing Mac OS X server in a demanding and relatively complex multiplatform environment.

How do I know if I need a consultant?
If you're like most people, you don't have the time or ability to properly set up and maintain even a small network of computers, or you may not have someone on your payroll to whom you would entrust that mission-critical responsibility. Consultants can bring a high level of technical knowledge and expertise in the latest Apple products and services to you and your company. The solutions they deliver often more than pay for themselves in reduced costs, increased productivity, and other tangible benefits, and there are other benefits to

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hiring a consultant, such as reduced payroll taxes, no pension or profit-sharing expenses, and the flexibility to use their skills on an as-needed basis. In addition, consultants have a depth of experience in strategic planning and are able to quickly identify opportunities for improving your business with technology that you may not have considered.

How much will a consultant's services cost?
Consultants set their own prices and they vary considerably, largely depending on the going hourly rate in their geographic area. Investigate different pricing options with the consultant you've chosen and keep in mind that the services and solutions they provide will typically deliver a long-term return on investment. The best approach is to ask the consultant for references of customers who had the same or similar types of services performed, then ask the references if the consultant delivered a valuable service at a reasonable price.

Where can I find and learn more about individual consultants?
Consultants can be found across the U.S., Canada, and Latin America. The best way to find a consultant in your area with the skills you need is to search the directory of members at http://consultants.apple.com/consultant/.

Visit the Services & Solutions page for more detail on specific services.

What types of businesses use consultants?
Companies of all sizes and in all industries use consultants. To avoid the high costs of a full-time IT staff, many small businesses use consultants as a "virtual" IT staff. Consultants can assess business needs, recommend solutions then implement and support them at a fraction of the cost of a full-time employee. Consultants also work with large companies to integrate Apple technology into their overall network or provide other custom solutions. Many consultants implement solutions such as workflow automation and digital asset management, while other members are UNIX experts who can help scientific companies identify and implement open source research tools or spearhead custom software development.

Do consultants typically offer training?
Many consultants provide seminars and training in addition to delivering technical solutions. Some offer regularly scheduled seminars at training centers. Others are available to provide on-site training at your facility, either one-on-one or in groups. Consultants can teach your employees to make optimal use of custom solutions, or they can deliver training in Mac OS X or other specific applications such as Final Cut Pro, AppleScript, and Aperture.

How do I find out what types of seminars and training are available?
Consultants offer a wide variety of training, from introductory classes in Mac OS X to digital media and design to business productivity. In addition, Apple offers seminars that you may find helpful for your business. You can visit Apple Seminars, Training & Events for more details.

If you are looking to maximize your use of technology, members of the Apple Consultants Network can help. Whether you need a customized solution or a simple network set-up, consultants can add value to your business that can result in a substantial return on your investment.