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@outsourcing.com

## Making the Case for a Master Services Integrator

*As IT plays an increasingly central role in enterprise operations, the task of integrating and managing a wider array of services is becoming more challenging. Organizations should consider the potential benefits of working with a master services integrator.*

AT&T White Paper in association with The Outsourcing Institute.

**Contributions provided by:**

**Jeremy Tudor**

Competitive & Market Strategy, AT&T Network Integration & Sourcing

**Craig Schewe**

Competitive & Market Strategy, AT&T Network Integration & Sourcing



at&t

The day of an IT director has never been more challenging or demanding. Even in the minority of enterprises where IT budgets have expanded at healthy rates, the timeworn phrase “doing more with less” almost always applies. That's because organizations expect their IT investments to do much more than just keep the lights on and provide basic computing services; they actually want and expect IT to help drive the organization's success.

In order to generate new revenue streams, reduce costs...or both, IT organizations need new applications, support for new computing modes such as mobility and ubiquitous connectivity, and a tighter alignment with business strategies. . Add in the heightened pressures on IT budgets caused by a stagnant global economy and escalating regulatory and compliance mandates, and it's easy to see why technology professionals are searching for new models of operational efficiency.

Increasingly, this combination of challenges and requirements has forced IT organizations to morph

their operations from a technology-centric model to a services-based model. The trick today, however, is to find a way to bring together a wide variety of technology services – virtualization, cloud computing, business continuity, network availability, hyper-scalable storage and application development in an “anything-as-a-service” framework.

Integrating those services into a holistic, efficient model takes a combination of technical skills, process excellence, business acumen and management expertise far beyond that of traditional project management. Suffice to say that, in today's market reality, those kinds of resources rarely reside with an organization's existing IT staff. How do organizations get their hands around the task of integrating a wider and wider array of IT services?

### **Ushering in the era of the Master Services Integrator**

Innovative organizations are embracing the concept of hiring a Master Services Integrator. This function extends far beyond the traditional project manager in taking on multi-functional projects, and it even expands on the traditional role of the prime contractor typically associated with IT outsourcing and systems integration.

Why is this scale and scope of capabilities so essential in today's business climate? First and foremost, organizations are looking for groundbreaking methods to use technology and achieve measurable and sustainable business benefits.

Today's chief information officer has been tasked with this challenging directive including limited resources and escalating expectations to support the business. CIOs are exploring multiple methodologies in order to improve business performance. Even during flush economic times, CIOs have often used outsourcing to broaden capabilities of internal staff in ways that extend far beyond allocating additional headcount to support development projects or lower administrative costs associated with managing day-to-day initiatives. With increased emphasis placed on IT's effective delivery of essential services supporting the organization, CIOs are searching for solutions to combine the efficiencies of outsourcing with the strategic benefits of developing, delivering and managing an integrated suite of business enhancing services and capabilities. Increased specialization and complexities within the IT environment requires a unique mix of technical, business and operational skills in a single resource; ideally as a turnkey application. Unfortunately, the majority of IT infrastructures are not equipped with the budget, resources, tools or technology to support this concept.

Thus enters the The Master Services Integration model; a unique approach to enabling organizations with the power to take advantage of a comprehensive range of capabilities, going beyond specific technology deployment projects, to include full lifecycle management of infrastructure, applications and services. In its real-world application, Master Services Integration provides a combination of technology road-mapping, lifecycle management,

continuous process improvement and governance throughout the enterprise. The Master Services Integrator is a strategic asset preferred by organizations because of its ability to deliver a broad array of capabilities, including:

- **High availability of Services and Infrastructure Resources.** These include strict SLAs, wrapped in an effective governance model, to address capacity management, network performance and incident and event management.
- **Evaluating and modifying ongoing services requirements.** IT and network services must always be in sync with business goals, and require flexibility in adapting to ever-changing conditions. These capabilities are delivered through effective change management, service request management and project management.
- **Tracking and billing for services development and delivery.** The Master Services Integrator delivers financial discipline and economic accountability, managing the full invoicing process; managing the configuration and tracking of all IT services and assets within the enterprise's inventory, and across multiple vendors and service providers.
- **Augmenting the in-house IT team.** The Master Services Integrator operates as an extension of the internal team because it understands and works within the organization's internal governance framework and has an effective, and clearly communicated structure for planning, deploying and managing integrated services and resources.

## Integration as a Service

Outsourcing has rarely been an “all-or-nothing” proposition. Some organizations have been comfortable aggressively outsourcing a wide variety of functions and requirements, ranging from large comprehensive components of the IT infrastructure to simple end-to-end business process outsourcing. From help desk and simple break-fix maintenance, to a full range of managed services, including software applications delivery and provisioning via the cloud, outsourced security or network capacity monitoring and management, outsourcing has served organizations in various capacities and is not a new concept to organizations dealing with change in technology, costs and business direction.

Today, the emphasis on services-oriented architecture and IT services delivery has created a new class of service: Integration as a Service. Let's face it; integration across many services and technologies can be tricky from both a technical and

operational standpoint, and IT executives' are facing new and uncharted challenges everyday. Successful management of increasingly complex environments must include effective business processes, governance and compliance, to name a few key issues.

Let's take one real-world example: private cloud. Very few organizations – even experienced outsourcers – have the ability, beyond their core service offerings, to effectively manage all the elements required in a private cloud offering. Capabilities such as enterprise-wide connectivity, pervasive mobility applications, equipment procurement and deployment, applications provisioning, end-user on boarding, network capacity management and traffic monitoring are just a handful of requirements to make private cloud computing work. And let's not fool ourselves... virtualization (cloud) is all about coordinated, connected and integrated connectivity; without the proper tools, controls and resources, virtualized computing would not be possible. Internal IT organizations to implement a private cloud infrastructure in order to reduce capital expenditures and improve IT agility usually lack the level of end-to-end technical, project management, and service delivery expertise to plan, deploy and manage a comprehensive and effective solution.

Integration as a Service provides organizations with an ability to manage (in whole or in part) the IT environment, with governance across all elements of the solution, promoting synchronicity among the various components within the environment. In this model, the Master Services Integrator plans,

deploys and manages end-to-end requirements, from conceptualization and development, to delivery and management of the full framework.

### **What to look for in a Master Services Integrator**

As we've shown, Master Services Integration extends far beyond traditional project management or even ambitious outsourcing models. In essence, it's the next generation of outsourcing and systems integration as it incorporates the planning, deployment and management of the IT services that define a majority of the enterprise architecture. So when it comes time to shop around for a Master Services Integrator, what capabilities do you need to look for?

- **End to End Service Delivery – and then some.** Providing more than just traditional systems integration The Master Services Integrator model provides an ongoing framework for the delivery services, tools and resources supporting management and operational excellence, financial discipline, governance and business continuity. You need to partner with an organization that has a proven, yet flexible and adaptable, model for planning, deploying and managing integrated services.
- **Technical Expertise.** Integrated services touch all parts of your infrastructure, whether that equipment is deployed on premise, in the cloud or a combination of both. Whatever your infrastructure profile, services delivery and management must take place over an ultra-reliable, high-

bandwidth network, with carrier-grade performance, security and management. Remember what today's enterprise-class networks are being asked to do – provide always-available, no-latency, highly-secure and affordable access to applications, data and services. As those assets become more and more integrated, the integrity of the network becomes even more pronounced.

- **Sensitivity to organizational culture and the “human element.”** As we noted earlier, relatively few organizations outsource everything, from infrastructure, applications and services to full-scale business processes. This puts a premium on an integrator's ability to work with both in-house technical staff and key business stakeholders to ensure alignment with business goals and the development and management of the precise palette of services. As you interview your potential Master Services Integrator partners, pay attention not only to what that integrator says, but how they say it. Communications skills – the human kind – are just as important as the technical skills.

### **Why AT&T as a Master Services Integrator**

Few organizations have the requisite suite of technical, process, business and cultural skills for large-scale services integration as AT&T. For decades, AT&T has planned, deployed and run global integration projects, ranging from telecommunications and IT infrastructure to full-scale services around applications, data, security, business continuity, financial oversight and project

management.

AT&T offers a wide variety of capabilities essential for master services integration, including:

- Multi-Carrier and Service Provider management
- Global procurement and logistics
- Broadband aggregation
- Virtual infrastructure management
- Wireless and mobility services
- Staff augmentation
- Project management
- Financial oversight
- Transformation management
- WAN acceleration and network management
- User onboarding and training

- Help desk and end-user support

AT&T understands that integration as a service establishes a new balance between risk and value, by combining technical and business skills with considerable experience in service deployment and global project management. AT&T's rich history in sourcing, integration, services creation and multi-platform support makes it an ideal candidate for organizations looking for a Master Services Integrator.

For more information on AT&T Network Integration and Sourcing, please [click here](#).

**theoutsourcinginstitute**  
@outsourcing.com

**The Outsourcing Institute**  
6800 Jericho Turnpike Suite 120 W Syosset NY 11791  
USA  
Phone: (516) 279-6850 - 712 Fax: (516) 706-2855  
[www.outsourcing.com](http://www.outsourcing.com)