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The Best Ways To Outsource As A Small Business



The book that has become an **ENTREPRENEURIAL movement!**

(By the way, we already heard the "movement" jokes.)

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1. VAs to the Rescue!

The best way for a business to outsource is to hire a virtual assistant for the tasks that they don't have the time to do or the tasks that require specialized talent such as marketing or social networking. Turn it over to a pro and see the amazing results.

Thanks to: Diana Ennen of Virtual Word Publishing.



2. High Performance Outsourcing

The key is to understand what your highest-value time is spent doing, and the things that you do well. Where those intersect, do it yourself; where they do not, outsource. I have multiple Virtual Assistants; one is local and handles functions that require a live/local presence or require "English as first language" capabilities. I also outsource other functions such as Internet research to offshore Virtual Assistants through Brickwork India and through individual projects on elance.com.

Thanks to: Troy Harrison of SalesForce Solutions.



3. Project Manage Your Team

When you are a small business, it can be incredibly efficient for you to outsource some help. One easy way to do this is by hiring a few good candidates and having someone internal project manage them to ensure your outsourced team is meeting goals and is actually adding value and contributing positive ROI.

Thanks to: Danny Wong of Custom Men's Dress Shirts | BL.



4. Leave the Website to the Pros

Small businesses should outsource their marketing efforts to a trusted marketing agency. Few large businesses create their own websites, logos or Facebook landing pages—they use professional agencies. The ones that do it in-house have dedicated departments and experts with highly specific skills.

Instead of trying to learn Dreamweaver to make a website, focus on your core products or services and let an expert do the work for you. In the long run it will be less expensive and much faster.

Thanks to: Susan Thayer of Firespring.



5. Outsource Your Grunt Work!

Our company uses oDesk and eLance to find freelancers. When we release a new title, we must find hundreds of media members to contact. Creating a list of contacts from newspapers, magazines, blogs, television & radio stations, etc. can take several hours and is tedious. We save hundreds of dollars and man-hours by outsourcing this job. We've also used this strategy to find new vendors for our books and products. In these instances we ask eLancers to find vendors who sell related products.

Thanks to: David Price of Price World Publishing.



6. Think Of Your Clients

When outsourcing think of your clients/customers first. Will it help them save money? Will it save time? Will the end product look professional? "Cheap, Good or Fast" you have to pick one.

Thanks to: Barry Harley of Terragenesis.



7. Search And Rescue

Many consumers search on Google, Yahoo! or Bing as their first step toward buying products and services online. A well executed SEM program can help ensure small businesses attract the right customers when they're ready to buy. Consistently monitoring and improving SEM efforts can help business owners get the most from their investment of time and money. SearchManager from American Express OPEN helps business owners outsource their SEM through a dedicated PPC consultant to manage their campaign.

Thanks to: Rob Ciccone of [American Express OPEN](#).



8. Quick And Done

The best things I've outsourced are those that you can leverage. A great example of this is the creation of a database with contact information to use for public relations. Get a freelancer to make a list of all chambers of commerce, editors of specific publications, etc. You use the list over again and it saves you from having to sit for hours doing the grunt work.

The best places I've found for outsourcing are: [www.getafreelancer.com](#) and [www.elance.com](#).

Thanks to: Sonia Gallagher of [Time for Life, LLC](#).



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Thanks to: Rob Ciccone of [American Express OPEN](#).



10. Do It For the Right Reason

I've seen companies fail in their outsourcing efforts because of a single issue - They failed to develop a data driven, logical & rational reason for doing it.

My BEST TIP may seem common sense but in practice it can result in painful conclusions. A company or organization must be able to clearly describe what business problem they are trying to solve.

I can guarantee if the reason for an outsourcing strategy is simply "our competition is doing it" You'll be disappointed in the result.

Thanks to: Bob Dixon of [Robert Dixon Associates](#).



11. CRM Helps!

Keep it to a fixed fee arrangement per month, use a web-based CRM so you can easily communicate tasks and to do's to the outsourcee without emailing or calling them and don't give them ability to contact your customers/clients until after 3 months. Once you do allow communication between the outsourcee and customers, set up a support@ email for the outsourcee to use and have your company's proper signature in the signature block

Thanks to: jennifer goldman of [My Virtual COO](#).

12. Test Your Out-Sources

When looking for an outsourcing partner, provide candidates with a small test project to assess their skills. A great way to do that and find a wide range of candidates is to post projects on [Elance.com](#).

Thanks to: Cathy Iconis of [Cathy Iconis, CPA](#).



13. Filipinos Are Great Workers!

No matter what you plan to outsource, look to do it in the Philippines. Not only are Filipinos generally loyal and hard-working, but the education system is taught in English so that almost all Filipinos are fluent in English writing and speaking. This makes communication of your ideas, tasks, etc. much easier and makes outsourcing much more efficient and worth-while. I've also found Filipinos to generally be really pleasant, enthusiastic and great people with whom to build friendships.

Thanks to: Ryan Colby of [Get Lean In 12](#).

14. Big Results for Small Business

One great way to outsource sales and marketing (a HUGE expense) is the use of affiliate or referral programs. They can be extremely effective: simply create an incentive for a person to refer another to purchase your product or service. All business people understand the important of word-of-mouth (viral) advertising. The effectiveness is magnified online with the use of social media such as twitter, linkedin and facebook!

Thanks to: Jeff Epstein of [zferral.com](#).



15. It's How I Outsource...

I used a fantastic company called [www.OutsourcingThingsDone.com](#)

They helped me recruit, train & hire a virtual assistant who is based in Manila at a fraction of what it would cost here in Vancouver.

Thanks to: Cameron Herold of [BackPocket COO](#).



16. Virtual Assistant Saves

My best advice for small businesses looking to outsource is to hire a virtual assistant. I did some math for the Vancouver Canada region. Using figures from Statistics Canada for rental and office set-up equipment, it would cost a company \$123,500 to hire a part-time employee; \$77,040 to hire a temp through an agency (because you still



have to provide the office); and \$60,000 to hire a VA. Virtual assistance is business' solution to managing budgets while getting the job done!

Thanks to: *Phyllis Harber-Murphy of [More Than 92.5 Virtual Assistance](#).*



17. Fire Yourself

1. Define what you love to do yourself in your business
 2. Fire yourself from the rest of the stuff you hate.
 3. Online areas such as Elance, Brickworks and many more can provide most of the skills and people that you need, or refer you to those that can.
 3. The world is full of people just waiting for you to ask for help.
 4. I recently self published using Graphic people in Pakistan..Printers in India..Social media in Colorado, and publicist in Canada.
- Create wealth, not just a job

Thanks to: *Wallis Pattisonn of [Think Rich Live Rich](#).*



18. The World At Your Service

I use Elance.com for everything I can - design, typesetting, editing, writing etc... I love them and haven't had a project go south, ever.

Thanks to: *Anne-Marie Faiola of [Bramble Berry Inc.](#)*



19. Seek and Ye Shall Find!

I have always surrounded myself with the best people possible and none of them are where I am! I outsource 100%. I do it because I can get the best people with the least amount of overhead. Having our warehouses, art department factories, bookkeeping, etc. spread out all over the world works great because with a phone and the internet, it's a piece of cake. It allows everyone to live a more easeful life. How to find them: Ask people you're already working with and hit that search engine!

Thanks to: *craig wolfe of [CelebriDucks](#).*



20. Read The Fine Print

The best way to outsource is to do it online only ___after___ thoroughly reading the terms and conditions agreements of popular services such as Elance, oDesk, Guru, Freelancer & Scriptlance in particular. Many problems occur with those services when people assume they operate the same way Rentacoder or vWorker operates, and users are often frustrated after discovering they can be more time consuming and costlier to use.

Thanks to: *Nicole Miller of [vWorker](#).*



21. Trust Is Key!

I am a freelance medical writer and author, and I employ a dozen other freelance medical writers in the US and the UK. My reputation and my success are integrally connected to the work of my team. The key to outsourcing is to know the people to whom you outsource. If you can trust them to be on the phone with your client without you being there too, that's a successful partnership!

Thanks to: *Brian Bass of [Bass Advertising & Marketing, Inc.](#)*



22. Eliminate Shipping Hassles

If you sell physical products, why would you want to store all your goods in your home or manage a small warehouse? Why hassle with stuffing boxes and walking to the post office? Outsourcing the pick, pack and shipping of your orders just makes sense. Outsourcing storage and fulfillment is especially valuable to businesses selling overseas: international shipping is expensive, prone to errors and customs problems. Instead, get an overseas warehouse on demand to store and ship those orders.

Thanks to: *Nate Gilmore of [Shipwire Product Fulfillment](#).*



23. Vet Outsourcers Carefully

Even if you're a start-up, it doesn't mean that it's a good idea to turn to another start-up for support in key areas. Do your homework before you engage anyone. Make sure that the people you hire for critical outsourcing functions are really experienced and can deliver what they say they can, on time and on budget. Look for people with strong track records and ask for references. Create budgets for key functions and stick to them.

Thanks to: *Karin Abarbanel of [Birthing the Elephant](#).*



24. Track Your "Undone" List

Make a list of 10 "To Do" items that you have waiting for you every day for a week. At the end of the week, take a look at the items that were left undone and evaluate the reasons:

- Was it that you didn't have enough time?
- Do you dislike the task?
- Do you lack the expertise or skills to do the task?

Doing this quick exercise can help you identify what important aspects of your business that you could use extra help to cover.

Thanks to: *Crystal Coleman of [The Northern Edge Business Solution](#).*





25. It's Ok To Get Help!

Ask yourself if there are aspects of the project work you do for clients that could be done faster, better, and/or more cheaply by someone else. If you're a technical writer (for example), wouldn't it make sense to get a freelance editor to proofread your documents rather than your spending hours on that tedious chore?

The idea is to focus on your "sweet spots"-those activities clients are really hiring you to do and you do very,very well-and get others to take care of the rest.

Thanks to: Steve Slaunwhite of [The Wealthy Freelancer](#).



26. ET Phone Home!

We used to manage a premise-based system internally. It was challenging to troubleshoot, was limiting and suffered quality issues. Now we use a cloud-based hosted unified communications solution from Alteva. No ugly boxes or wires on the walls (the equipment is off site). When I need to change/add an extension, I do it online or send Alteva a note. I also have conferencing, call recording, Salesforce.com integration, disaster recovery and more. And I pay less than I ever have.

Thanks to: Michael Becce of [TechJournalists.com](#).

Compiled by Mike Michalowicz, Author of [The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur](#)



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