

Outsource your IT

IT can be a major headache for growing businesses but it needn't be that way especially if you hand it over to the experts

Over the last 3 years there's been a growing trend for companies to outsource parts of their company that are non-core, particularly areas that require high-levels of sophisticated technical knowledge. So it's no surprise to see the largest area of growth in outsourcing is in IT. According to analysts Gartner, in 2004, outsourcing will account for 53 percent of the total worldwide IT services market, and will make up 56 percent of the market by 2007.

The typical growing business needs IT to get that competitive edge, but can't do it justice; either because the person in charge is stretched and/or hasn't enough in-depth knowledge to carry out the role, or simply that the original job spec and interview was beyond the capabilities of the person in charge.

Ideally the person in charge of IT - and it typically is only one person in most



companies with under 40 staff - needs to be able to install and maintain hardware and software, troubleshoot problems, setup networks, give advice on streamlining workflow, recommending, implementing and training solutions for customer relationship management, inventory control, billing, e-commerce and a million other things. This mix of skills doesn't usually exist even in a team of three to four so it's quite easy to see why outsourcing IT is such a no-brainer.

An IT Outsourcing company can do all of this as your not just employing one person with skills you're employing a whole company full of people with experts in each individual field.

IT outsourcing company Wavex Managing Director Peter Sweetbaum says "the problem for small businesses with in-house IT is that the IT person can't keep up with the technology, and that person then makes purchasing decisions based on their limited knowledge." He also acknowledges that the decision to outsource is made mostly on cost "outsourcing is 25-30% cheaper for most companies." But he also adds that IT outsourcing shouldn't just be about swapping control of your PC from an in-house person to a company "good outsourcing is about development your outsourcer should also be there to advise you on business critical service such as disaster recovery, anti-virus strategies, security, and on improving your bottom line with new uses of technology like broadband, and voice over IP."

"Outsourcing is becoming the dominant way that enterprises buy IT services," said Allie Young, research vice president for Gartner's sourcing group. "The outsourcing industry continues to evolve, but the imperatives for enterprises that are considering outsourcing are constant - focus on core business, access to critical technical expertise and optimized IT operations." Increasingly the IT outsourcing is offshore particularly developing countries like India with ready sources of well-educated and cheap personnel. But a leap to offshore can be frightening so many companies choose to start local before thinking global.

WAVEX

Wavex is opening up offices in the South West to cover the Bristol and Bath areas. Gavin Russell, Technology Director founded Wavex in 1998 having gained extensive technical, operational and IT service experience managing IT systems and leading teams at AT&T. The company currently has 50 staff across two sites in central London and services over 3500 users in 160 companies across London and the South East. Wavex have an impressive list of clients running from smaller high-profile companies like Innocent drinks through to big multi-nationals like Memorex. Services Wavex offer are Firewall, secure remote office access, remote administration of all your devices, internet backup, extranet access, a service level agreement, high-level security, a help desk service available via telephone, email, fax or their extranet.

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