

Winning In Business

Five key tools to ensure
you stay ahead





*"the secret to success
lies in great calmness"*

Welcome

Business has always been a battlefield, but within the past five years, the rules of engagement have become more confusing and challenging than ever. New technologies, new communications media, new market segmentations and new economic challenges have made survival difficult – and growth a near impossibility.



But in the middle of great turmoil, the secret to success lies in great calmness. Letting your business strategies be dictated by the lunacy of the marketplace is a recipe for ultimate failure, and there has never been a greater need to look at the essentials of your business – the core principles that guarantee it will prosper, regardless of the short-term financial and economic challenges that we face today.

And when it comes to taking that cold, hard look at your operation, you shouldn't go it alone. You need the expertise, the perceptiveness and the objectiveness of an outside eye – someone who can see the wood for the trees.

With over twenty years working for major multinationals and running my own business, I offer you exactly that – a trusted external resource who can assist you across a broad range of business issues, including:

- 1) Successful and trouble-free outsourcing of critical functions of your business
- 2) Provision of corporate strategies that work
- 3) Tightly controlled management of your cost base
- 4) Highly experienced and astute commercial negotiation
- 5) Development of a strong corporate vision as an aid to effective leadership

"Over the last four years, Pam has played a pivotal role in supporting our organisation in a number of key strategic initiatives."

She is a top class professional, balanced but with excellent attention to detail and always willing to be flexible to ensure we meet our goals and deadline."

She is an experienced and pragmatic commercial negotiator who takes the time to understand the key drivers and levers within any commercial discussions and backs up her views with well thought through analytics and financial rigour. She understands the importance of building relationship but also the priority of delivering against our targets."

Her strength in terms of communication and presentation ensured that senior management were always kept up to speed on progress. Her results with us, speak for themselves."

Paul Whelan
C.F.O.
Telefonica O2 Ireland

*"move from seeing the challenges
to seeing the opportunities"*

In short, I can offer you the benefits of 'best practice' from a range of successful Irish and multinational organizations, delivering an eagle-like view of your business – without the distortion which day-to-day involvement inevitably produces.

Within the pages of this document, you'll find an informative and easy-to-read summary of some of the most common challenges that Irish businesses face – and how to obtain a very real competitive advantage by focusing on the five elements of your business listed above.

The following five chapters provide a brief overview of how you can completely transform how you look at your business – and how you gear your organization towards continued growth.

And drawing on practical examples from two decades of high-level experience, the result is a series of short, concise pointers to how you can move from seeing the challenges to seeing the opportunities, and how your business can come through these difficult times as a leaner, more focused and more agile company.

I hope you enjoy this introduction to my proven strategies for success, and I look forward to the opportunity of telling you more about how these and other principles of success can be successfully applied to your business.

P Harrison

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*"Outsourcing has to be seen
as a partnership"*

1. Why so many companies get Outsourcing completely wrong

One of the most regularly misunderstood business tools that I work with on a regular basis is Outsourcing. More and more, it's being seen as a way of removing a corporate headache, and of producing short or medium term cost savings.

This approach is flawed from the very outset. At its very heart, Outsourcing has to be seen as a partnership – one of the most important your business will ever enter into.

And like most great partnerships, it can't be broken down exclusively into pounds, shillings and pence – its real value contains many more intangibles that should be considered before you enter into an Outsourcing agreement.

For example, what access will your business have to great external resources after the Outsourcing is complete? And what additional technical skills do they add to your business?

In a recent Outsourcing programme for a major telecoms company, I introduced a weighting system for assessing prospective Outsourcing partners.

Just one third of the marks were allocated for financial considerations – in other words, could they fulfill the function for less than it was currently costing, and by how much?

A further third was allocated to their technical and operational abilities – how well they could bring their specialist knowledge to bear on the outsourcing organization.

But perhaps the most important third of the marks were allocated to the heading of 'People'. We needed to be sure, first of all, that there was a cultural fit between both companies, which inevitably plays a huge role in a smooth and successful transition.

But equally important, we were focused on the integrity of prospective partners when it came to issues such as employee transfer. Could they offer better service through more skilled labour, access to a broader work panel, access to offshore employment roles, for example? If the answer was 'yes', we had a Win-Win situation on our hands.

A second common mistake that businesses make when it comes to Outsourcing is believing that there can be a complete divorcing of the outsourced function from the very outset. I was approached, for example, by a leading national transport provider

"As Finance Director of the business, Pamela was responsible for setting up the financial control systems with over €300m of annual capital expenditure, and establishing the financial systems for eircom Networks and Wholesale business, following floatation in 1999.

During that period of major transformation of the business, Pamela distinguished herself in her grasp of the strategic issues and her ability to work with colleagues across a range of disciplines. She proved highly effective in both establishing the controls and disciplines necessary in a public company, and maintaining a positive and productive working environment.

Her grasp of the key issues and her unique ability to communicate to senior management, made her one of the most valued and respected members on our team"

Martin Keating
Finance Director
eircom Ireland

*"Outsourcing has to be
a Win-Win situation"*

who wanted to outsource a part of their business. I was amazed to find out that they hadn't even defined the service they were looking to outsource, or thought about how to achieve a seamless integration to their new provider.

Not alone does this misinterpret the essence of the partnership at the heart of Outsourcing, but it could also leave your business completely exposed to serious service lapses in the initial stages.

Outsourcing is a highly efficient business tool for many corporations – but it isn't a magic bullet. You can't just wave goodbye to a mission-critical function at the drop of a hat.

It requires enormous attention to detail if it is to be seamlessly integrated into your business. And while the outsourced function will demand less of your time over future years, it's essential that you allocate sufficient manpower at the transition stage to build the foundations of a successful, long-term business relationship. If you get the working partnership right from the outset, it will require less and less vigilance on your part as the partnership evolves over time.

The third most common mistake that companies make when it comes to Outsourcing is being dazzled by the promise of offloading a potentially troublesome or inefficient business function. They are so enthused by the prospect of being free of it that they are less than forensic when it comes to examining the terms of the Outsourcing deal.

One major financial institution that I worked for was just about to sign a deal that would have guaranteed a significant financial loss. Outsourcing has to be a Win-Win situation, and if a situation develops, instead, where there are winners and losers, the relationship is doomed to failure from the start.

By re-structuring the Outsourcing contract in question, we were able to engineer a situation where both parties saw clear commercial benefits. The service commencement date, for example, had been set at a date when the Outsourcer just wouldn't have been ready to make a full transition.

The bottom line was that they'd have been paying for a service which they weren't ready to utilize. And while it sounds painfully obvious, these are the nitty-gritty elements of an Outsourcing contract that can make the difference between success and failure.

Make sure you don't repeat them. From personal observation of companies who've got it wrong, I assure you it can prove very, very expensive.

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"top of the list for any winning strategy is knowing what your customers really value"

2. The key building blocks of successful corporate strategies

It has always surprised me, while helping companies to develop winning corporate strategies, how little thought goes into what is probably the single most important determinant of ultimate success.

And top of the list for any winning strategy is knowing what your customers really value – the elements of your product or service that are not just ‘nice to have’, but are the killer sales points. And once you’ve landed on it – usually through the blindingly obvious tactic of talking to your customers – you need to focus on it relentlessly.

If, for example, your customers want to enjoy excellent customer service and support ahead of technological superiority, then you need to get there – and fast. If you look at O2 as a case in point, their customer service has developed beyond recognition in the past few years, as more complex mobile comms offerings bring with them a need for better customer service.

When trying to find out what your customers really want, the information is usually fairly readily available to your organization – but you need to allow it to be channeled effectively. By this I mean that your sales team are probably full of anecdotal evidence of what’s happening on the ground – but have you a forum in place for listening to this evidence and integrating it into your strategy?

You also need to be very aware of what your competitors have defined as the key product or service differentiator. You may choose to ignore this information if you believe your competitors are getting it wrong – but make sure you understand it before you discard it.

If an airline wants to get closer to its first class travelers, for example, it’s critical to know whether your customers place a higher value on the fact that you help them combat Deep Vein Thrombosis or an occasional reward of a day in a health spa. The information comes first – the strategy second.

"Pam is a hugely capable and very results-focused individual and is a true expert in her area."

"I have worked with Pam on a number of occasions and have found her knowledge, experience and commitment to be second to none."

"I would recommend Pam without hesitation to any prospective client or employer."

Ray Murphy
Strategic Computing

*"The information comes first "
– the strategy second."*

Agility and nimbleness are other factors which influence your corporate strategy. By definition, larger organizations are less geared to reacting quickly. This is neither a good nor a bad thing – but it needs to be acknowledged from the outset.

In the mobile market, for example, Meteor offered free roaming to its customers. But knowing that many of these were younger – and not likely to travel extensively on business – the cost was relatively little. If 02 or Vodafone were to follow suit, with their more mature customer base, the cost could be crippling.

That doesn't mean that you can't react to changing market conditions – but you need to recognize the fact that it takes you longer to react. The secret, therefore, is to start sooner. Because an ocean liner takes forever to come to a halt, the captain needs to start the slowing down process much earlier than a speedboat, for example.

So when it comes to reacting to new technologies, new competitors, a new economic environment or a new regulatory environment, the secret is in spotting things early. If you can start to react at the earliest possible moment, you can counteract some of your organisation's lack of natural agility.

A good example of this is 02's alliance with the iPhone in recent years. They shrewdly saw it as representing the pinnacle of technological sophistication, and pinned their colours to the Apple mast from early on. And even though their exclusivity agreement with Apple lasted for only two years, the general consumer continues to link 02 and the iPhone, making sure that the company can win the lion's share of this lucrative business.

So by making a key strategic decision early enough – and with genuinely long-term implications – 02 neatly neutralised competitors which were more naturally agile – but hadn't spotted the opportunity early enough.

A final thought on the development of successful strategies is that they must be challenged in a regular basis to see if they are achieving the expected results.

Winning market share can be a simple enough trick – if you throw enough money at it. But boosting market share at the expense of profitability is a recipe for disaster, so all key strategic decisions need to be reviewed at least quarterly to make sure they're fit for purpose.

They should be seen as guiding principles rather than straitjackets, with the flexibility in place to abort or amend in response to emerging information on profitability. Don't be slow to admit a short-term failure – it's a lot less painful and costly than a long-term one!



*"cost control can't exist
in a vacuum"*

3. Keeping a lid on cost and cash flow management

In recent times, access to a seemingly inexhaustible supply of cash-rich customers has meant that many organizations become slightly blasé about traditional virtues such as cost management and cash flow management.

The new economic reality, however, means that it's simply never been more important to keep the lid on cost and protect your vital cash flow – the lifeblood of your business.

A useful starting point is to get a firm understanding of the key activities that drive costs in your business. If your company has a major sponsorship in place, for example, where does this cost fit into the puzzle?

Is it a cost of customer acquisition – such as Etihad's involvement with the All-Ireland hurling championships – or is it a cost of customer retention, such as 02's sponsorship of the former Point Theatre, now The 02.

It's also important to stress that cost control can't exist in a vacuum – it can only work when it's related to comparable costs for your competitor set. If you've reduced your costs by 20% in the last three years, for example, this is meaningless if you're still running at 20% above the industry norm.

Benchmarking is critical. You need to constantly benchmark the cost of key activities against the competition, and also against the top quartile of businesses in comparable sectors. Benchmarking is not a one-off exercise – it's a way of life. You need to constantly assess how you're performing, not treat it as an annual or even less frequent exercise.

I am constantly surprised, too, by certain companies' lack of knowledge on the profitability of key product or service offerings. You need to know not just what the overall profitability figure is, but how much individual products and services are contributing to this total.

Many industries in modern times – including the pharmaceutical sector – have become totally focused on market share at the expense of profitability. This frequently results in a race to the bottom in terms of price – and also in terms of profitability.

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*"identify who your
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and cut them adrift"*

The sole arbiter of success is profitability, and if that means cherry-picking niche sectors of the market – at the expense of volume – then so be it.

Before engaging on a major cost-cutting programme, the most important thing to be aware of is how it will affect the product or service you offer to your customers.

Most cuts will have an impact – some are customer-facing, some are not. If you halve the staff in your Call Centre, for example, your customers will spot it. If you change other work practices, however, they may not.

Cost-cutting is like pruning a rose bush. It normally results in a healthier plant and more roses, but if you over-prune, you can kill growth completely. So be aware of the implications of every cut that you propose making, and don't get carried away by the seemingly magic transformation to your bottom line of endless cuts.


You should be similarly careful when it comes to managing your cash flow. In times of need, you need to know what suppliers you can lean on not just for reduced costs – but also for increased efficiencies.

Cheaper isn't always best. The optimum solution is one that reduces net costs – in other words, it takes into account all of the implications of your cost-cutting exercise.

If cost-cutting is being achieved through outsourcing contracts, you need to be confident of two things. Firstly, that the move supports your growth strategies, and secondly, that any savings it offers are front-loaded. It's critical that such a major decision will have a short-term impact on your costs.

A final observation on cost-cutting is that one of the simplest and most direct ways to make savings is to identify who your costliest customer are – and cut them adrift.

It's counter-intuitive to so many companies to willingly cede market share to rivals, but it's one of the smartest decisions you'll ever make. If a customer is unprofitable today, he's highly unlikely to be profitable tomorrow, so why keep him?



"make sure that all team members are aligned in their expectations of an outcome"

4. When it comes to successful contract negotiation, the devil is in the detail

For many companies, contract negotiation may involve a team – so it's important to make sure that all team members are aligned in their expectations of an outcome.

For each of the major service or cost elements listed in a contract, you need to agree, in advance, the following three parameters:

1. Most Desirable Outcome (MDO)
2. Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)
3. Least Acceptable Agreement (LAA) - this should be your walk away position

As to what components of a contract you should apply these parameters to, consider the following for starters:

- Transition Acceptance and Migration obligations of both parties prior to Service commencement.
- Your Minimum Commitment which is the minimum amount you will commit to pay for regardless of volumes required over the deal term. This is a critical consideration as you do not want to end up paying for services in the future that you do not need.
- Termination clause to include termination of the contract for material breach in service, insolvency events, persistent failure etc.

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"Clearly outline the services to be delivered as part of the agreement."

- Non-exclusivity of service clause, meaning the relationship between the parties is not exclusive. It's essential that the purchaser of the service is free to engage a third party or parties at any time to provide similar or identical services.
- Service Levels. In this case, the supplier agrees to provide the services at agreed service levels and pay service credits in the event it does not meet this (you can't complain that your staff are left idle because of a 48-hour service response if that's what you've signed up for).
- Transfer of employees and the obligations of the parties under the TUPE regulations (European regulations which provide, among other things, that the employees belonging to a business which is being transferred must transfer with their existing terms and conditions of employment).
- Termination assistance.
- Services schedule. Clearly outline the services to be delivered as part of the agreement. If not correctly specified in the contract, you could end up paying for some of your business as usual (BAU) services as an expensive add-on to the service charge. The supplier can state they assumed they were not clearly defined in the contract.
- Step in rights (whereby certain levels of unacceptable performance can trigger a replacement outsourced company – at the expense of the original one).
- Benchmarking. Include a benchmarking clause in the contract. Use a recognized benchmarking company, and benchmarking against comparable suppliers. And make sure to stipulate if benchmarking can be downwards only – it could cost you otherwise.
- Warranties.
- Limitation of liability, to include breach of confidentiality by supplier, loss or damage to physical property. It should also include persistent breaches of service levels.
- Management performance and governance.
- Payment terms. If you're not terribly concerned about the payment terms, use them nevertheless as a negotiating tool to get something you are concerned about.

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"If you're not terribly concerned about the payment terms, use them nevertheless as a negotiating tool"

At various times, all successful businesses will enter into large, mission-critical contracts which will involve some or all of the elements listed above. These may be with suppliers, with customers, or with Outsourcing partners. But they all have one thing in common – their ability to directly affect the success of your business for the entire contract period. My work with leading Irish and multinational companies has involved reviewing major contracts and re-negotiating, where applicable. In the vast majority of cases, re-negotiating has very definitely been on the agenda.

Successful contracts start with defining the precise service that you want to buy in – or offer to your customers – and then forensically setting out all the elements that make up that service. It's only when you have done this that you're in a position to develop a formal tender document.

If buying in, the key is to identify all service components required, avoiding costly add-ons. If selling to customers, the critical element is in identifying precisely how much it costs to deliver the service. Both sound blindingly obvious and blindingly simple, but this couldn't be further from the truth.

If you look at the energy market, for example, ESB is now in a position to set its own price for electricity and gas. At the same time, this is both a fantastic opportunity and a major minefield. Without being able to correctly baseline the in-house cost of providing a service, the danger lies in setting a pricing policy that delivers customers at the expense of profit.

Also, you need to be aware of the core components of any contract other than price and savings potential. What degree of competitive advantage will you enjoy by dealing with a specified supplier – and what degree of risk will you have to endure if you want to guarantee lower prices?

The most expensive part of any contract is inevitably the thorny problem of add-ons. This is particularly prevalent in the construction industry, at present, where contractors are securing major State projects are close to or below cost, but then recouping margin with add-ons that weren't specified in the contract. The old maxim still applies – if a price looks too good to be true, it probably is too good to be true.

And inevitably, once a supplier has started to provide a product or service, they have the upper hand when it comes to negotiating the price of add-ons. You've already put them in place - it will be too costly or take too long to replace them, so you're forced into paying the asking rate for service elements that you failed to foresee at the outset.

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"The most expensive part of any contract is inevitably the "thorny problem of add-ons"

One of the most effective ways of minimizing this threat is by setting key timelines and milestones for the successful project delivery. This takes the power back into your own hands, letting you define the parameters of success, and having a regular review process in place to ensure that both supplier and customer are aligned in their expectations of the contract outcome.

Knowing the critical factors of the project is also vitally important. In other words, have you a sound grasp of the contract elements that potentially leave you exposed? It's also essential that you've correctly defined the resource skill-set to deliver the project, whether this relates to service, technology, or previous experience of a similar contract.

Make sure, too, that any successful contract has specifically taken into the account the notion of 'fit'. Will a new supplier neatly dovetail with your technologies, your reporting structures, your staff culture and your marketing strategy? It's an intangible that's hard to pinpoint in the creation of a contract, but you need to be conscious that these factors are in play and select your suppliers accordingly.

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*"Really big visions involve
the bravery to think
way, way outside the box."*

5. Developing a strong corporate vision

More than ever before, successful leadership requires a strong vision for where the company is going. And I'm not referring to those rather bland Mission Statements that talk of world domination or providing the best service in the history of the world.

I'm referring to a vision of where you want to be in three to five years time – regardless of how well or how poorly things may be going right now.

Really big visions involve the bravery to think way, way outside the box. Look at O2's emergence into financial services through the O2 Card, for example. Think of how big and bold a decision it was to diverge so completely from traditional comms products.

One of the advantages that a company like O2 has in determining a vision for tomorrow is that it has sister companies all around the world who have already identified the 'next big thing'. In your own case, it may be more difficult to second-guess what the future holds, but if you fail to have a future vision, there can only be one outcome – stagnation.

And yes, I accept that it's very difficult to develop your vision when you're in the trenches every day. But if you don't make the time to get out of your daily grind, you're committing yourself to mere survival at the expense of real, long-term success.

It's particularly important to have a vision when you're at the mercy of forces outside of your control – like deregulation, for example. If you look at how ESB and Bord Gais are affected by the fact that pretty much their entire customer base is struggling in some shape or form, what could they have done about this in advance?

One answer is credit control. If this is lax in either organization, then the implications of customer hardship will be so much greater for the company. By having a vision which included stringent and aggressive credit control, either organization could have largely future-proofed themselves against the worst impact of an economic downturn.

One of the most critical aspects of any corporate vision is that it must be so simple as to allow your organization live up to it each and every day. If you take the Ryanair promise of being the low fares airline, for example, it's beyond argument that they walk the walk. And whatever your views on hoary old chestnuts like charging to go to the loo on a Ryanair plane, they simply cement the airline's vision every time the media pick up on it.

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"it's not about doing something extraordinary - but about doing the ordinary things extraordinarily well"

Frequently, it's not about doing something extraordinary – but about doing the ordinary things extraordinarily well. Historically in Ireland, for example, Superquinn was a byword for exceptional customer service. Their higher pricing was seen as worth it by their legions of fans simply because they did the little things brilliantly well, whether it was a 16-year-old part-timer who smiled at you rather than sulking, or a complimentary umbrella escort to your car on rainy days.

No rocket science, but a really strong vision of what the customer wanted - and how Superquinn could be the provider of choice in response to those wants.

Exceptional corporate vision is often a collaborative effort, but it needs to come – at least in part – from the core beliefs and values of the guy at the top. You can't fake your vision. You either believe that this is how your company should behave or you don't.

If it's not sincere, you'll be found out in double quick time, but if it's a promise of low fare travel or exceptional retail service – and you really mean it – it can be your passport to long-term customer loyalty, no matter what else is happening in the market.

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"She doesn't just present the problems; she provides a clear path to solving it."

About Pamela Harrison

Pamela Harrison is a leading financial consultant who has advised the boards and CEO's of some of Ireland's largest firms, including Telefonica O2 Ireland, Irish Continental Group, Hewlett Packard and eircom among others.

A highly recognised and respected face in the business world, she has worked on a multitude of key strategic projects, including their implementation and seamless execution.

Pamela's astute business acumen has seen her negotiate contracts to the value of €600 million, co-ordinate staff of up to 350 and achieve significant savings of €150 million.

Organisations look to Pamela for advice during times of major change as they value her unique intuitive skills and ability to identify the crucial business issues facing a client and then clearly advise the business on the corrective action.

She doesn't just present the problems; she provides a clear path to solving it. Pamela's key focus is in the area of strategic projects - particularly in the areas of restructuring, cost control, outsourcing, negotiation of outsourcing agreements, and vendor management.

She also provides leadership in project implementation and execution. Her clients have described her as results-focused and driven to succeed. She is a qualified accountant, a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and an associate member of the Institute of Management Consultants.

Pamela's intuitive skills and unique ability to work across all levels of an organisation set her apart from other financial consultants in her field.

"Pam worked with me on an IT cost review and outsourcing feasibility study in 2009. Without Pam's assistance, I would not have been able to get to the real cost of IT to the business, or to identify and prioritise specific areas of greatest cost saving potential."

Pam was instrumental in mapping out strategic options on the basis of these findings, and was a compelling advocate in presenting them to the board. Pam was a pleasure to work with, delivered great value to the business, and I would strongly recommend her work."

Seamus McCarville
Head of IT
Irish Continental Group P.L.C.



*"manage and sustain
your company's growth"*

Our Services

Strategically Realign Your Business

Are you looking to strategically realign your business? Would you like to both manage and sustain your company's growth? If so you will need the help of an expert to carry out the following review:

- To identify what works well in your business.
- To identify potential growth areas in revenue from new and existing customers.
- To evaluate where your business can be more efficient, and to reduce costs by eliminating those inefficiencies.
- To complete a review of your strategic competitors, to identify threats to your current revenue base and to identify potential gaps in the market offerings.
- To design a future technology roadmap for capital intensive organisations and to establish the business's ability to fund these changes.
- To consider your people's suitability and skill-set to determine the 'right fit' for the organisation to drive the business forward in the future.
- We work closely with clients to improve business performance, drive shareholder value and create a competitive, sustainable advantage.

We have worked on strategic, high-level programmes in the past, and continue to work with organisations of all sizes and sectors. We have helped our clients increase revenue by 10%, drive major business change to achieve cost reductions of 30% or up to €150 million.

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*"identify the necessary steps to
drive your business forward"*

Identify Key Issues Facing Your Organisation

Are you finding it difficult to identify key projects to move your business forward? Do you need another, expert point of view which will help you to pinpoint those projects to deliver the best return for your business?

We will work with you to:

- Identify the key business issues.
- Identify corrective action to address issues and risks, and to implement the required change through project implementation.
- Complete a high-level review or feasibility study to determine potential benefits of executing projects, including identifying high-level business benefits.
- Develop and build a plan to ensure smooth execution of the project.

We will work with you to identify the necessary steps to drive your business forward. We have worked with both private and public sector clients to carry out important feasibility studies and to design plans to ensure that all issues are anticipated and executed as effectively and as efficiently as possible.

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"we help you to deliver 'real' business benefits for your business within tight timelines"

Expert Assistance to Implement Key Projects & Deliver Effective Solutions

Does your business lack the expertise to drive the execution and implementation of key projects? Do you need effective solutions delivered within a set time period?

To successfully implement a project the following essential steps need to be completed:

- Development of a clear understanding of the scope of the project and the key deliverables.
- Determination of the financial benefits of the project.
- Identification of the necessary resource skill-set to deliver the project, including identifying the key stakeholders, such as the project sponsor, who will be involved in the entire process.
- Identification of the critical success factors of the project.
- Agreement of timelines and milestones for the project delivery.
- Ensuring that project governance is in place, including communication and reporting to senior management and stakeholders on project progress.

Using our expertise we help you to deliver 'real' business benefits for your business within tight timelines. We will not only identify the issues but will solve them, implementing required changes through project implementation.

We have worked with numerous clients to both determine the benefits of identified projects and to ensure that the right systems were in place to ensure success.

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"Negotiating and implementing outsourcing agreements is a complex area"

Successfully Outsourcing & Negotiating Projects

Are you considering outsourcing elements of your business, be they strategic (network and IT costs) or non-strategic (accounts payable functions)? If so, you will need to carry out the following:

- Determine a baseline for the in-house cost of delivering the service that is being considered for outsourcing.
- Identify opportunities for immediate cost reduction through a detailed third party contract review and overall review of in-scope staff.
- Conduct a feasibility study on the potential benefits from outsourcing.
- Manage requests for tenders from relevant managed service partners.
- Carry out a subsequent evaluation of vendor offering and determine the 'best fit' business partner.
- Complete the due diligence process with the preferred supplier and the subsequent negotiation of commercial terms of the contract.
- Complete the transition of service to the new outsourced partner including the transfer of in-scope staff under the relevant T.U.P.E. (Transfer of Undertakings [Protection of Employment]) legislation.

Negotiating and implementing outsourcing agreements is a complex area, entailing the management of diverse interests, both within and outside the organisation.

If you are outsourcing, we can support you across all phases of the Outsourcing Project Lifecycle - from completing the feasibility study through to the negotiation preparation and execution phase.

We are experts at outsourcing, having managed a significant IT contract in excess of €650m for a major outsource provider. We also negotiated contracts of over €500m for Telefonica O2, including the transfer of up to 300 staff to the outsource provider.

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