



Case Study: Outsourcing an Internally Managed Software Portfolio

How Solentra Global successfully supported an overstretched IT team to improve their users' service levels

Background

A large client of Solentra Global had a software solution being managed by their internal IT team. The software was originally written by a third-party vendor, but the ongoing management was taken over by the IT team. A business re-organization had left the IT team short of sufficient resources to support their previous commitment levels.

Constant juggling and re-allocation of the limited IT resources meant that the users of the software were not getting the level of service they needed to support ongoing operations. The threat of a detrimental impact on the business was imminent. The users were very unhappy with the level of service because the IT team was only addressing the highest priority issues, causing a growing backlog of problems they had to work around on a daily basis.

During routine and regular on-site visits, the Solentra Engagement Manager was made aware of the issues and quickly worked out a proposal where Solentra resources would relieve the burden from the IT team and provide a service level commitment to the business users.

The Agreement

After an initial knowledge transfer from the IT team to the Solentra team, the intent was:

- Business power users would provide first-line support to the rest of the user base in the way of dealing with questions and training needs, as well as replicating issues caused by software problems.
- The IT team would provide second-line support to manage the outstanding issue list.
- Solentra would provide the third-line support of investigating and addressing software issues.
- Each month, a fixed number of hours would be available to resolve issues such as fixing code or data, as well as building minor new software features.
- The IT team would work with the power users to prioritize and order the work items for the Solentra team to work through in order to best consume the available hours.

The client was more than happy with this proposal because it provided a committed level of service to the users that:

- Was unaffected by changes to the IT team's changing priorities
- Addressed both existing issues in the backlog and included the ability to add new features
- Gave flexibility and control for the power users to determine their own business priorities
- Provided a known fixed cost per month for a known capacity
- Freed up the IT team to work on higher priority projects
- Gave visibility of where the maintenance dollars are spent

How the Service Has Evolved

As the relationship has grown and evolved, the IT team and power users have become increasingly comfortable with letting the Solentra team effectively take over all aspects of the service provided. Solentra now deals directly with the power users to provide both second and third-line support, including managing the priority list and the entire SDLC (Software Development Lifecycle). This also includes promoting new releases to the live environment. The Solentra team only needs to keep IT informed when events that could have an impact on the IT infrastructure occur, especially software updates being applied.

Due to the establishment of a culture of trust, both teams have become flexible in the way the “fixed” number of hours per month are utilized with “unders and overs” carried over and used to handle unpredictable demands on a monthly basis. The power users have grown to understand the value of increasing the Solentra team’s knowledge regarding how their business operates and the direct impact this can have on the speed and quality of solutions delivered.

Offers have been extended to visit sites, walk through the processes, and meet the users to see how the software is used to operate the business. The power users have even done “virtual tours” of the site using the various security cameras due to the ongoing travel restrictions.

Conclusion

All participants agree that the ongoing engagement has been a great success and have learned a great deal from each other. The Solentra team is keen to apply their improved knowledge and experience to help all clients and their IT teams provide the service levels that users want and deserve from their internally maintained systems. Solentra Global has the scalable capacity to provide the same benefits described above to all clients.

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About Solentra Global

Solentra Global is a part of the Cultura Technologies family, who is owned by Constellation Software, Inc. (CSI), an international vertical market software specialist. Solentra builds innovative software and technology-based solutions for industry-leading global agribusinesses.

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