

Project Outsourcing: Why ALL Businesses Should Consider Outsourcing an Integral Part of Business Growth

A FREE E-BOOK

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OUTSOURCING: AN OVERVIEW

Businesses of all kinds can and do benefit from the tool of outsourcing every day. Businesses large and small have been outsourcing every day projects for many years. The businesses that use outsourcing as a tool to enhance and grow their business already know the value that outsourcing brings to their organization. Outsourcing is a business process term for what has literally become known as hiring a consultant, independent contractor, or freelancer to do a specific task or tasks for an organization in which the organization either does not have the time or the expertise to do on their own. The organizations that have used outsourcing for many years know that with the positives it brings to the organization that it is also important to have a well managed plan of action for hiring a consultant or contractor for a business task. This includes

deciding which projects or tasks to outsource, whom to hire for these tasks, how to manage the project, how to agree on payment terms, and how to achieve the desired results.

There are many forms of outsourcing ranging from outsourcing payroll to outsourcing package handling, to everything in between. Small businesses hiring a self-employed accountant to handle the corporate tax returns are in essence hiring a tax consultant. Large corporations that hire outside customer service firms to handle their customer support are outsourcing that function of their business to focus more on their core business functions. It is entirely possible to outsource practically every business process within an organization.

OUTSOURCING TOOLS

There are a wealth of tools available for the organization looking to outsource business processes. Companies such as [SmartyLance](#), enable a business to post a project to a project marketplace and receive bids from experts in the field. These type of freelance sites match companies with freelance professionals, consultants, and independent contractors. There are many advantages for a business to use services such as [SmartyLance](#). First, the marketplace enables businesses to use a centralized location to post their project, receive bids on that project, communicate with potential providers, choose a winning bid (either based on lowest cost or based on the credentials, expertise, or prior feedback of a particular provider), manage the project specifications, receive the delivered project and make final payment based on the terms of the auction. This

centralized marketplace provided by [SmartyLance](#) greatly streamlines the entire outsourcing process and enables the business owner or manager to have greater control over the entire outsourcing process.

INCREASING COMPETITION

Competition is a complicated subject for many people. Ultimately, competition is good for the consumer, whether the consumer is an individual or a business, competition enables products and services to maintain high quality and low cost. Although many people dislike competition because it forces action to improve quality, the benefits to the overall economy even result in improved products and services for the very people that dismiss competition and the headaches it sometimes brings. Freelance marketplaces such as [SmartyLance](#) are no exception in that competition improves the overall quality and value for the project buyer

and causes the freelance provider to adjust to market conditions in a practical, intelligent manner to win new business. The benefits to the company looking to hire freelancers are obvious. For example, Company A can compile a list of consultants to work on the design of their new company logo. This list may include a multitude of design firms from the same geographical area. Company A would be required to submit an RFP by contacting each design firm individually, stating the requirements of their project and requesting a quote based on the requirements. Many factors come into play in deciding which design firm Company A will choose. Chances are, that using this approach, Company A will end up paying too much for the project and will only have a handful of providers to choose from. Company B also must outsource the design of their new company logo. Rather than compile lists of design

firms, which can result in overpriced quotes, Company B decides to post their logo design project to the [SmartyLance](#) marketplace. Doing so enables Company B to get competitive bids that help ensure that Company B gets the most competitive price for their project. By posting the logo design project to [SmartyLance](#), Company B not only reduced costs associated with the project, they had access to specialists and skilled professional designers from around the world that were competing to give Company B the best cost and highest quality design for their money. The entire process was managed easily through Company B's [SmartyLance](#) account enabling them to keep in contact, manage project specifications, manage competing bids, and send payment easily and securely through one of several different payment methods. An escrow account enabled Company B to ensure that payment

wasn't released to the provider until all project requirements were met. Company B successfully outsourced the logo design project and was able to save several hundred dollars and received the project several days quicker than Company A. In this example of Company A and Company B, we see that Company A had limited its ability to find a skilled professional and limited its ability to save money on the project. Company B took full advantage of all the resources and benefits of the [SmartyLance](#) marketplace and was able to save time and money. By outsourcing critical business functions that are not core business functions, the organization greatly benefits through a savings of time and money which in turn benefits us all through decreasing costs that are passed down to the consumer.

TO OUTSOURCE OR NOT TO OUTSOURCE?

That is the question many small business owners and large corporations alike are asking themselves each and every day. Risks are inherent in any new business strategy or thought process. However, like any business decision, risk can be managed. By intelligently choosing a provider that matches your intended skill requirements, carefully detailing and outlining your project requirements, and ensuring that you maintain the requirements within budget, the benefits can far outweigh the risks.

One of the more common fears among some larger organizations that may be reluctant to outsource projects is a fear of the unknown. This fear stems from the inherent inability to oversee each and every aspect of the project from start to finish and to evaluate each step along the way.

Internal employees devoted to a project are more easily

evaluated and can be guided through performance and work appraisals. Managers may feel that outsourced projects are more difficult to oversee and manage with an eagle eye.

The fact of the matter is that so long as there are well defined contractual obligations and project reporting requirements, an outsourced project can in fact result in a more manageable outcome than actually thought. Also, the talent pool and skills obtained that may be completely unavailable to the organization allow the organization to reach milestones and achieve success that may never have been possible with their current employees.

OUTSOURCING CONTROVERSY:

The outsourcing controversy that is making headlines today is the public opinion of outsourcing jobs to other countries. This includes manufacturing of products, such as those that are “Made In China” as well as service outsourcing such as

computer programming that is outsourced to skilled workers in India. One can argue that outsourcing projects overseas is taking opportunity away from workers in their native country. Others may contend that outsourcing projects, whether it's overseas or in the same country is a great opportunity that will improve business processes, improve productivity, reduce costs and have an overall positive effect on the economy, thus creating more new jobs and specialized jobs in specific skill areas. All businesses consistently are looking for ways to increase productivity and lower costs. From an economic standpoint, increasing productivity and lowering costs are essential elements for business success. Business success, in turn leads to more growth which leads to new job creation, be it in a more specialized skill area or through the development in new types of jobs in new specialized areas.

OUTSOURCED BUSINESS PROCESSES

As mentioned previously, practically *any* business process not related to the core business activity can be outsourced.

Some examples of commonly outsourced business processes include:

Accounting and Finance

Graphic Design & Multimedia

Sales and Telemarketing

Web Design and Development

Administrative Support and Data Entry

Business Strategy, Advertising, Business Plans, Consulting

Legal, Contracts, Copyright, Corporate, Incorporation

Software and Technology, Database Development

Writing and Translation, Copy Writing, Creative Writing

Press Releases

A REWARDING CAREER

Having a specialty or skill in a particular business area can enable you to begin a career as a consultant or freelancer.

Freelancing enables you to have the flexibility to work on your own and on your own schedule. You can choose which projects match your skill set and decide which types of freelance projects that you would be interested in working on. There are numerous sources available to find freelance work. Some sources include browsing freelance directories, job boards, and registering with talent auction sites such as [SmartyLance](#). All of these resources are filled with potential jobs. In comparison, it seems that talent auctions are the most comprehensive resources offering the most flexibility to both the freelancer and the company hiring a freelancer. They offer the breadth and depth of listings and the simplicity to bid on numerous projects as well as

services enabling the handling of the entire payment process through a service provider account with the talent auction site. Bidding on projects requires much discipline and planning. Before placing a bid or giving a quote on a project, the freelancer must take into account many factors including the length of time required for the project completion, the budget the service buyer can afford, and whether or not they can actually meet the requirements to complete the project. It is also important to keep in mind that developing relationships with service buyers can lead to more work in the future. Developing a relationship with service buyers and meeting or exceeding their project expectations will enable you to develop a client base that allows you to practically always have new work and new projects to work on.

COMPETITION FOR PROJECTS

There will always be competition in all forms of business.

Competition for freelance projects is fierce. One of the major ways to compete and win is to make yourself stand out from the rest of the crowd. You can start by fine tuning your resume. This will force you to think about your accomplishments as well as your exact skills and abilities.

There are numerous services that can help you with your resume, including [ResumeEdge](#). Using a service to help you with your resume will enable you to better explain your accomplishments and present them in a manner that will captivate and impress the reader. Especially if you are an independent freelancer, having your resume retooled by [ResumeEdge](#) will allow you to stand out in a crowded marketplace. Many freelance service buyers will wish to

see a list of your accomplishments and your skills. If you register as a service provider with a freelance marketplace such as [SmartyLance](#), they offer several different options that enable you to stand out above the crowd. First, there are different subscription levels when registering. There is a Limited subscription, a Novice subscription or a Professional subscription. Each higher level subscription offers more options to the service provider. Every service provider does have the ability to post a profile, detailing various information about their abilities. Limited subscriptions limit the cost range in which a service provider can bid. For example, a Limited service provider can only bid on projects with a price range less than one thousand dollars. Novice subscription service providers can bid on projects less than five thousand dollars, and Professional subscription service providers can bid on any

service level project. Several added bonuses with the Novice and Professional subscription levels include the ability to purchase credential verification services as well as the ability to post “Buy Now” projects. Credential verification services enable you to post information related to your references, certifications, licenses, education and previous employment. Simply adding these options to your account gives you a special designation stating that your information has been checked and verified as being true and accurate by the freelance marketplace. This designation gives you an added level of credibility making you stand out from the rest of the service providers and enabling you to showcase your achievements and abilities, giving a service buyer confidence in choosing you to complete their project. This will undoubtedly lead to more work and more projects coming your way. In addition to

verifying your credentials, you have the ability to showcase a portfolio of your previous work. This allows you to show the service buyers your achievements and your successes with previous clients. Showcasing your portfolio is another important aspect that gives the service buyer confidence in your ability. Finally, the higher level subscriptions enable you as a service provider to offer “Buy Now” solutions.

Similar to purchasing products immediately without bidding as on major product auctions such as [Ebay](#), “Buy Now” solutions enable freelance service providers and consultants to make a solution available to all service buyers for a specific set price. For example, a freelance graphic design firm may create a “Corporate Identity Package”, enabling a service buyer to purchase this package that may include the graphic design of a logo, along with designs for letterhead, business cards, and

banner ads. Another example could be from a lawyer or legal consultant who creates an incorporation package that includes corporate setup and incorporation services for all fifty states, creation of shareholder agreements, employment agreements, and registered agent services all for a set price. These simple examples of “Buy Now” services enable freelance consultants and independent contractors to create easy options for service buyers who are looking for simple solutions and quick turnaround time. Service providers also enjoy creating these type of services because it enables them to focus on their core interests and abilities. Only higher level subscriptions such as the Novice or Limited subscriptions enable freelance service providers to post “Buy Now” projects. The beauty of these additional options as a freelance service provider is that you can focus on one specific aspect of your business. If

you are a consultant for a graphic design firm and you simply enjoy creating and designing corporate logos and identities, then you can find work specifically in this area by posting your own “Buy Now” solution. If you are a lawyer working for your own legal firm and your passion is new business setups and incorporation services, then you can steer projects your way with a “Buy Now” solution posted on a freelance marketplace like [SmartyLance](#).

CONCLUSION

These are only a few examples of the many opportunities that exist as a freelancer. Whether you are a small business, an individual, or a large corporation, this e-book simply serves as a guide to help you in your quest to use outsourcing to your advantage to help your business grow and flourish. Outsourcing, when done correctly, can benefit your business in so many different ways. The two

most obvious benefits are a savings of time and money.

From the freelancer's standpoint, this e-book has been developed to help educate and guide you with the many options available to find work as well as to delve into the minds of freelance service buyers. Knowing their concerns and understanding the reasons for choosing one service provider over another will greatly benefit you by enabling you to increase your odds for getting new business.

Understanding the concerns and needs of service buyers will lead to your gains as a service provider. If you are able to provide enough people with services that they wish to have, then you will always be in demand.