

Q1:

There are a variety of factors to consider when deciding whether or not to outsource. Outsourcing Insight defines 10 of the most influential factors as: cost savings, pricing, resources and technology, the ability to meet deadlines, minimal supervision, limit the liabilities, trustworthiness, who'll lead the team, the service level agreement, communication. I recommend Gartner Group Research should look at communication, the ability to meet deadlines and resources and technology in particular.

First and foremost is communication. This can be broken down several ways, but essentially boils down to the ability for both sides (the home country/corporation/team/GGR and the outsourcing country/corporation/team/destination) to effectively impart and exchange news/information to each other. Without clear and open communication, any and all progress would be severely hindered. I strongly recommend GGR finds an outsourcing group that can speak English, like for example Ukraine, Romania, Israel or the Philippines, where a large percentage of the population is fluent.

The ability to meet deadlines is heavily reliant on the kind of culture your home team practices. For example, cultures with a polychronic culture, in which relationships are so important, will appear chaotic to a North American; time will be devoted to drinking coffee or to small talk — maintaining the relationship will be the end goal. People in monochronic cultures are much lower context communicators; issues need to be explained and put in writing. Here, time is regarded as a limited and valuable commodity. This is very important for countries that rank to the hierarchy side of power distance as missing a deadline is interpreted as disrespecting authority. Some Hispanic countries like Spain, Brazil or Argentina, or Eastern countries like China, South Korea or the Philippines, or even African countries like Rwanda or Ethiopia — although excellent outsourcing destinations — may not align with the expectations of monochronic high power distance countries, especially in the work style of the employees. Call centers or client partnerships could be run on much more of a cultivating relationship basis, rather than the cold and prudent methodology of “going down a list with a script”.

The research and technology is also a very important aspect of the capabilities of the outsourcing team's ability to competently contribute their work. In countries like China or India that have high scores on HackerRank, we can assume their ability (on average) will be of high quality. This can also be seen as a reflection of countries that have heavy government expenditure in education. Israel is a prime example of this. Its incredible research school have given them the ability to be world-class pioneers in emerging technologies. All these are important considerations in where and why to outsource tasks to other countries.

Q2:

Social Informatics (SI) is a term that has origins that emerged across the globe at different times (e.g. USSR, Slovenia, Britain) and therefore has several varying definitions, but Dr. Rob Kling

(formerly a professor at Indiana University) defines the field as "the interdisciplinary study of the design, uses and consequences of information technologies that takes into account their interaction with institutional and cultural contexts."

SI is different than technological determinism (TD, Thorstein Veblen) – which argues technology has/is a major influence on society and organizations – and social construction of technology (SCOT, Wiebe Bijker and Trevor Pinch), which argues that society and human nature and action reflects onto technology. The differences between SI, SCOT and/or TD can be seen in the way that it views technology: TD sees technology as the most influential and pivotal reason for human improvement (seen in economic concepts like Marxism or the Solow Model), SCOT explains how technologies arise but nothing about the consequences of the technology, SI encompasses all this and more, as it is the broad interdisciplinary field of any technology as it relates to social, economical, political and personal aspects of human existence.

I argue that SaaS platforms like GPS have a net positive impact on the livelihood of humans. In the past, navigation was mostly done with physical maps and the mental capacity of memory. Now, through the seamless integration of GPS into car systems and phone apps, we have become more and more reliant on the computer. This new-age relationship between humans and technology is recursively reciprocated: humans become more reliant on GPS as GPS relies more on human source input (see Waze, Autonomous Vehicles, etc).

Q3:

This question revolves heavily around the fourth amendment. As defined in the constitution:

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Meaning, without someone testifying saying they have a reason for suspicion, warrants or impromptu searches can not take place. However, one's definition of 'probable cause' is very subjective. This is something we've seen more and more of recently with corrupt cops, politicians and court officers assigning their personal (and sometimes immoral) values to confirm their suspicions. This can be coined as the confirmation bias, and is a significant risk to the legitimacy of any claim for seizing private property. The potential benefits however, far exceed that of the amount of time false positives or false negatives occur. Benefits include getting more comprehensive understandings of crime cases, proactively preventing atrocities, or collecting information in general, which is always an advantage.

There are tons of legal claims fighting this, however. For example, the case of Apple vs FBI has been greatly pivotal in this discussion of the legality of the government seizing smartphones. The FBI recovered an Apple iPhone 5C — owned by the San Bernardino County, California government — that had been issued to its employee, Syed Rizwan Farook, one of the shooters involved in the December 2015 San Bernardino attack. The attack killed 14 people and

seriously injured 22. Apple has fought tooth and nail for their privacy and CEO Tim Cook has come out and said:

The United States government has demanded that Apple take an unprecedented step which threatens the security of our customers. We oppose this order, which has implications far beyond the legal case at hand. This moment calls for public discussion, and we want our customers and people around the country to understand what is at stake.

I agree with this sentiment, it should be up to the democratic people of America to decide what is allowed and what isn't in this regard. However, after hefty and expensive litigation trials, the FBI has withdrawn its request. As it appears, the Reform Government Surveillance coalition, which includes major tech firms Microsoft, Facebook, Yahoo!, Twitter, and LinkedIn, has won indicated its opposition to the order. My School My Rights claims investigators would need a warrant issued by a judge, and even so a student can still reserve the right to keep their digital devices private. For the moment, private smartphones are untouchable by law, unless conceded by its owner.