In today’s business environment, software-related problems can really slow down a business—not to mention tie up an IT staff. IT organizations are expected to manage highly complex, multi-platform IT systems while simultaneously improving availability and reducing support costs. And they’re being asked not only to support complex software implementations, but also to minimize the negative business impact that those software changes can create, leverage automation to reduce costs and spur innovation. A complex environment often means that your IT staff must coordinate business strategy with expensive individual support agreements from multiple vendors, each with limited expertise, differing support terms and multiple points of contact—creating prolonged problem resolution, increased downtime and frustration within your client base and IT department.

IBM Software Support Services – Software Maintenance is designed to provide comprehensive coverage for software license acquisition, product upgrades and remotely delivered technical support under a single, common set of agreements, processes and tools. To help ensure that you always have access to the latest version of your software and to remote technical support, Software Maintenance is included in the license acquisition for all IBM Power Systems™ (including IBM System i® and IBM System p®) operating systems and associated software products, and is renewable on an annual basis.
Keeping your software versions current and running smoothly can be a challenge in today's complex IT environment. To stay competitive, your organization can’t afford to have out-of-date software or downtime. And with support staff and budgets stretched thin, you need to maximize the value of your IT assets and, at the same time, have access to technical support that can help you with any question or problem. As a result, your organization can experience greater cost-efficiency, faster problem resolution times and a higher level of availability through expert-level resources from IBM.

Simplifying access to the latest software
With increasing numbers of critical releases and security updates, it’s essential that you stay on top of business-critical software issues. With Software Maintenance from IBM Software Support Services, you get the optimum level of support through a flexible, single-source contract. With subscription software updates at a fixed annual expense, you can more easily and cost-effectively protect your software investments with continuous access to the latest technology enhancements from IBM.

Not all problems are the same
Gathering information is often the most critical step in resolving your problem. Severity levels are determined during a mutual discussion with you and our support analyst based on the business impact of the issue. If a problem is determined to be severity 1, IBM will work the issue seven days a week, 24 hours a day, providing you are able to work with us during those hours as part of the standard package.

You receive 24x7 support for your critical issues (severity 1) and 8x5 for severity 2, 3 and 4 issues. For a nominal fee, you can upgrade to 24x7 for all-severity support to help ensure that no issue has to wait until the next day to be addressed.

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<th>Severity level situations and examples</th>
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<td><strong>Level</strong></td>
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| Severity 1 | Critical impact or system down: Business-critical software component is inoperable or critical interface has failed. This usually applies to a production environment and indicates you are unable to use the program, resulting in a critical impact on operations. This condition requires an immediate solution. | • Users are unable to log on.  
• The server cannot be started. |
| Severity 2 | Significant business impact: A software component is severely restricted in its use, or you are in jeopardy of missing business deadlines because of problems with a new application rollout. | Users receive a database management error while attempting to view records. |
| Severity 3 | Some business impact: Program is usable with less significant features (not critical to operations) unavailable. | A client cannot connect to a server. |
| Severity 4 | Minimal business impact: A noncritical software component is malfunctioning, causing minimal impact, or a nontechnical request is made. | • Documentation is incorrect.  
• Additional documentation is requested. |
Speeding up problem resolution
With Software Maintenance, IBM can help speed problem resolution by providing one-stop access to specialized IBM technical experts with extensive knowledge of IBM Power Systems (including System i and System p) software. You can take advantage of unlimited calls from an unlimited number of callers without limitations on incidents or hours of support. With IBM’s global presence and the ability to support your 24x7 business needs, it takes full ownership of the problem from initial problem report through resolution and ensure prompt and accurate resolution.

Supporting increased system availability and staff productivity
Software Maintenance can help take the burden away from you to keep your staff’s skills up-to-date in a fast-changing IT environment. Backed by IBM’s trusted support center and expert help for routine and business-critical severity 1 issues and direct links into IBM development labs to enable swift problem resolution, your staff is free to focus on more revenue-producing projects and innovation. Software Maintenance delivers a highly cost-effective way, for a predictable fixed annual expense, to help protect you from unplanned charges. With yearly support for your business-critical software, you can keep downtime to a minimum and derive higher value from your IT assets.

Why IBM?
IBM Software Support Services – Software Maintenance can provide you with software product upgrades and remotely delivered technical support under a single, common set of agreements, processes and tools. You gain access to IBM’s current software technology enhancements and have one-stop access to specialized IBM technical experts with extensive knowledge of IBM Power Systems (including System i and System p) software. IBM expertise — coupled with flexible renewal options and cost-efficiency—makes this service a compelling choice for organizations of any size that require maximum availability and optimum performance from their IT systems.

For more information
To learn more about IBM Software Support Services—Software Maintenance, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:

ibm.com/services/maintenance