

# An Internal IT Team and Outsourced IT Management: Not an Either/Or Choice

By Heinan Landa

For any business, having the right IT team will undoubtedly accelerate the path to success. Having confidence in the scope of the team's capabilities and knowledge is key, but how can you be sure that all of your IT bases are covered? After all, your IT team undoubtedly has a strong knowledge base of your organization's technology needs, but the spectrum of technology management has multiple, ever-evolving components on which it can be hard to stay on top.

In other words, no one person

can handle all the elements for any given organization. There are just too many pieces to the puzzle, and with technological advances continuing to adapt and improve at an alarming pace, businesses should continue to look for ways to expand and strengthen their IT team's knowledge base and toolkit. One of the best ways to do this is through outsourcing.

#### Where Do I Start?

You don't have to make an either/or choice between an internal team and outsourced IT management. If you want to combine the

benefits of both, though, how do you decide what to outsource? First, assess and evaluate your internal IT team and compare what you have to the vast array of today's technology tools, tasks and roles. Audit what talents you have in your current team and what tools your team members are competent to work with. This audit can also showcase your team's talents and weaknesses, and from that point onward you can decide who, or what, to bring in from the outside. A technologically capable, specialized and computer-savvy outside team will be able to help complement, balance, and enhance the skills that your internal IT team already has.

#### What Can an Outside Technology Company Bring to the Table?

■ *A broader industry perspective.* An internal IT team usually has a solid understanding of technologies already in use in your organization. However, an outside team will usu-

ally have broad exposure to many different technologies. An outside source can use this knowledge to provide consulting, planning and budgeting improvements when it comes time to set an IT direction for your organization. For example, you may be wondering what is the best disaster recovery technology for your organization? A firm who has experience with several of them might be able to point the way.

■ *Project expertise.* Since an internal IT team's focus is usually on the day-to-day support and management of technology, they often bring in outside consultants with project management expertise when it comes to major technology upgrades or the implementation of new, unfamiliar technologies. They can bring in specific technology expertise, and, more importantly, project management experience that can make upgrades and implementations nearly pain-free.

■ *Specific, management tool technologies.* Many technology

companies have spent tremendous resources in developing and implementing system monitoring and management tools for their clients. These might include patch management systems, software configuration management tools, application and server monitoring, and even end-user ticketing systems. Internal IT teams can use this specialized expertise and the associated software and hardware systems to further organizational goals and to efficiently cut the difficulty, cost and time it would take to develop these management tools in-house.

#### But It Costs More Money, Right?

It actually may provide a cost savings; according to Accenture, outsourcing provides a cost savings of 25-30 percent. Plus, some of the more important long-term business benefits include increas-

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people or organizations, the personal satisfaction of giving back and the belief that lawyers should give back to their communities." In addition, more than 75 percent of attorneys who performed pro bono service in the past year indicated "they do not seek pro bono opportunities; rather, the opportunities find them." The lawyers who do not do pro bono cite "a lack of time or support from their employers."

It is interesting to note that most attorneys define pro bono "as legal work that is delivered for free" and indicate that "when serving a person, the person has to be of limited means." Moreover, it shows most attorneys have a profound sense of responsibility to do pro bono work and they gain personal satisfaction from doing so.

The ABA study, conducted by an independent consultant, interviewed close to 1,000 attorneys

from all types of law practices in all 50 states. Its results are considered a "representative sampling of the legal profession" in the U.S. A copy of the survey may be found at [www.abanet.org/media/nosearch/2008\\_report\\_pro\\_bono\\_work\\_american\\_lawyers.pdf](http://www.abanet.org/media/nosearch/2008_report_pro_bono_work_american_lawyers.pdf).

Overall, this study underscores

U.S. lawyers' commitment to access to justice by providing pro bono legal services. However, the ABA reports that "even though U.S. lawyers donate more than 20 million hours to pro bono service every year, the poor still do not have access to the legal help they need 80 percent of the time."

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at least three years experience who is barred to practice in Maryland and is also admitted to practice in Federal Court is invited to volunteer. However, any attorney interested in volunteering is encouraged to contact the Court as training opportunities are currently being discussed.

Support pro bono work in your community. Add your resources to

the fight. For more information on the legal service volunteer opportunities in Maryland, contact Jon Moseley at PBRC at (410) 837-9379 or 800-396-1274, or e-mail [jmoseley@probonomd.org](mailto:jmoseley@probonomd.org).

*Jon Moseley is Director of Volunteer Services & Community Outreach for the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland.*

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ing efficiency, reducing risks and lowering the cost of labor and training. Companies with internal teams that try to juggle everything themselves often find themselves paying a higher price. After all, training can be a costly investment for most companies – even more so when there is a need to hire and train staff for short-term projects. Outsourcing can save a company money in this arena by providing a ready cadre of resources in a specific area. Outsourcing can also improve a business's productivity levels, freeing the internal team to handle the day-to-day management of the systems. In addition, as technological advances continue to change the face of the technology industry, business investments in such technologies create more risks. An outside provider can manage these risks and employ their experience and expertise to help a company detour from making costly mistakes.

### Last Word

With almost all industries struggling to stay afloat in the present down economy, you need to choose the most efficient and cost-effective way to accomplish organizational goals – especially in the technology arena. Take the time to evaluate your internal IT team and decide what weak areas of expertise need to be strengthened. Don't reinvent the wheel –

know when and how to outsource prudently so that you can ensure that your technology is working for your organization.

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or to develop your own practice, neither of which you can do by sitting at home.

9) Attend Solo Day at the MSBA Annual Meeting on Friday, June 12, 2009, and/or the "Hanging Out a Shingle" program on Saturday, July 18, at the Holiday Inn in Laurel. Also, watch the MSBA website for details about a special program in May sponsored by the Solo and

Small Firm Practice Section on "What Do I Do Now?"

10) Finally, on April 15, MSBA will devote a complete section of its website to helping members cope with these difficult times. Visit [www.msba.org](http://www.msba.org) for more information. And as always, if you have any questions, call Pat Yevics at (800) 492-1964, ext. 3039. We are here to help.



**THE 2009 MARYLAND PRO BONO SERVICE AWARDS** are statewide awards honoring outstanding attorneys and non-attorneys who have made a significant contribution to the delivery of pro bono civil legal services to Maryland's poor. The service may have been made through litigation, legal/legislative advocacy or any other means that extend needed legal services to low-income persons.

Nominations will be accepted for the following categories:

- Individuals
  - ◆ Large Firm
  - ◆ Small Firm
  - ◆ Solo practitioners
  - ◆ "Alex Fee" Award – MSBA Young Lawyers' Section award
  - ◆ "Lee A. Caplan" Award – Solo/small firm practitioner with years of service
- Members of the Judiciary
- Pro Bono Agencies or Programs
- Law Firms
- Government or Corporate Legal Departments
- "Herbert S. Garten" Special Project Award
- Non-Legal or Organizational Involvement

If someone you know has made an impact, please consider nominating them for one of these awards. Information and an application are available on our website, [www.probonomd.org](http://www.probonomd.org), or you may e-mail [jmoseley@probonomd.org](mailto:jmoseley@probonomd.org) to receive an application by either e-mail or mail. For more information contact Jon Moseley at the Pro Bono Resource Center at (410) 837-9379 or (800) 396-1274 or [jmoseley@probonomd.org](mailto:jmoseley@probonomd.org). Applications should be returned no later than the deadline of **Friday, April 17, 2009**.

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*Thank you for giving hundreds of our friends, neighbors and family members hope.*

**Thank you from The Project Partners**