



## Outsourcing IT Support for the Small and Medium Sized Business

A number of companies have either moved from an in-house to an outsourced model for supporting and managing their IT, or simply looked hard in that direction.

What does it really mean, and why have they done it?

### What is outsourced IT support?

**Features:** Outsourced IT is the using of an external partner's team of deep, well trained IT technicians, as well as industry best practices and processes, to optimally support and meet the client's IT needs. It can be structured to be whatever the client needs; from a 100% on-site tech, to a service desk model, to part-time and "on demand" project expertise. Overall management and continuous monitoring of vital infrastructure is often a key addition as well.

**Benefits:** Outsourcing the IT function gives clients access to critical, high-end talent (like security and networking skills), but only when needed. Clients also gain access to peer and industry best practices and proven solutions via the outsourcer's broader experience. No more one-off solutions, or trial and error IT. All this results in peace of mind, as key business functions will not be interrupted by systems' down-time. Other benefits include lower 'all-in' support costs, capital savings via proven solutions, shifting a non-core activity to experts, and staying compliant with government regulations and licensing.

**Who typically outsources:** All businesses, from all verticals and industries. The typical firm that outsources their IT to experts understands both the value of IT to their organization, and the value of having experts plan and maintain it for them. There is no optimal company size – very small firms typically can't justify the broad skills required to properly manage their systems, and larger organizations typically require deeper and more targeted project expertise. Outsourcing can be used strategically by all.

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Douglas Gray, founder and President of the Graycon Group, a Calgary-based Information Technology outsourcing firm, has been helping companies optimize IT outsourcing in their organizations for over 20 years. Many of them had concerns before transitioning, so here we've asked Doug to respond to several of their typical questions.

#### ***"We're too busy to consider it right now."***

**DG:** Too busy to stop for gas is the concern I hear most - typically right after I hear about how much attention their systems need. Companies tend to be busy because they are focusing on the things they should be - growth, profit, their people, etc. Properly managed IT can make their jobs easier, but the assumption is that senior management has to be actively involved in the minutia of all outsourcing arrangements - while really they only have to know what they expect it to do for them! Outsourcing consultants can seamlessly transition to a new model based on the benefits required (less down-time, more secure, more cost effective, etc.) with little or no involvement from the executives. Kinda of like gassing up while on the run!

*At Graycon we typically start with a needs-assessment that helps both the client and Graycon clearly understand what the end results should look like, and we plan and staff accordingly. We also offer the services of a part-time IT Manager to help executives with budgeting, planning, communication, and managing the support people.*



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YOUR IT DESERVES A PARTNER  
WHO UNDERSTANDS THE REALITY  
OF YOUR BUSINESS.

TIME TO GET REAL.

# REALIT

### **"It costs too much."**

**DG:** A faulty or misaligned outsourcing arrangement can be costly, this is true. But when built with clarity and a focus on achieving true business goals, IT outsourcing is cost neutral – and brings many additional benefits. The total costs associated with retaining an IT person (or persons) who is likely not skilled in all aspects of technology, can be significant - particularly when compared to a full-service consultant with broad experience, and team support in the background. When using a single resource you only get what they know, so you miss out on all a deep team brings - access to ways to save money with technology enhancements, faster escalations, innovation, and industry peer solutions. There are also internal costs to take into consideration; training, overhead, missed cost-saving opportunities, lost (business) time due to outages, vacation coverage, management time, learning on your dime, etc.

*We're quite flexible at Graycon. No binding contracts, and we are fine with adjusting the service and related costs as we go so it fits within your budget. We also bring you 21 years and hundreds of peer-based innovative savings and best practices. We conduct license audits so you're not paying for more than you need, and we will guide you with a clear IT budget that meets business goals while minimizing your costs.*

### **"My IT guy is OK - what if your Graycon tech isn't?"**

**DG:** A key benefit of a full-service outsourcing firm is that they typically have more depth of team than just one tech. As well, there is peer experience (someone to ask), and frankly there aren't a lot of things an experienced outsourcer hasn't seen. No 'figuring it out' on your dime!

*In our shop, we pride ourselves with how and who we hire for all positions. We have considerable experience and connection when it comes to IT staffing - but if there isn't a 'fit' we will switch in a more suitable candidate.*

### **"Won't you change techs on me when a bigger client comes along?"**

**DG:** When a client has the right tech, with fit and skills in balance, we don't mess with that. Finding the best fit is always a goal for consulting firms, as we balance the clients' needs with those of our employees. Firms that use contractors will be at a higher risk of changing-out resources, as they tend to not have a connection with the outsourcer or the client.

*We've learned from our clients that building strong, long term relationships with the technical people who serve them is important and results in greater client satisfaction. That's why all Graycon resources are employees – not contractors – which means we can provide you "Continuity of Care". We have many Grayconians with over 5 to 10 years of service dedicated to one client.*

### **"Can I trust someone to not upsell me? Will they stay within budget?"**

**DG:** It's important to be clear on what the budget is (both capital and expense) and to understand what is in and out of scope. A more experienced outsourcing firm will have both the desire to over-deliver and to recommend improvements that they feel would add value to your IT.

*Our people, including our sales team, don't have quotas to push additional services or products. We want them to help you make the best IT decisions possible for your organization. You want us to make the optimal IT decisions for you and your firm's best interest. And we've been doing that for 21 years ...*

"Graycon has provided us with a plan to help us map out our IT investments, and a path to vitalize our business."

Derrick Bullen, President, S.i. Systems

"I know that things don't go smoothly without a lot of work, thinking and planning in the background. Our system has significantly improved thanks to Graycon! We are more efficient, we've lowered costs and there has never been better communication!"

Clint White, Vice President,  
Finance & CFO, Ferus

"We received absolutely incredible service from Graycon. They were overly patient, interested, passionate and persistent about fixing our problem. We really enjoyed working with them."

Todd Brown, The Motor Company,  
Discovery Solutions Client