

Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022

"Beyond outsourcing: Entering a new sourcing ecosystem"

Navigating talent, technology, and new ways to outsource



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Beyond outsourcing: Entering a new sourcing ecosystem

Two years have passed since our last report on outsourcing and organizations are settling into place in a post-COVID-19 pandemic world. In the *Global Outsourcing Survey 2020 Report* “How Much Disruption?,” published by Deloitte Consulting LLP, we¹ noted the struggles clients faced when trying to embrace disruptive technologies in the fallout of COVID-19. Many of them were forced to return to the basics and focus on driving down costs and performing risk management instead of investing in new capabilities.

2022 brought new challenges: Competition for talent and the great resignation reached unprecedented intensity and supply chain disruptions drove new ways to source regionally/locally, all while the global economy faced a possible recession.

We surveyed more than 500 business and technology leaders, including more than 150 C-suite executives, from across a variety of industries worldwide to get a pulse of the outsourcing industry and its role in addressing these challenges.

Executives indicated third-party providers and new sourcing geographies alleviated the challenges created by the talent race – and they did not stop there: The resurgence of global in-house centers was cited as an attractive alternative or supplement to outsourcing.

The typical cost reduction drivers have been overshadowed by the prioritization of capabilities for outsourcing (especially data and analytics, cybersecurity), the need to evolve the outsourcing delivery model towards value, and the need to manage an entire ecosystem of third parties and solutions based on trust and transparency over single-vendor performance.

Organizations are turning to outsourcing to fill gaps, drive value, and provide end-to-end solutions as they build a blueprint for the future.

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1. Throughout this document, “we” and “our” refer to Deloitte Consulting, LLP, except where explicitly stated otherwise

Definitions

For the purpose of this report, we define the following:

Traditional Outsourcing is focused on cost reduction for simple, discrete tasks which can be automated. The relationship with vendors is transactional in nature. Outsourcing tasks could be payroll, network administration, or other narrowly defined business processes.

Managed Services move beyond traditional outsourcing, combining cost reduction and discrete value-add, where vendors support complex processes, applications, or full business functional areas requiring specialized expertise. The relationship is longer term, tied to performance service levels (via a service-level agreement [SLA]), and it is priced on outcomes and volume consumption. Examples include hosting/cloud operations, infrastructure support, or other defined, but multifaceted, processes.

Operate Services are outcome and innovation-oriented, underpinned by technology and cost optimization—leverage automation and data insights as part of the services to drive value. Clients are given on-demand access to hard-to-source talent, experiences, skills, and leading technology. Offerings are broad and dynamic in scope and the relationship with the vendor is highly collaborative and often viewed as an extension of the organization. Examples include foundry services, advise-as-a-service, analytics-as-a-service, cyber detect and respond, or other outcome and innovation-oriented functions.





Executive summary

Five key findings emerged from our executive survey.

Finding and keeping the right talent with the right skills at the right price is more elusive than ever.

The issue of talent acquisition and retention is more pronounced than ever in the digitally transforming world. Executives reported talent acquisition as the top internal challenge for their organizations, despite more than half reporting an increase in their staff over the last year to support the demand for growth. Simultaneously, 62% of executives say they are ill-prepared to address the causes and impacts of poor employee retention. This revolving door effect, coupled with new remote working options, causes organizations to seek and fight for talent in a global market. It also creates an opportunity for service providers to deliver solutions for outstanding talent problems.

Third-party delivery models keep evolving to unlock value: Operate Services.

Reported increases in revenue and budget across industries indicate strong growth in the use of third parties over the past two years. While enabling functions and IT departments continue to outsource most of their services through differentiated third-party delivery models, core business operations (e.g., product development, sales) remain internally managed. In addition to Traditional Outsourcing, Managed Services, and Operate Services, service providers now supply knowledge, capability, and capacity by providing on-demand access to hard-to-source talent and expertise on technology and transformation that keeps pace with the continuously evolving business environment. This shift towards Operate Services signals the desire to deliver core capabilities in collaboration with service providers, aiming for elevated business value creation.

Cybersecurity and data analytics are the top outsourcing priorities.

Executives identified cybersecurity as the number one external challenge they face in achieving their strategic objectives. Today, 81% of executives turn to third-party vendors to provide, in full or in part, their cybersecurity capabilities. Executives also indicated demand for extracting value through data via analytics. 96% of executives cited service providers as the source for the development of data and analytics capabilities. As executives focus on both harvesting and protecting their enterprise and ecosystem data, service providers must be willing both to offer talent-integrating solutions and to bear risk.

Global In-house Centers (GIC): internal sourcing with intention is an alternative to third parties.

The 'what' and 'how' of sourcing strategy is not an easy decision to make as a plethora of outsourcing options exist. In addition to third-party providers, organizations can retain and manage functions (or a portion of them) through global in-house centers (an evolution of captive operations), global shared services, or by acquiring in-house capabilities through Build-Operate-Transform-Transfer (BOTT)² strategies. An effective sourcing model goes beyond cost and skillset and considers time zone, cultural similarities, and enhanced infrastructure. With comfort in remote work, organizations globally are looking to expand their external workforce to new regions, such as Latin America for USA nearshore access, or Eastern Europe instead of India. GICs have regained attention as an attractive option for organizations looking to find cost-takeout and long-term innovation, resulting in the evolution of the GIC.³

Evolving from vendor management to a holistic ecosystem management.

Despite the evolution of the service delivery model, executives ranked collaboration with external providers at the bottom of their strategic priorities and culture fit at the bottom of their vendor selection concerns. As the complexity, number of third-party choices, and configuration options for service delivery models expand, now is the time to ensure that enterprises have a robust strategy and framework to manage an ecosystem of third-party relationships in full coordination with their internal workforce, GIC, and business-led tech strategies, compared to the traditional siloed vendor management approach. Managing the third-party ecosystem goes beyond SLAs: transparency and trust must be paramount.

2. Ayan Chatterjee et al., [Adding 'Transform' to a 'Build-Operate-Transfer' Model](#), Deloitte US Consulting LLP 2022

3. Anthony Crasto et al., [Global In-house Centers \(GIC\) report](#), Deloitte India 2018



Finding, developing, and keeping the right talent with the right skills at the right price is more elusive than ever.

Remote work and a global talent market give firms – and their competition – access to more people than ever. This benefit also applies to employees, with abundant employment opportunities and switching costs low – outsourcing is here to help.

Post-COVID-19, the talent pool became globally accessible.

One in two executives, irrespective of industry or function, identified acquiring talent as a top internal challenge. 53% of surveyed executives reported increased staff levels over the last two years to match strategic organizational priorities. As remote work became the norm during the pandemic and talent began looking beyond their local geography, organizations started branching outside of their typical locations to tap into the global talent pool. Earlier this year, Deloitte Consulting LLP found 71% of CEOs expect the global talent shortage to continue into next year.⁴

With access comes competition and a revolving door of talent: Service providers step up with solutions.

Acquiring talent is not the end of the talent race story: Nearly two-thirds of executives do not feel their organization is ready to face their employee retention challenge.



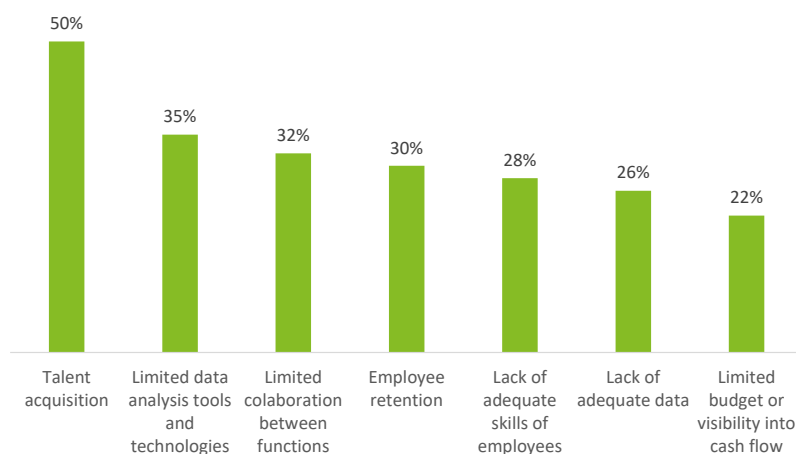
of executives identify **talent acquisition** as a **top internal challenge** in meeting their organizations' strategic priorities

Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents)

56% of the executives do not feel their organizations have the right mechanisms to retain employees. Organizations are evolving their sourcing ecosystems to include external providers in their future workforce planning and talent acquisition strategies. 87% of organizations consider external workers part of their workforce.⁵

This continued shift in organizations adopting an ecosystem view and incorporating external talent into their internal operations has led to the emergence of Operate Services. Operate Services are highly collaborative and outcome-based, addressing skill gaps in critical growth functions (e.g., foundry services, analytics-as-service) requiring organizations to manage an integrated workforce as one team, enabled by Artificial Intelligence (AI).

What are the top internal challenges for your organization in meeting its overall strategic priorities?



Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents)

Skills shortages exist predominantly in cybersecurity, AI/Machine Learning (ML), and data science, and organizations must find ways to meet their needs.

Next-generation technology skill shortages (e.g., advanced cybersecurity, data science and ML, Infrastructure-as-code) were cited by executives as a top external challenge, and only half of those surveyed were prepared for the challenge. The competition in the talent market is a critical roadblock for organizations attempting to acquire skills to support new and critical capabilities organically. Consequently, organizations are turning to service providers to overcome existing challenges related to skills and services.

4. [Winter 2022 Fortune/Deloitte CEO Survey](#), Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2022

5. Robin Jones et al., [Workforce ecosystems](#), Deloitte Consulting LLP/Deloitte Insights, 2021



Third-party delivery models continue evolving to unlock value: Operate Services.

Determining the right balance between outsourcing and insourcing has always been difficult, and the arrival of new delivery models adds to the challenge.

IT is delivered via the service provider ecosystem.

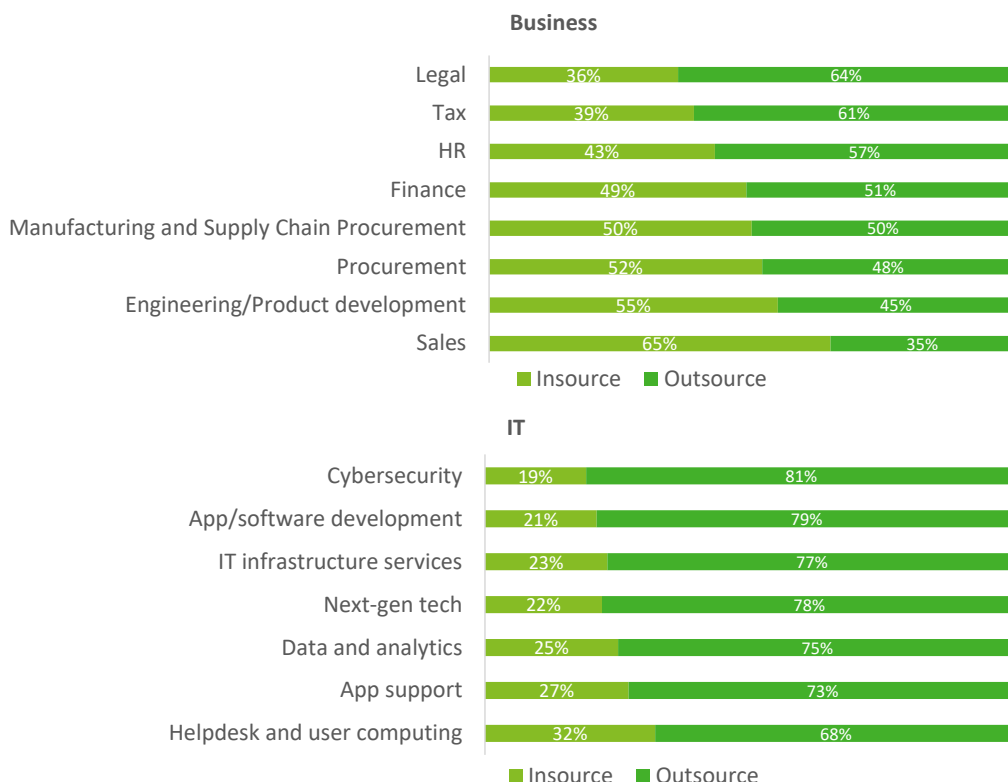
76% of all surveyed executives indicated their IT services were delivered via third-party models. IT has led the charge in adopting an ecosystem view of service delivery over the last 20 years. The shift to prioritizing value over cost efficiencies from third-party services has accelerated this evolution toward a highly outsourced IT environment.

Back office functions remain internally managed, which presents an opportunity to leverage third-party delivery models.

The decision of which functions to keep in-house versus which to outsource must strike a balance between efficiently responding to new ways of working while leveraging and retaining existing organizational talent. Nearly half (48%) of surveyed executives indicated that they handle business functions internally.

Core business operations (e.g., sales and engineering/product development) are skewed towards an internal sourcing strategy, yet despite the maturity of third-party enabling function operations (e.g., finance, procurement, and supply chain), our survey shows an opportunity to further outsource these functions. Third-party delivery models can grow to mirror IT outsourcing adoption levels (up to 80%). Significant opportunity remains for business process outsourcing (BPO) to mature in how it engages with, and realizes benefits from, external service providers beyond cutting costs.

In which of the following functional areas does your company currently use external service providers today?



of executives outsource **business functions**



of executives indicated that **IT functions** are outsourced

The evolution of sourcing continues with three differentiated third-party delivery models and an increasing interest in global in-house centers.

Third-party delivery models historically have fallen into two categories: 1) Traditional Outsourcing (focused on cost reduction for easily automated, simple, and discrete tasks) and 2) Managed Services (focused on volume and outcome-based pricing and performance service levels). However, third-party delivery models keep evolving to address modern operating models (e.g., Agile). Operate Services are fully recognized by surveyed executives who indicate having differentiated budgets for this emerging highly collaborative, skills and technology-powered, and outcome-oriented delivery model.

The last two years have been extraordinary in terms of growth, with organizations focused on expanding into new markets and tapping into new business models. More than 75% of executives reported that their organizations have experienced revenue growth, and one in four reported significant growth greater than 10%. When asked for anticipated budget changes over the next two years, our survey found an even greater demand for external services across all third-party delivery models. Particularly, 67% of executives signaled an increase in budget for Operate Services. This shift in budgetary and financial planning is evidence

of the desire for a more integrated service delivery and way of working with the vendor ecosystem. Executives are searching for ways to buy instead of build capabilities by increasingly leveraging service providers to directly support highly integrated business and technology operating models. Transparency, trustworthiness, and business understanding remain critical for close relationships.

Balancing cost-takeout and access to new skills and capabilities.

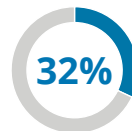
Two years ago, 70% of surveyed executives indicated cost was a primary reason for outsourcing.⁶ Today, while cutting costs ranks within the top four primary drivers for engaging Operate and Managed Services, it is overshadowed by access to new capabilities, business and operating model shifts, and keeping up with technology and regulation. As organizations strive for growth, they face the challenges of a competitive global talent market coupled with technology changes outpacing feasible adoption timelines. With this uniquely challenging position of balancing cost and access to new skills and capabilities, curating innovation, and incorporating new remote working norms, organizations call upon the service provider ecosystem to provide critical solutions that are agile and integrated.



of executives indicate a budget increase for **Operate Services**



of executives indicate a budget increase for **Managed Services**



of executives indicate a budget increase for **Traditional Outsourcing**

Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents)

6. [Global Outsourcing Survey](#), Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2020



Operate Services emerge

Our survey found that the leading driver of Operate Services is acquiring new capabilities. Executives are increasingly looking for a way to gain access to new capabilities and skills, address operating model changes, and manage changing regulatory requirements. Services demanded from providers are shifting from well-understood and standard capabilities towards more complex and core functions,

which were previously not possible with arm's-length relationships. With a highly integrated ecosystem of internal and external talent, organizations find value in the business insights providers are now able to provide. Beyond technology and process guidance, organizations are tapping into the deep industry knowledge of third-party providers, with 45% of executives indicating they are leveraging Operate Services due to changing regulatory requirements. Injecting

highly skilled, collaborative, and innovative talent directly into an organization grants access to new high-tech capabilities, supporting organizations' market and business model expansion priorities, and if integrated well enough, trusted to aid in navigating regulatory requirements which have historically been performed internally.

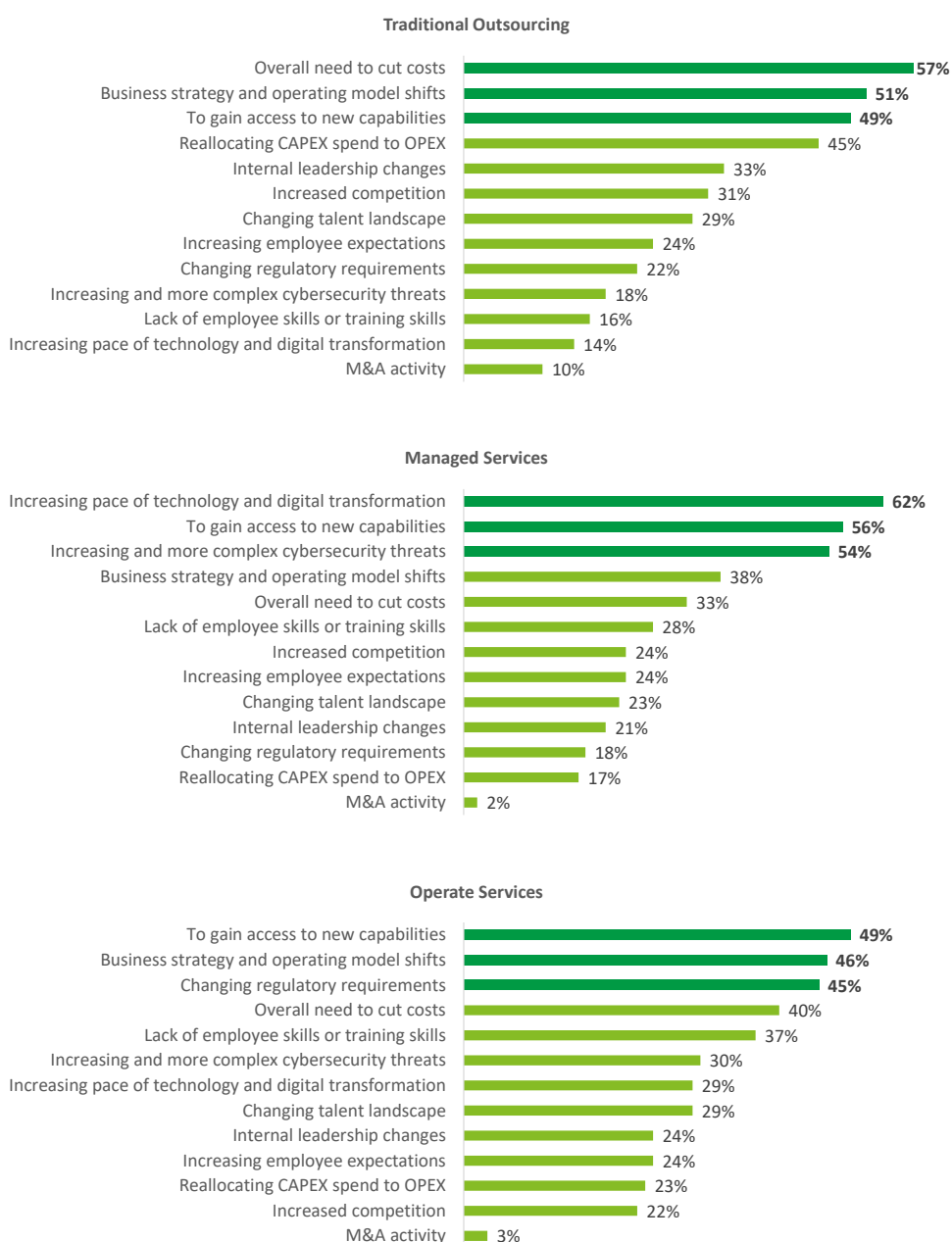
Managed Services are still viewed as key to technology modernization and digital transformation.

Despite this shift, the market still views Managed Services as a key mechanism to solve for the pace of technological advancement. The ability to encapsulate a whole function provides more than just delivery model options. For example, leveraging providers for cybersecurity services brings not only technology, talent access, and cost advantages, but also risk-sharing advantages, as in the case of a data breach.

Traditional Outsourcing remains focused on cost reduction.

57% of executives indicate the primary driver of Traditional Outsourcing is cost reduction, typically via staff augmentation for transactional business and IT activities. When an organization needs skills, the easiest path is to use Traditional Outsourcing to bolster its workforce. While this is the easiest path, it does not always provide the most benefit to organizations. The maturity of third-party engagement models has evolved beyond Traditional Outsourcing towards paying for outcomes instead of paying for time (e.g., Managed Services, Operate Services). However, to realize benefits from these models, sufficient vendor management capabilities should exist to orchestrate talent and technology into one team.

What are the primary drivers behind your growing use of each delivery model?



Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents)



Cybersecurity and data and analytics are the top outsourcing priorities.

The evolution of third-party delivery models beyond cost brings an opportunity to outsource differentiated capabilities such as cybersecurity and data and analytics.

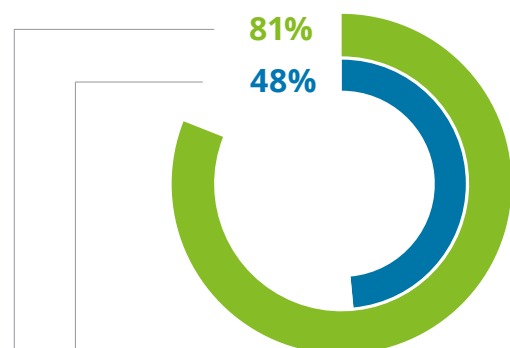
Cybersecurity presents a challenge and executives are willing to rely on third parties to deliver.

In our survey, executives identified cybersecurity concerns as the top external challenge for meeting organizational

strategic priorities. In 2018, the *Global Outsourcing Survey*⁷ found that 95% of companies reported they had cybersecurity risk measures in place. Today, only 52% of executives believe they are prepared to meet their cybersecurity challenges. To

tackle the challenge, organizations have looked to the service provider ecosystem for access to new cybersecurity capabilities, with 81% of executives reporting they support their cybersecurity function with a third-party delivery model.

Cybersecurity is today's top external challenge for executives



Less than half of these organizations are prepared to handle this **challenge**

At least 3 out of 4 executives **use third-party vendors** to support the cybersecurity function

In a few words, what are your expectations from your use of third-party services?



Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents)

Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (free text)

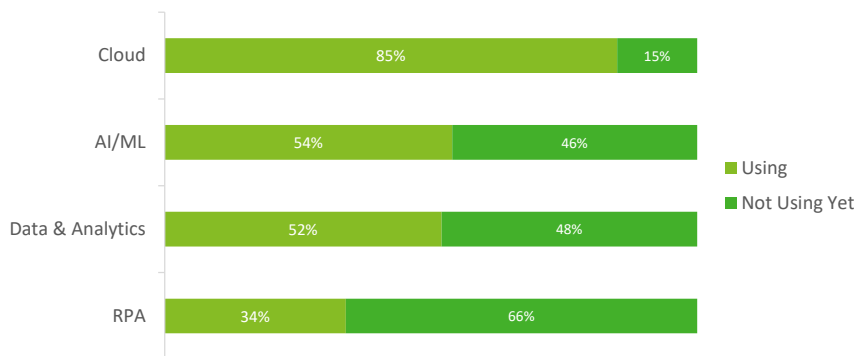
7. [Global Outsourcing Survey](#), Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2018

Analytics capabilities are growing via integrated ecosystem relationships.

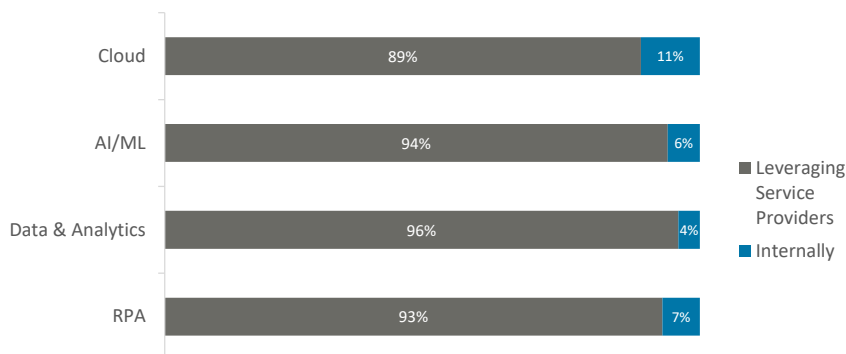
Organizations have outsourced data entry and operations for decades, but modern expectations and requirements have grown to include analytics and insight generation. To extract value from data with analytics, teams must possess both technical and functional knowledge. Historically, this functional knowledge requirement, along with data residency and privacy laws, has prohibited organizations from turning to third-party models to source their talent. Today, the demand for handling data strategically and efficiently has never been greater, and organizations are turning to third parties to source the skills, technologies, and services to support these

growing capabilities. 75% of companies leverage data and analytics via external providers. To innovate with that data, 94% of organizations are leveraging service providers to develop their AI/ML technology. Navigating AI/ML insight generation across the business application landscape creates significant complexity as each application's AI/ML capabilities (e.g., ERP, CRM) require skillsets to collaborate across technology and business domains. This is where service providers can help: by providing solutions across talent, services, and technology, while seamlessly integrating into the organization to build capabilities as a single cohesive entity.

To what extent is your organization using the following technologies across your organization?



How you are developing or deploying the following technologies in your business?



Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents). Only four options shown.

RPA has competition

Four years ago, the [2018 Global Outsourcing Survey](#) reported that 72% of executives were considering or adopting Robot Process Automation (RPA).

RPA seemed poised to gain widespread acceptance across industries and functional areas as the champion of enabling functions with the potential to provide organizations a competitive advantage. The [2020 Global Outsourcing Survey](#) reported that full RPA adoption was still low due to an inability to capture immediate value. However, in 2022, almost 66% of organization use RPA, of which 34% use it across their organization, and 33% are piloting it in some areas. We see the rise and adoption of AI/ML embedded in stand-alone solutions or heavily integrated into third-party delivery (e.g., within Operate Services) as a signal of strong confidence in the benefits that AI/ML solutions can provide today.



Global in-house centers: Internal sourcing with intention is an alternative to third parties.

Based on our interviews, third-party delivery models are not the only answer for a holistic ecosystem. Making the right decision on what type of work to insource or put into GICs impacts the benefit these alternative delivery models ultimately provide.

Alternatives to third-party delivery models.

Executive interviews highlight the legitimacy of a vital sourcing strategy: GICs. Where there has been a contraction in external services budget, organizations are turning toward sourcing their capabilities internally via low-cost locations. Organizations feel that although significant scale is required and there are brand risks, leveraging GICs produces higher-quality services, innovation, and effort while reaping the benefits of sourcing talent from lower-cost locations.

Setting up a GIC can be a complex task, competing with other high-priority goals within an organization. Based on interviews with executives, BOTT has emerged as a model. With BOTT, a trusted provider builds an organization at the client's request, operates the new capability, transforms the client's operations, and eventually transfers control of the operation back to the client. The BOTT model reduces time to execution with new capabilities, provides access to hard-to-source talent, clears transformation backlogs, and provides a pathway to keep critical skillsets, capabilities, and innovation in-house.

"We are expanding our internal offshore footprint for transparency, innovation, and better way-of-working, with India, Latin America, and Eastern Europe."

– Head of Enterprise Operations, Global Financial Services Company

The BOTT model allows firms to gain the expertise and experience of a trusted third party while maintaining control over operations. BOTT reduces risk by transferring difficult up-front challenges to third parties.⁸ The model also has lower up-front costs, which allows an organization to pursue other strategic priorities in parallel. Additionally, BOTT provides flexibility: operations can scale up or down as the business demands, or even pivot entirely as strategic objectives change. With renewed interest from both vendors and clients, BOTT is an excellent option to pursue a GIC/captive approach.

India remains the top destination, but Latin America and Nearshore delivery is a rising and competitive location model that provides unique value for GICs and outsourcing services.

India remains the prime destination for outsourcing. However, our conversations with executives show change is coming. Firms feel over-reliant on India, and the competition paired with increased global talent access has caused a reevaluation of alternative geographies. Firms are increasingly looking towards Europe (particularly Eastern Europe), Latin America, Asia-Pacific nations apart from India, and even North America as viable options for their outsourcing efforts. A common theme in our conversations was the rise of Latin America as the up-and-coming region today. The region offers business and technology talent, enhanced infrastructure, and the benefit of substantial time zone and cultural overlap with North America, making it ideal for same-time-zone operations.

"Captives [GICs] create careers; third-party models create jobs."

– Head of Enterprise Financial Services, Global Media Company

8. Ayan Chatterjee et al., [Adding 'Transform' to a 'Build Operate Transfer' Model](#), Deloitte Consulting LLP 2022



Evolving from traditional vendor management to a holistic ecosystem management.

In an increasingly complex outsourcing environment, siloed third-party relationships must be replaced by an ecosystem approach to ensure effective and efficient delivery.

An expanding universe of vendors and configurable sourcing strategy options make solely selecting and managing a vendor insufficient.

As third-party delivery models keep evolving, service delivery models are becoming more complex with services demanded from providers shifting towards core and integrated functions previously not possible in transactional relationships. Delivering services through the ecosystem of business-led tech solutions, third parties, and GICs should be fully aligned with business and technology objectives and will require enhanced collaboration and trust between all parties.



of executives' primary third-party selection concern includes the negative impacts to company culture

Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents)

Collaboration and cultural fit.

Collaboration and culture fit are fundamental drivers of success in a

high-functioning ecosystem. However, organizations' strategic priorities for the next two years do not align, with only 27% of executives citing an increase in 'collaboration across the organization', and 17% an increase in 'collaboration with providers' as a top strategic priority. Surprisingly, 'cultural fit' remains a low priority with only 22% of executives citing it as a main concern in provider selection.

"We couldn't build trust across our providers, and SLAs weren't cutting it, so we built the team ourselves in a strategic location."

– CTO, Global Apparel Manufacturer

Service Level Agreements are not enough.

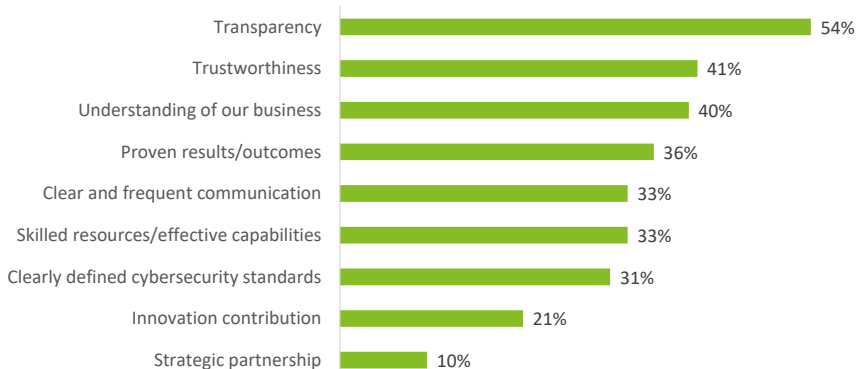
Managing performance for a product-based operating model with Agile teams, all integrated with various service providers and service delivery sources, goes beyond SLAs. In 2020, the *Global Outsourcing*

Survey,⁹ as published by Deloitte Consulting LLP reported that almost half of those interviewed predicted SLA terms would be key for the future of outsourcing. In 2022, only 19% of executives prioritized favorable SLA terms as a top criterion in the provider selection process. Although executives recognize SLAs are best viewed as a tool to set minimum thresholds, SLAs alone are not effective in maximizing benefits from a vendor relationship. When the goal is highly integrated teams working as one, SLAs set the baseline, but cannot reliably ensure peak outcomes. To unlock the most value from these teams, firms must go beyond SLAs and create true relationships with vendors based on mutual trust and transparency that yields innovative thinking and mutually beneficial outcomes.

Beyond vendor management.

Aligning multiple vendors on a single objective is challenging and time-consuming. This challenge is underscored by the need for end-to-end talent and service integration, cyber control over the extended enterprise ecosystem, and single sources of truth. In this new environment, the vendor management capability must evolve from single and siloed vendor management to a strategic ecosystem management approach. An ecosystem approach should be based on transparency and trust, and interlock with the overall operating and service delivery model, including GICs. Building standard capabilities to manage a holistic ecosystem of vendors that is fully aligned to IT or business strategy is vital. Ensuring that each vendor fits the team's culture and vision, understands the business, and provides innovative thought leadership puts organizations in the most appropriate position to realize maximum potential from vendors.

What are the top qualitative aspects you most value in a service provider?



Source: Deloitte Global Outsourcing Survey 2022 (% respondents)

9. [Global Outsourcing Survey](#), Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2020



Conclusion

In today's world where talent, cost, technology, and cybersecurity are differentiated capabilities, the effective use of third-party ecosystems and enhanced sourcing delivery models are required to unlock immediate and long-term business value.

This report opened by reflecting on how much has changed in the years since the publication of the last *Global Outsourcing Survey*. What we found in 2022 is that not only have technologies evolved, ways of working transformed, and borders expanded, but also the priorities and needs for which organizations choose to outsource have shifted from two years ago.

Unlocking the benefits of Operate Services.

This report uncovered the challenging position executives are in as they look to both cut costs and expand access to new capabilities. Not only do organizations want to acquire talent and keep pace with advancing technology, they want to do so with service providers who can bring trustworthiness, transparency, and business understanding to their relationship. Operate Services has emerged as a model to deliver organizations the new capabilities they seek and offer industry expertise during a time of regulatory change. By integrating highly skilled and collaborative talent directly into an organization, and leveraging automation, AI, and data insights as part of the services, Operate Services unlock the potential of new capabilities and are trusted to guide organizations through their top external challenges.

Closing the gap between cybersecurity and AI.

In the past two years, organizations have shifted to viewing third-party ecosystems as more than a means of reducing costs: They also serve to close talent gaps and accelerate growth. It comes as no surprise that technology-related challenges and capabilities dominate the reasons organizations choose to outsource. Executives indicated that cybersecurity is the top external challenge they face in achieving their strategic objectives, and

organizations turn almost exclusively to third-party vendors to deliver cybersecurity solutions. Organizations also trust third-party vendors with data analytics, AI solutions, and cloud technology implementation, exemplifying the close coordination of organizations with the service provider ecosystem from both a talent and tech services perspective.

A renewed interest in GICs.

Demand for services continually increases. Organizations face the challenge of delivering core capabilities while balancing cost - not an easy feat in the context of the uncertain global economy and borderless talent pools. Many delivery models exist from which organizations can choose to source based on their strategic priorities and needs. For organizations sensitive to budgetary restrictions, leaders are looking to build global in-house centers or implement BOTT strategies to maintain brand-promised services in lower-cost areas. As executives become more comfortable with remote work, they are crafting sourcing strategies that consider time zones, cultural similarities, and nearshore access. It is no longer a question of 'to source or not to source,' but rather what can organizations keep in-house and how can they construct and manage ecosystems of third-party vendors to improve their organization.

Amidst an increasingly complex business environment, now is the time to revisit sourcing strategy and evolve the vendor management capability.

Rather than leveraging third-party vendors to reduce cost (as was the norm in 2020), organizations are using third parties to tackle their greatest challenges, such as protecting their business and keeping up with rapid technological advances.

Organizations and their executives are turning toward third-party vendors to provide strategic insight and access to advance capabilities. What this iteration of the global outsourcing report has uncovered is that third-party vendor use alone is not enough: Third-party vendors must be managed in coordination with internal talent in a way that fosters transparency and trustworthiness to truly unlock value as one team in a holistic ecosystem of services, both internal and external.

The 'what' and the 'how' of sourcing strategy are becoming more difficult questions for any organization to answer given the plethora of sourcing options. Executives are balancing the need for new capabilities and skillsets delivered by third-party vendors against impacts on organizations' cultures and budgets. In order to tackle competing priorities and complex delivery options, an organization's vendor management capability needs to evolve from single and siloed vendor management to ecosystem management across vendors focused on transparency, culture, service integration, trust, and performance. If organizations evolve to a true ecosystem approach to management, they can unlock and expedite value realization in an agile way.



Let's talk

Today's sourcing environment has tremendous opportunities to enhance innovation and market competitiveness for forward-thinking organizations. If you would like to learn more about ways these solutions could help your own organization, or to gain deeper insights into how other organizations are using them already, please contact us. We would be glad to provide you a full briefing.

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