



How Can We Help You?



[Outsourcing Strategies for Every Business]

Introduction

Sometimes – especially if you’re running a business – it makes more sense to outsource your requirements to somebody else. Why? First, your team may lack the expertise to accomplish a specific task or function; or, you may need to assemble and manage a technical team from scratch. This is a common reason, but at its most elementary level, we outsource for another reason all together. The New York Times put it like this:

“Because there is an opportunity cost for every hour consumed by [other] tasks; there exists some higher-value activity you could be spending your time on instead.”

According to a 2009 PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) survey, 87-percent of respondents claim that modern outsourcing efforts have either partly or completely satisfied the goals of the original business case – 91-percent, whether completely satisfied or not, claim that they will outsource again. It’s become a growing trend, and companies now have the ability to outsource anything from project management to personal assistants. The challenge lies in doing it efficiently and cost-effectively. To get you headed in the right direction, we’ve put together a few pointers.

Jumping in too Quickly



Outsourcing may provide a quick way for you to meet your goals and turn a profit. Unfortunately, many companies make snap-decisions when it comes to this process, usually due to financial pressure to handle a situation as quickly as possible.

It may be tempting to explicitly trust a company with your individual needs, but be mindful of the potential negative returns that accompany a hastily executed decision.

In the article, “The 7 Biggest Outsourcing Mistakes to Avoid,” CBS Moneywatch recommends viewing this relationship like the early stages of a honeymoon. “...Over time a great experience can turn into something quite different. Turn over a portion of the function and let your outsourcing partner earn a greater share.”

In other words, take time to consider the risks that may grow from this partnership. To help better understand the process and how both companies will react, consider outsourcing one stand-alone project at a time before moving on to other specific needs.

Carefully Evaluate What Can be Outsourced

Don’t jeopardize your company’s greatest asset to save a few dollars. If you’ve got the best customer service around, consider it invaluable, especially if your customers identify it with your image. The National Federation of Independent Business recommends that you “...keep doing the things you’re good at and outsource those tasks or projects that cost too much time or money—or outsource tasks that require greater expertise.”

Businesses frequently outsource projects and tasks out of convenience. Instead, take the time to analyze your company’s specific strengths and weaknesses before selecting the ideal project or process to outsource.

Due Diligence



Before you commit to one outsourcing company, spend time to investigate what they can offer you and how well they can do it. This means looking beyond their website, which should be a useful tool to acquaint you with their services, but cannot be your only reference.

A good outsourcing company will offer services that align with your needs; a great outsourcing company will have aligned their services to meet the needs of many before you. Look for testimonials across various websites. This is an easy way to determine who else has used them, what kind of services they provide, and how well they can provide them.

Definability and Measurability

Before committing completely, be sure to define the terms of your outsourcing partnership. Be clear to identify your requirements, then develop a way to measure how they're being met.

According to the PwC study we mentioned earlier, anywhere from 27- to 55-percent of those surveyed (depending on industry) replied that they intend to expand their outsourcing partnerships into "second wave" areas by 2014. This means companies want to outsource unique, specific services, such as research and development or innovation. In this regard, specificity and measurability become even more paramount. Without clearly defined goals, these types of intangible services become hard to provide. Use the appropriate metrics to enforce your expectations.

Future Scalability and Alignment

What are your long-term goals? Today, you may need a call center capable of supporting X amount of callers per day. Five years from now may be a different story. If you anticipate large-scale growth over a specific period of time, be sure your outsourcing partner is – or will be – in a position to meet your new requirements. Still, allow your partner to compensate for your growth and expansion. It's wise to provide lead time on requirements – try not to demand results that immediately reflect your growth rate.

In its article, "Ten Keys to Successful Outsourcing," Tech Republic points out that it also helps to ensure your partner's business strategy similarly reflects your own. Operating under a unified strategy will help satisfy business goals on either end of the arrangement.

Get Started Today

Studies indicate that global outsourcing is on the rise, not just for core services, but for support areas, as well. To accompany its popularity, we'd like to help you outsource in a way that supports your business and its strategy as efficiently as possible.

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