



Australia's Cloud Experts

# 5 Traits You Should Demand From A Virtual Private Server

Before You Ever Entrust It With Your Mission-Critical Data



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## Why A Virtual Private Server?

Imagine your business runs a clever little advertisement or posts an interesting piece of social-media content — and it goes viral. The results are astonishing. Overnight, traffic to your website increases exponentially. Great news, right?

It would be. But you're using an entry-level "Shared Hosting" solution for your company's site — and because the package you bought doesn't offer on-demand scalability and wasn't designed for this level of traffic, your website actually crashes.

Or, even worse: Imagine another company hosting its website on the same Shared Hosting solution as yours. They — not you — hit the viral-content jackpot, and overnight their website gets slammed with traffic. But because your site is sharing server space in the cloud with that company, both their site and yours crash.

## VPS Services Are Not All Created Equal

Because you're reading this, we'll assume you understand the basic advantages of a Virtual Private Server (VPS) over a simple Shared Hosting service if you're running anything more complicated and mission-critical than a simple, static brochure website.

But what you might not know is that within the VPS-solution Industry, there are a wide range of offerings - in terms of Quality, Reliability, Scalability, and Support.



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# *Here Are 5 Things You Should Demand From Any VPS Provider — Before You Ever Entrust Them With Your Mission-Critical Data*

## #1 Experience And Credibility

It is easier today than ever to get into the cloud-hosting business. Just put up a website, create a slick marketing campaign, and you can call yourself a Virtual Private Server hosting company.

This is great for competition — which is one reason VPS hosting has become so affordable for small and midsize businesses like yours.

But it also means that when investigating VPS solutions — well before you begin comparing different providers' technical specifications — you first need to be certain that any company that makes your hosting short-list has a proven track record and deep experience and knowledge in the cloud-hosting industry.

That's why we're listing this trait first. It doesn't matter what else a VPS provider claims to offer — if they can't first demonstrate they're already successfully serving happy customers.



## What To Look For In Assessing Experience

### 1. Who are the company's customers, and will they name them?

You can usually find these details on the VPS provider's website, if they actually have satisfied customers.

### 2. Does the company offer customer testimonials, or even full case studies?

An added bonus of reading a VPS providers' case studies is that it can give you great ideas for using a Virtual Private Server to manage your website — ideas you might not have considered.

### 3. What kind of resources does the company have?

This is a very important component of a VPS company or any cloud-based service provider. You are entrusting this entity to keep your business website up and your users' experience at that site excellent, 24/7/365. So it's important to know that the VPS provider is backed by real resources.



## #2 Proven Data Security

Coming in a close second in importance to a VPS provider's experience and credibility is the company's processes for encrypting, securing and physically protecting your business data stored on its Virtual Private Servers.

Here, as with every other aspect of the VPS-solution industry, quality can range wildly. Fortunately, you can determine a great deal about how secure your website and other mission-critical data will be with a given VPS provider.

Here are some objective metrics to help you determine whether a VPS provider truly knows how to protect your data in the cloud.

### Key Metrics To Identify A Secure VPS Provider

#### 1. Data Encryption

Look for the highest encryption levels (e.g., 256-bit) to be used whenever the transfers your data to its servers.

#### 2. ISO-27001 and -9001 Certifications

This is key because it indicates the VPS provider has earned independent verification, from the International Standards Organization, that its data-security and quality-control processes are proven reliable.

#### 3. ASIO-T4 Secure Servers

This is also important, because it indicates the VPS provider uses data centres accredited by strict federal guidelines for security. You should always demand T4 accreditation.

#### 4. Daily Backups

Look for VPS solutions that include regular backups — ideally, every 24 hours — of your files, databases and entire servers. This way your system and data can be restored even after a serious disaster.



## #3 More Resources On-Demand

Let's go back to the viral-content jackpot scenario we discussed earlier. If you needed to scale up resources to accommodate more website traffic — in a hurry — you'd want to know your hosting provider could handle it, that your visitors would continue to enjoy a great user experience, and that it wouldn't be cost-prohibitive.

Here's one great advantage of the right Virtual Private Server solution: on-demand scalability to increase bandwidth and other resources as you need them, without breaking the bank.

### Even Better Than A Dedicated Server?

One more note about the on-demand scalability of resources that the right VPS service can provide. Interestingly, this is one aspect of VPS hosting that is even better than the more-expensive virtual Dedicated Server solution.

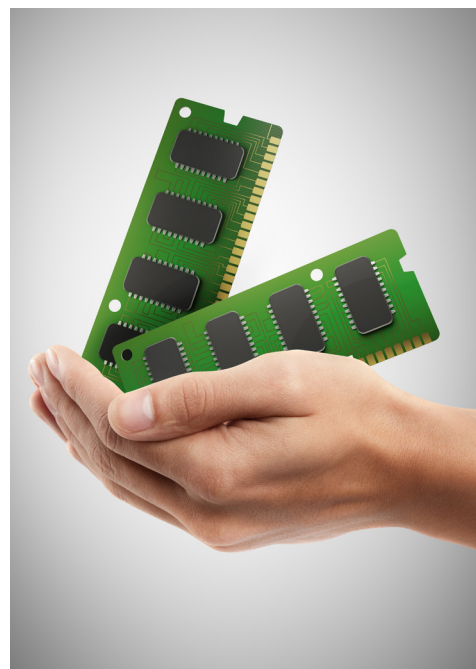
With a Dedicated Server, you have full, exclusive use of an actual server hosted in the cloud. For a larger business, this can be preferable to a VPS solution, where you are in effect sharing server space (even though your "shared" server acts like a standalone unit, and cannot be negatively affected by other companies using it).

The downside of a Dedicated Server, however, is scalability. Because it's indeed a real server, if you need to scale up for more resources — say, because you hit that viral-content jackpot we discussed earlier, and suddenly need to accommodate more site traffic — your hosting company will need to physically add more capacity.

This could mean adding another hard drive to your Dedicated Server, or even move your existing site and related data to a more powerful server. All of this takes time and could mean downtime for your site.

With a VPS solution, however — assuming you're working with an experienced provider — you can have your capacity increased anytime, with virtually no downtime, by simply adding a virtual CPU to your Virtual Private Server.

In this sense, the right VPS solution can be better than a Dedicated Server — because it can scale up with you, quickly and cost-effectively, whenever you need the added resources — and then scale back down when you don't.





## #4 Real Support Around The Clock

Here's another area in which the quality of VPS solutions can vary tremendously — and where your research upfront will be critical to finding the right solution. When investigating potential providers, you should demand 24/7/365 support from real people.

You are making an implicit promise to your customers that your site will be up and functioning smoothly every minute of every day. If there's ever a problem, you need a lot more from your VPS provider than the ability to submit a trouble ticket — you need to reach a real person who can help you get things back on track.

### Support Services A VPS Provider Should Provide

#### 1. 24/7 Availability

Is the VPS company going to be there, day and night, every day of the year in case you have an issue? Demand nothing less.

#### 2. Live Support Staff

What does the VPS provider mean by "24/7?" Does that simply mean you can submit a ticket, and then wait, if something goes haywire in the middle of the night? Or will there always — always — be a real support person there to help you?

#### 3. Immediate Notification Of Issues

The right VPS provider will not only "be there" for you 24/7 — they'll also be monitoring your data. Which means they'll be able to alert you — by email or text — right away if there's an issue.

## #5 Guaranteed Reliability And Site Uptime

Finally, when you begin researching VPS providers, you're going to find many big promises of high-percentage uptimes, many of them even backed up "guarantees." But what do those guarantees actually mean?

Here's a great way to separate the proven, reliable Virtual Private Server companies from those whose specialty is actually making big promises: Look at their Service Level Agreements to determine how they guarantee their stated uptimes.

### Does The Company's SLA Include A Credit Against Its Guarantee?

Review the SLA of any VPS provider you're considering entrusting with your business website. If they can truly guarantee their high-uptime promises — and by the way, you should demand 99.9% availability — their SLA will also include a legally binding credit to your account for any dips below that uptime percentage.

Remember, promising a high uptime is the easy part. Actually backing it up with what amounts to a money-back guarantee — that's where you'll find the Virtual Private Server company that you actually want to do business with.



*99% Guaranteed Uptime Is The Minimum  
You Should Demand From Your Virtual  
Private Server Provider*