

Outsourcing of IT Operations Takes Off in the Nonprofit Sector

Utilizing managed services to optimize your IT and transform your business

White Paper



Outsourcing IT Takes Off in Nonprofit Sector

Introduction

Outsourcing is on the rise and can be instrumental in the growth of your nonprofit organization (NPO). Having an information technology (IT) department may be out of the question for your organization because of the unreasonable cost. This is what makes outsourcing IT an increasingly popular solution in the nonprofit sector. Instead of having to hire underqualified and more affordable staff, nonprofits can outsource specialists and have access to services that would be unaffordable otherwise.

In this white paper we summarize:

- **Define outsourcing** - understanding what the outsourcing of services means
- **The role outsourcing plays** - an outline of how the services apply to your nonprofit
- **Reasons why and the benefits** - review how outsourcing can help in your operations
- **Tips for success** - helpful tips to aid in a better outsourcing arrangement

Defining Outsourcing for Nonprofits

The [Nonprofit Coordinating Community of New York](#) defines outsourcing in the nonprofit community as:

The delegation of key management areas, especially “back office” services, to outside contractors or vendors, usually on a relatively long-term basis, with the expectation of improving quality, strengthening management effectiveness, and perhaps lowering costs.

Reasons to Outsource

One great thing about outsourcing is that your nonprofit can pick and choose which aspects will be most beneficial to your organization’s future success. The option to outsource opens up a lot of doors that would typically be closed off to you.

The choice to outsource may be a good option for organizations looking for any of the following:

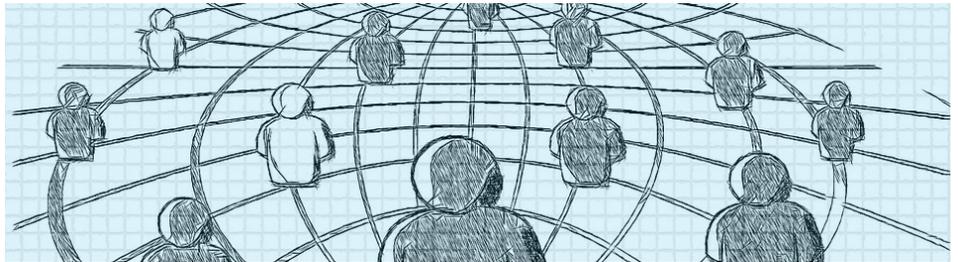
- Improved operational quality and efficiency.
- Increased net revenue (in cost savings or increased revenue).
- Improved organizational and/or mission performance.

Your NPO can also greatly benefit from IT outsourcing in these ways:

- **Staff can remain focused.** - Outsourcing gives staff the ability to focus on the job they were hired for. For example, a full-time employee who has been dividing his or her time between a normal position and providing some IT services on the side can concentrate on his or her work.

Outsourcing IT Takes Off in Nonprofit Sector

- **Cost savings.** - When staff members are untrained in the field of IT, it takes them longer to figure out what could be a simple solution for an IT specialist. And the time saved can save your agency money.
- **Reasons why and the benefits** - When IT is outsourced, and staff members are able to focus on their job, the overall efficiency of your operation will increase. This benefits all parties involved and leaves more time for your nonprofit to do its essential work.
- **Adaptability.** - Nonprofits must remain flexible and adapt to quickly changing times. Technology can be a tool that propels an organization forward, or it can be the thing that holds an organization back. Outsourcing for IT allows nonprofits to focus on their mission while staying current with the latest tech trends ([Nonprofit Accounting Basics](#)).



Tips for a Successful Outsourcing Arrangement

Every nonprofit is different, so it's essential to find the right provider when your organization is ready to outsource. Following these procedures and [asking the right questions](#) is key to making an informed choice.

Conduct In-Person Interviews and Check References

Meeting potential contractors in person is essential. Ideally, you will hire someone who has references from a nonprofit of a similar size and scope. Check at least three references and look for examples of work completed within the past twelve months. Review potential vendor websites and review their past client services. Also, consider checking databases such as the Better Business Bureau or performing a Google search. The more information you can gather on the vendor before going ahead with a contract, the better.

Negotiate a Contract

A written contract is a necessary part of any outsourcing agreement. No organization has precisely the same needs so make sure you weigh your options. [How much can you spend?](#) Do you want to pay a contractor an hourly rate? Or is a fixed-fee contract the best for you? You must understand what is included in this fee and what will be billed separately. What seems like the lowest cost agreement may end up being the most expensive after all is said and done. It is in the best interest of your nonprofit to set clear expectations, goals, and deliverables for the vendor and the organization.

Outsourcing IT Takes Off in Nonprofit Sector

Track Performance

Identify metrics and track performance so you can fairly evaluate the outsourcing relationship. Make sure the outcome measures up to what you planned for in the contractual agreement. Are you saving as much as you initially thought you would? Is it a good idea to schedule regular check-ins with the vendor. This way you can manage the relationship by identifying issues and discussing the changing IT needs of your nonprofit.

What to Expect from an Outsourcing Provider

It is a good idea to know which services you're looking to outsource before contacting a provider. Your nonprofit can choose whether to contract out for all or part of the IT services required to operate. Once you decide which services would be the most beneficial, you'll have an easier time negotiating an outside contract.

Possible IT Services to Outsource

- Training services
- [Disaster recovery services](#)
- [Cloud services](#)
- Website creation
- Software updates
- Server installation and management
- Server back-up and maintenance
- Network system upgrades
- Networking across multiple sites (WAN)
- Systems monitoring
- Strategic technology planning
- IT audit management
- Procurement
- Network installation and management
- Desktop/laptop installation and management
- Mobile device support
- Virtual Private Networking (VPN)
- Network security
- Website maintenance and uploads
- Development and maintenance of intranet
- Development and maintenance of extranet
- Development and maintenance of web-based
- Database creation
- Database maintenance
- Cabling
- Setup and maintenance of virtual infrastructure
- Installation and maintenance of phone system
- On-site emergency assistance

([Nonprofit Accounting Basics](#))

Outsourcing IT Takes Off in Nonprofit Sector

Further Resources & Information from CRA

Computer Resources of America provides [outstanding IT outsourcing services](#) for organizations in the nonprofit sector. Chief Executive Officer of CRA Chico Ramnarayan, said, “The opportunity to manage and support the IT environment that enables the NPO to achieve its mission is a true privilege. Our [Manage360° solution](#) will not only add value and enhance IT operations, but it will also help enable agility and efficiency for the organization.”

Learn how a managed services provider like Computer Resources of America can help ease the flow of your business’s IT operations and overall transform the way processes are managed. For over 25 years CRA has been providing the New York metro area with the IT solutions and services that move you forward in the evolving tech world. Our experienced technicians and staff can help find you the IT roadmap tailored to [your nonprofit’s needs](#). Contact our professionals today for a [FREE evaluation!](#)



Corporate Headquarters

64 West 48th Street, New York, NY 10036 – 212-376-4040 – www.consultcra.com – sales@consultcra.com