Great Plains Support Guidelines

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Some support situations go beyond a typical technical support incident and beyond what is provided in your support plan. This section can help you determine when a situation is defined as technical support or professional services (called Beyond the Call Services when delivered by Microsoft® Business Solutions Support).

Technical Support

For instance, typical incidents for technical support would include operational questions, trouble-shooting assistance, mission-critical help and general how-to questions. Technical support requires technical experts to be available to assist customers throughout the day, either by telephone or electronically. You can typically purchase technical support on a per-incident basis or as part of a support plan.

Professional Services

Professional services generally involve more extensive assistance. Examples of professional services include implementation and setup of your solution, report formatting, migration services, update services, data recovery, data fixing, system administration support, training and onsite expert technical support. Professional services are generally delivered in person, although they can be delivered over the telephone like telephone support. Professional services are also scheduled within a reasonable time period. For more information about the fee-based support services offered by Microsoft Business Solutions Support, please refer to the Beyond the Call Services link in the Support Information area.

How does Microsoft Business Solutions define a support incident?
Our definition of a support incident is: one or more support issues brought up during the initial conversation with a support engineer. A support incident may be broken down into subordinate problems, but all issues brought up during that initial contact are assigned the same incident number.

If further assistance is needed on any one of the issues brought up in the initial conversation, it is considered an ongoing incident. Multiple calls or e-mails may be required to solve an ongoing issue, which is assigned a specific incident number. Any additional calls or e-mails required to solve an ongoing issue with an assigned incident number are included in the initial charge. If any new support issues are raised while working on an ongoing issue, those will be considered a new incident and will be assigned a new incident number and charged appropriately.

What is addressed in a support incident and what is chargeable?
Your support plan determines whether you will be charged for an incident.

If you are enrolled in a plan that provides unlimited technical support, all telephone calls and electronic support incidents submitted to Microsoft Business Solutions Support for regular support situations are included in the plan and won't be subject to individual charging. If you rely on Per-Incident Support or have pre-paid incidents, support engineers will judge if that incident should be charged after you initiate the incident.

You can avoid a chargeable support incident by checking for the solution yourself in one of the many self-help areas of CustomerSource. These include TechKnowledge, Support Hot Topics and Technical FAQ.

Chargeable Incidents

All technical support incidents initiated with Microsoft Business Solutions will be considered chargeable unless the engineer determines it to be not chargeable. The following are some typical situations of chargeable incidents.

How-To Questions: General how-to questions regarding a Microsoft Business Solutions product and the underlying system on which the product is implemented are chargeable. Typical how-to incidents include assistance in bypassing a specific error message and accomplishing certain steps in a report or other specific inquiries, such as where a certain field is stored or what a field will do if it is marked versus unmarked. Additional examples of how-to questions include how to modify an existing report, how to run month-end or year-end procedures, how to modify a check format, how are taxes calculated, what report do I run to obtain the value and quantity of my inventory and how do I transfer quantities from one site to another?

Operational Questions: You will be charged for help with operational questions, which are similar to how-to questions. An example would be how do I run month-end procedures in Payables Management?

Troubleshooting Assistance: You will be charged for troubleshooting assistance. An example of troubleshooting assistance may include a situation where you are trying to reconcile your checkbook to your general ledger cash account and it is not in balance. Or, you're wondering what to do because your payables aged trial balance does not match your control account in general ledger, or a paid invoice is showing on your aged trial balance.

Mission-Critical Help: You will be charged for emergency support. A severity-one support issue involves a mission-critical operation that is halted. Mission-critical operations include system-down situations as well as situations where an operation vital to the customer's success cannot be performed, resulting in potential threats to the financial or legal obligations of the customer. An example of mission-critical help includes recovering your system after a hardware or power failure, or you are wondering what to do if your computer crashes while posting a batch.

Compatibility Questions: If you inquire about compatibility with existing Microsoft Business Solutionsproducts, you will be charged if the information is available in the Read Me file or on CustomerSource. Examples of compatibility questions include asking if your new printer is compatible with your Microsoft Business Solutionssolution or if Microsoft Business Solutionsis compatible with Microsoft NT version X.X.

System or Implementation Problems: You will be charged to help overcome system or implementation problems. Examples of system or implementation problems include asking what is wrong if you are unable to launch Dynamics from one of your workstations when you are installing Dynamics. Or, after installing Dynamics on a new workstation, you just added to your network and you are unable to launch Dynamics from the new workstation, and you are wondering what could be wrong.

Support incidents that aren't charged:

Ongoing Incidents: Additional calls or e-mails needed to solve an ongoing issue are not considered chargeable. Ongoing incidents are assigned a case number. You can enter your case number to bypass the credit card request at the beginning of the call, to avoid additional charges. You can also review the status of an ongoing incident that's being researched by an engineer by reviewing your Microsoft Business Solutions support history in CustomerSource. If you have more information about a support incident, you can locate your case number in your support history, choose "update" and add additional details at no charge.

Incidents Related to Software Problems: Incidents caused by a software problem in a Microsoft Business Solutions product are not chargeable. This includes reporting software problems to Microsoft Business Solutions and obtaining assistance in determining if there is a possible work-around or temporary solution to the issue. There would not be any charges for obtaining any available service packs to correct the problem, as long as you are enrolled in the Microsoft Business Solutions Enhancement Program. After additional research, if an incident that was previously charged is determined to be a result of a software problem, the original charge

will be reversed. A call or e-mail requesting that a customer's name be added to an existing problem report is also not charged.

Potential Sales: Calls and e-mails related to a potential sale of Microsoft Business Solutions products are not charged. This includes questions about modules you do not own, additional services such as training and compatibility of products you are considering purchasing. While Microsoft Business Solutions Support will handle technical and feature questions about Microsoft Business Solutions products, questions about pricing should be directed to Sales Operations by sending an e-mail to mbssalop@microsoft.com or by calling 800-456-0025; press 2, then press 1.

Suggestions: If you call in with suggestions for new features or enhancements for Microsoft Business Solutions products, you will not be charged. If you have multiple suggestions, we recommend you submit using the Global Product Suggestions Tool.

Calls About Shipping: If you have questions about CD shipments, the replacement of bad CDs, a substitution of the wrong CD or documentation, or CDs that were not received, you will not be charged. You may also inquire, at no charge, about when and how the CD was shipped. Replacement CDs are shipped by regular ground mail. Overnight shipping may result in an extra charge.