

Outsourcing as a Cost-Saving Alternative for IT Support

by Nino Gigineishvili, Global Business Solutions

Undoubtedly, Information Technology (IT) is an integral part of the success of a business. And most businesses require a bit more than just a computer. Often, an entire network is necessary for affective communication among employees and business associates. Outsourcing can be the most cost effective way for some businesses to support their IT needs.

While technology is an absolute necessity for the success of any organization, management of this technology gets expensive and sometimes overwhelming, especially for small businesses.

Small and medium-size businesses tend to require a “Jack of all Trades” to support all of their existing systems and lead them into the right future. This type of comprehensive knowledge can be hard to find for a price these businesses can afford. The average annual salary for this type of IT professional is approximately \$65,000.

A trend in the IT industry is for these professionals to move around and not stay with one employer for an extended period of time. This high turnover can be costly for many small and medium size businesses.

Outsourcing can be a cost-saving alternative to having an onsite IT professional. For the purpose of this article, outsourcing IT is used with a meaning of allowing an outside firm to take care of all your IT needs starting from procuring equipment to providing daily services/troubleshooting and repair. There are many firms out there that provide IT solutions, but how do you distinguish them from each other? How do you weed out the good from the “not so good.” We offer the following guidelines for evaluating IT companies.

Expertise – Request a list of certifications and specializations of engineers and staff. Look for a variety of knowledge and well recognized certifications.

Experience – Generally, a number of years a company has been in business is a good gage of the quality of their service. It is a well known fact that 90% of all newly started companies go out of business within the first two years. 90% of those that remain also disappear within 5 years. Once companies reach 10 year mark, it is a good indication that they have what it takes to succeed.

Breadth of Services – As you are searching for a company that will take care of all your IT needs, you want to evaluate what services and solutions they offer. They should be able to help you from your data networks to your voice networks and even your audio/video.

Track Record – Request plenty of references. Although, it is expected that references will generally provide favorable answers, you can always judge the validity of their answers by the type of companies that they are. Don’t hesitate to ask them detailed questions about their companies, size of their networks, and other details. Also, ask around the town. Word travels fast.

Cost – No matter how great and professional the services, it has to make business sense cost wise. Your goal with outsourcing is to get more for less: more experience and support for less cost. Always request a customized solution that fits your needs and your budget.

Finally, ask yourself this last question...Can you hire a person that truly meets all the skill sets your users require? If so, can you do so more cost effectively than outsourcing? In the end, it is your business we are talking about.

For more information on IT Outsourcing, Global Business Solutions can be reached at (859) 491-5900 or info@gbs-inc.com.