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How to ask for help, and what “unmanaged” really means

Getting Support

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How to ask for help, and what “unmanaged” really means

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Half the misunderstandings about support come from the same boundary: **the server is ours, the site is yours**. This article covers where to ask for help, what to put in the request so it gets solved first time, and exactly where that boundary runs.

Where to ask

Channel	For what
Support ticket	The most effective route. It is recorded, it has a history, it reaches the right department, and it is evidence of what was said. Anything that needs investigation, another team, or a written record goes here.
Site chat	Quick questions and pointers. The first responder is the automated assistant, always identified as such, and the conversation moves to a person when the subject calls for it or when you ask.
Phone and the rest	On the **contact page**, with the hours for each.

Invoices, payments and refunds are **always** handled by a person, never by the assistant. And there is a dedicated department for migrations, which is where you ask to bring a site over from another provider.

Pick the right department when you open the ticket. A ticket in the wrong department is not lost, but it takes one extra hop before it reaches whoever can solve it, and that hop is on the clock.

What to put in the ticket

A well-written ticket saves one round trip, and a round trip usually costs more time than the problem itself.

1. **The domain or service involved**, written out in full. Many accounts hold more than one, and «my site» does not narrow it down.

2. **The exact address where the problem shows.** The page, not just the site.

3. **What you expected and what happened.** An error message copied verbatim is worth far more than the same message recalled from memory.

4. **When it started, and what changed just before:** an update, a new plugin, a DNS change, a migration. The answer is nearly always in there.

5. **What you have already tried**, so we do not spend the first reply repeating it.

6. **How to reproduce it**, if it is not obvious: the steps that lead to the error. A problem that reproduces gets fixed; one that does not gets debated.

! **No technician of ours will ever ask you for a password**
to your e-mail, your panel or your bank, by phone, e-mail or chat. We reach your account from the server side to diagnose it. Anyone asking you for a password is not us.

What is ours and what is yours

Whose	What it covers
Ours: the environment	On services with a control panel, support covers the panel, the server, the network and the mail service. On servers without a panel, it covers the hardware, the network and the power.
Yours: the site content	The files, the content management system, the themes and the plugins, and whatever the application needs configured to run. Code is code, and it is not part of support.
Yours: keeping applications updated	An outdated or badly configured application is the most common way in for an attacker, and a compromised service can be suspended as a precaution. We examine the environment and tell you what we found; fixing the application is yours to do.
Yours: your own computer	We do not take control of it. We can guide you, but you press the keys.

Work outside that scope can be requested by ticket. If we can do it, it is **quoted before it starts**: nobody gets surprised by an invoice.

«Unmanaged», plainly

On VPS, Cloud and dedicated servers the plan is **unmanaged** by default. It means this, and only this: the hardware, the network and the power are ours; the operating system, the updates, the firewall, the backups and the applications are yours.

The trade is an honest one. You get administrator access and can shape the server however you like, and precisely because you can change everything, keeping it running and watching it becomes yours, including any downtime caused by changes you make. We watch the network and the infrastructure; the memory, disk, processing and mail queue of *your* server are watched by you.

> **Not included unless you buy them:**
> A control panel, backups, system administration, and installing or tuning applications. There is a managed server option: take it, and the support scope for that server becomes the scope of that option.

On **shared hosting** and **reseller hosting** it is the other way round, by design: the configuration is standard and cannot be customised, there is no administrator access, and we run the checks that need it. Less freedom, less work for you.

Deadlines, hours and language

The departments do not all keep the same hours, and the first reply to a support ticket has a published deadline. Note that it is a **first reply** deadline, not a resolution one: that first message may confirm receipt, ask for what is missing, or say the investigation has begun.

The deadlines, the hours of each department and the situations in which a deadline is paused are all in the **Support Policy**, which is the document that governs. We deliberately do not repeat them here: two copies of the same number always end with one of them being wrong.

RECOMMENDED

Read the Support Policy before you need it. It is short, and it settles arguments.

Read the Support Policy →

SEE ALSO

- **Support Policy** →
- **Talk to us** →
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