



INSIDE OUT:

How outsourcing can boost your marketing power

Outsourcing: From battlefields to boiler rooms

The term *outsource*¹ wasn't officially accepted into the *Oxford English Dictionary* until 1979. But the idea of outsourcing is as old as civilization. Egyptian King Ramses II hired foreign mercenaries in the 13th century BC to fortify his own armies. And Julius Caesar outsourced cavalry services to Gaul and German tribes. For as long as there has been work to be done, we've hired out, farmed out, contracted out ... *or outsourced* a variety of jobs to specialists.

In more recent times, globalization brought new outsourcing and "offshoring" opportunities – with 24/7 call centers, telemarketing boiler rooms and "follow-the-sun" business models that offered round-the-clock workdays. These applications enable businesses to shift work from one center to another, minimizing production and delivery times.

Outsourcing is a big ... and growing business

A whole industry has sprung forth from the simple idea of delegating complex tasks to an outside source. Today there are outsourcing websites, conferences, magazines and associations that bring together users, suppliers and those who specialize in analyzing outsourcing relationships or bringing resources together.

The International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP), established in 2005, is one such organization that has benefited from increased outsourcing. It boasts more than 100,000 members globally, and estimates the size of the outsourcing industry in the U.S. at \$4 trillion annually, and at \$6 trillion annually on a global scale. According to its year-end predictions, IAOP foresees companies returning to outsourcing as a means to recapture innovation and increase flexibility in 2010 vs. merely saving money.²

Time is an increasingly valuable asset

Having more time to concentrate on your core business is a huge advantage afforded by outsourcing. Accelerating delivery times for your marketing communications is another benefit. Whether it's launching a new product, meeting a sales deadline, or just getting ahead of the competition, Asset can help you save valuable time. How? For one thing, we know the financial services industry inside and out. With virtually no learning curve, our marketing content experts can get to work quickly and effectively on your assignment.

Our network of more than 40 financial writers, strategists and communications experts can write speeches, brochures and white papers for any audience imaginable – from board members to shareholders. You can effectively achieve your marketing communications objectives through outsourcing without adding staff. And, because many of our experienced marketing professionals previously served in influential positions with investment management firms, insurance and banking organizations, they often can do a better job in less time, thereby reducing costs and maximizing results.

Business benefits of outsourcing

Mike Hecklinger, vice president and senior account executive at Asset Communications, offers his **Top 10** ways outsourcing can boost your marketing power:

1. Access top **talent** and seasoned professionals – from strategists to technical writers – to complement in-house resources.
2. Enjoy the advantage of **variable costs** (project based) vs. fixed and long-term expenses, and potentially lower department budget instead of hiring additional in-house staff.
3. You can obtain knowledge, creative concepts and competitive intelligence *beyond* in-house talent.
4. Marketing communications specialists bring fresh ideas that encompass current trends, market intelligence and best practices.
5. Without the need to quickly hire and train staff, outsourcing provides instant marketing department expansion.
6. You can start new projects quickly; a quality marketing firm has the resources to start a project right away, affording you valuable **time savings**.
7. **Adaptability:** Unlike the constraints of an in-house-only effort, your marketing partner can swiftly alter a project team based upon any number of circumstances.
8. You have the ability to **focus** exclusively on your assignment without other distractions, accelerating your time to market.
9. Your marketing partner can be a **catalyst for change**.
10. **Longer days:** Leveraging time zones and virtual resources that work throughout the country can mean reduced time to market and accelerated delivery schedules.

Keys to consider in successfully managing outsourcing relationships

Marketing managers need to nurture ongoing relationships with outside suppliers. The best outsourcing arrangements are partnerships. Suppliers should not be regarded as mere contractors, since contractors do not always perceive a long-term stake in the project's success. The value created should be seen as shared value. Managing suppliers in this way requires a great deal of skill and competencies that are not always resident within a firm.

Source: Harvard Business School, Working Knowledge; excerpts from an interview by Poping Lin with Gail J. McGovern. Prior to joining the HBS faculty, she was president of the Fidelity Personal Investments unit of Fidelity Investments.

Boost your marketing power with outsourcing

In tough economic periods – not unlike the one we've been in for the past two years – marketing budgets often are among the first to get trimmed. It seems there is more work to be done with fewer people than ever before. But that doesn't mean your marketing efforts should suffer. Doing more with less is the new reality. More than likely it means changing up your media mix and distributing resources to your most valuable channels. It also means forging strategic alliances with proven partners who can fill creative and content voids. In essence, it means working smarter, and making the most out of what you have to work with, which implies prioritizing, and cutting out the superfluous from both your budget and your workday. Outsourcing with Asset can help you achieve these five essential principles:



These are challenging times, indeed. But these simple principles offer clarity, focus and a straightforward framework to help you do more with less.

Outsourcing: A win-win proposition

At Asset Communications, creative marketing – and all the ancillary services linked to it, like design, photography, fulfillment, printing, web development, etc. – is all we do. In a way, clients see us as their humble tugboat; small but mighty, and extremely nimble. We guide our partners in and out of harbors and ports, maneuvering through the challenging waters of a competitive marketplace.

You can tap into our vast network of talent and knowledge capital. That enables you to align marketing content with sales objectives and help you effectively reach your most valuable prospects and clients. In today's competitive marketplace, you gain a broad perspective, fresh ideas and deep product expertise – all from a single source. With Asset Communications, you get the traditional benefits of outsourcing, such as cost savings and variable, rather than fixed expenses, increased efficiencies, access to specialized talent and the time to concentrate on your core business priorities.

"Our goal is to help our clients realize high-quality, cost-effective solutions that secure their market position, enhance their competitive advantage, and make a measurable contribution to business results."

Christina Shiebler, Managing Director,
Asset Communications

Leverage our resources and boost your competitive advantage

Companies of all sizes have come to recognize the value in concentrating on their core businesses and competencies, while outsourcing an ever broader range of tasks – from information technology and human resources to finance and marketing communications specialists.

If you need a few foot soldiers or a whole army to support your marketing communications in the ongoing battle to gain or maintain market share, look to **Asset Communications** for help. Whether it's planning, market research or creative execution, we're problem solvers – and we're easy to work with. For more than 20 years, we have enjoyed a proud reputation for infusing creativity, innovation and knowledge capital into every assignment we undertake – from full branding efforts to single-product sales support – regardless of scope or budget.

out•source |'out,sɔrs|

verb [*Trans.*]

To obtain (goods, a service, etc.) by contract from an outside source; to contract (work) out. Also *intr.*³

¹ "outsource, v.", *OED Online*. June 2003. Oxford University Press. Dec. 2007. <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00299371>

² Source: International Association of Outsourcing Professionals

³ *Ibid*

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