

The Real Challenge for the Brazilian IT Services companies to become global

In the last 3 weeks we have done what can be called the experts circuit. We have participated in both, Gartner Symposium ITXpo's conferences, in Orlando and Cannes; we spoke to more than a dozen analysts; we listened to other research institutes, like Forrester and IDC; we participated in panel discussions in the Global Sourcing Forum & Expo; and we talked to several key end user organizations. With all of them, we addressed the Brazilian IT Services companies positioning in the global scenario, and what would be their challenges going forward, and truly become a world player.

Brazil is currently in a very favorable spotlight, especially after being able to weather the economic storm without major casualties, and also after winning the right to host the two largest world sporting events: The Football World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics Summer Games in 2016. Actually, it is the first time that a country is able to host these two events back to back. So it seems that the window of opportunities is wide open. The question is, however, for how long.

With all the specialists we talked in these last 20 days, all were unanimous in recognizing the positive momentum that Brazil is experiencing. But they also all agree that there is more that needs to be done, and that it needs to be sooner rather than later. All the institutional fanfare is very good, but needs to be followed with real targeted, result-oriented actions.

In the IT Services space, many analysts and experts agree, that because of the current positive view on Brazil, it could claim to be one of the top 3 players worldwide. But in order to do that, it needs to rev up its go-to-market and communication investments. It needs to address head on the issues it faces with being more focused and aggressive in the market.

According to the experts, we are now living the Global Delivery Model scenario, and for services organizations, it is mandatory to have a global footprint and be able to deliver in type of environment and culture. And for Brazil, this is one of their greatest challenges, as it still has a bi-lateral approach, where it only approaches from the Brazil-to-country and county-to-Brazil view.

This obviously requires greater investment by the companies, so they can actually build a global footprint. And companies will tell us that in turn, government needs to do their part as well, and most importantly create a more favorable fiscal environment, lessening the impact of the current taxation structures on companies' global competitiveness. Much like the Indian government did for their IT sector in the early 90's.

Undoubtedly this is a crucial issue, but there is more than just better government fiscal policies for the IT sector. There is a greater issue which only the Brazilian companies themselves can resolve. And that has to do with their current attitude. Very few Brazilian businessmen have been able to think and act "out of the box", meaning to think as a global player and not with a Brazilian mind set.

Too often, Brazilian leaders, both, private and public, fail to exercise the basic premise of marketing 101, which is, understand the clients' true perception. Be able to look on the issues with the clients' eyes and vision. Be able to understand clients' motivations and objectives and because of that be able to align

their communication and product and services development roadmap accordingly. Many times, Brazilian leaders will provide answers that are based on their views and not aligned with market's reality. Bottom line, Brazilian companies' real challenge is to overcome the "stray dog complex" and learn how to become a global business citizen.

In the last 20 years we have been hearing a lot about "Think globally and act locally". Well, for the Brazilians it is the other way around, it is "Think locally and act globally".