

# Technical Support & Associated Charges

To ensure that we're always able to help you as quickly and as effectively as possible, this short document provides guidance on how to use our technical support system, and outlines what is included, and what is outwith, our remit for the provision of technical support.

## 1. What's included, and what's not included?

Free technical support is only available for issues with Network Online's systems and hardware if they aren't working correctly.

- a) Only the following aspects are included within our technical support remit, and these are provided to you completely free of charge:
1. For shared hosting customers: 24x7x365 monitoring of your web site and of the host server on which your web site is located.
  2. For Virtual Private Server (VPS) and Dedicated Server customers: 24x7x365 monitoring of your VPS and of the host server on which your VPS is located.
  3. Replacement of faulty or damaged hardware on your host server.
  4. Emergency Support if your web site or VPS becomes unavailable through the direct fault of Network Online.
  5. 24x7x365 monitoring and management of all of our core services (e.g. DNS servers, mail server, FTP servers, control panel, backup servers, and monitoring servers), and providing fixes for genuine issues with these servers and services.
  6. 24x7x365 monitoring and management of our shared SQL and MySQL database servers, and providing fixes for genuine issues with these servers and services.
- b) Any requests for technical support that are not included in the list above are chargeable at our standard hourly rates:
- 09:00 – 17:30 (UK Time) **£60 per hour**, charged in 15 minute increments
  - 17:30 - 09:00 (UK Time) **£90 per hour**, charged in 30 minute increments
- c) Some examples of issues that are **outwith** our technical support remit include:
1. Error messages from any software that is installed on your own PC.
  2. Issues that are unrelated to Network Online's systems, such as problems with Smartphones, mobile phones, tablets, or any other mobile device, and how to configure these devices to collect or to send emails.

3. Problems with any third party software or applications.
4. Problems sending or receiving emails when you don't have email accounts on our mail server.
5. Scripting errors with software or applications that you are installing.
6. Advice on programs or scripts that you are thinking about installing.
7. Database rebuilds or extraction of files or folders from backup copies of your web site or VPS (e.g. for the purposes of your own testing or archiving, or where you have deleted files in error).
8. Any other issue that has not been caused directly by Network Online, and that is not a problem with our servers or the systems that we provide.
9. Any issue not listed under section 1.a) of this guide.

We will be very happy to provide assistance with point 7 above. Our standard hourly support rates, as detailed in section 1.b), will be charged.

## 2. How to use our support ticket system

When you need technical support, just send an email to [support@network-online.co.uk](mailto:support@network-online.co.uk), and make sure that you provide as much information as you possibly can. Support requests along the lines of, "Help. My email is down!" don't allow us to help you!

Some important things to include within your support request:

1. Always give information such as your username, what server you are on, and the web site, domain, or service that you are having a problem with.
2. Please try to explain clearly the problem in detail. We don't expect you to be technical, but the better you try to explain the problem, and the more information you give us, the greater the chance of us being able to fix the issue quickly.  
Additional information that may be important includes:
  - a) Are other domains having the same problem, or is it only this domain?
  - b) Was it working before?
  - c) When did the issue first start happening?
  - d) Has anything changed, or been updated, or been installed?
  - e) What do you think **may** have caused this issue?
  - f) Can you think of any reason for this happening?
  - g) Any other information that you think may be important

3. If you've received an error message, please forward the **entire** error message to us. It's important that we see the whole error message that was provided to you since it may contain codes or clues as to what the problem is.
4. Be sure that you can replicate the problem, and describe what circumstances cause it.
5. We may need to "see" the problem for ourselves and to test if the work that we do is helping, so please send any relevant links to the pages (including usernames and passwords, if required) and tell us how we can replicate the issue.
6. If the issue is to do with a connection problem or the unavailability of a particular website or service, please **always supply a traceroute** for that site or service by following the steps below (these instructions apply to Windows PCs):
  - a) Click on "Start"
  - b) Click on "Run" (if you can't see it, try looking in "All Programs | Accessories | Run")
  - c) Type: `cmd`
  - d) When the screen opens, type: `cd desktop`
  - e) type: `tracert <destination> > trace.txt` e.g. If you wanted to trace the route to `network-online.co.uk`, you would type `tracert network-online.co.uk > trace.txt`

This will run a traceroute between your computer and e.g. `network-online.co.uk`, and will output the results to a file on your desktop called "`trace.txt`". This is the file that you should email to us.

A typical traceroute will look something like this:

*Tracing route to network-online.co.uk [82.113.143.89] over a maximum of 30 hops:*

```

1  <1 ms <1 ms <1 ms cbs2.networkonline.local [192.168.16.2]
2  2 ms <1 ms <1 ms 192.168.1.1
3  45 ms 46 ms 46 ms lo0-central1.pcl-ag02.plus.net [195.166.128.235]
4  47 ms 48 ms 44 ms gi1-13-211.pcl-gw01.plus.net [84.92.6.32]
5  45 ms 45 ms 45 ms te2-1.pcl-gw02.plus.net [212.159.1.114]
6  45 ms 46 ms 45 ms te2-2.thn-gw2.plus.net [212.159.0.190]
7  45 ms 46 ms 45 ms xe-1-1-0-0.lon10.ip4.tinet.net [213.200.78.69]
8  45 ms 45 ms 45 ms gw.ip4.tinet.net [77.67.72.118]
9  58 ms 57 ms 56 ms 82.113.159.14
10 58 ms 57 ms 58 ms core-01.net.uk [82.113.128.30]
11 44 ms 45 ms 44 ms 82.113.143.89 [82.113.143.89]

```

*Trace complete.*

7. If a service appears not to be working at all, please always check our Core Service Monitoring Reports (<http://monitor.network-online.co.uk/core-service.html>) before emailing our support team.

If our monitoring reports display a service in white text, highlighted in red, this indicates that there is a problem with that service, and you can be sure that our support team will already be working on it. If you can see that a service is offline, please avoid contacting support immediately as it will result in us pulling technicians away from solving the issue, which will increase the time taken to fix it.

Our monitoring reports show when a service went offline (the "Status Changed at" column) so it's easy to calculate for how long the service has been unavailable. If time to fix the issue is likely to be protracted, we will send an email to all affected customers.

8. Please open a new ticket for each individual issue you are having. If you are having two problems, please send **two** emails. This helps to keep things simple, it avoids confusion, and it ensures that questions are handled by the correct support person.
9. Please don't re-open old tickets unless your support request is a continuation of an existing issue.
10. Please be patient. If you have provided us with sufficient information to allow us to investigate the issue, then you can be assured that our support team will be looking at the problem. It may take time to replicate the issue and to provide a fix, so please give them time to look at the problem and try to resolve it. Bombarding them with emails or requests for updates will only delay matters.

Our technical team work 24x7x365, and our response to problems is almost immediate. You can be confident that matters will be taken in hand, and you won't be kept waiting too long for a resolution or for an update on the issue when your request is urgent. We always aim to provide an update or a fix for an urgent problem within 2 hours. However, the time-to-fix depends upon how complicated the resolution is.

Support requests are prioritised by our support team, and emails that are marked as "urgent" receive no more priority than regular emails. Urgent matters – i.e. server or service unavailable – are always dealt with first, and non-urgent requests may take longer than usual to complete if there are more urgent issues to fix first.

### 3. Don't assume that all problems are our fault!

Our support team is sometimes too efficient at answering queries or dealing with problems, so, if you notice anything that doesn't seem right, it can seem to be easier to contact us than to take the steps necessary to ensure that the problem lies with our systems.

There can be many reasons for things to go wrong, or for websites to be unavailable (or "slow") and it's not always obvious where the problem lies.

Traffic on the internet travels through various points and over various connections or "backbones". Backbones are the main conduits for network traffic, and they operate at varying levels of capacity. When a backbone gets heavily used, or when it has problems, it can affect performance for certain areas of the world. There is very little that we can do to alter the network conditions for the major backbones as they are outwith our control. Thankfully, these problems are usually temporary, but please never assume that your server or website is down just because you are unable to connect to it.

**Before contacting support, always check general network conditions, always carry out a traceroute (as described on page 3), and always include those results in your email.**

#### 1. Always use the Online Support System

Every support request is tracked and monitored. By using our online system, all of the details about how your support request is being handled are available.

Using the online system ensures that all relevant information is at hand, and avoids you having to repeat yourself if your request is escalated to a more senior team member. By using the online system, we will have a full description of your issue, and a detailed record of the steps that have been taken to resolve it.

To enable us to provide free support for our customers, we don't provide telephone support. If you call us, unless you are paying for telephone support, or unless a service or a server is down, you will be charged for the time it takes our support team to deal with your query.

To use the online support system, you only need to send an email to [support@network-online.co.uk](mailto:support@network-online.co.uk) and the support process will start automatically.

#### 2. Please don't email support and then immediately follow up with a call

We only provide support through our support ticket system, except for specific cases when telephone support is paid for, or if there is an emergency – i.e. a service or

server is not operating.

If you believe that a service or server is not working, please check our core services monitoring report <http://monitor.network-online.co.uk/coreservice.html> before contacting support. When dealing with a service or server down, all of our technical support resources will be targeted towards fixing the problem, and any emails or telephone calls at this time will only delay matters.

If you do call for general support, you will be charged for the time taken to deal with your request (in 15 minute intervals) at our standard support rates.