



## Deccan Herald - DH Economy & Business

**MANAGING IT INFRASTRUCTURE**

### *Adopting RIMS: Model for India*

By SHARAD HEDA

**T**here is no business today that does not use IT systems. The moment you set up a business, the first thing you look at is a computer network for your team to create and share knowledge, Internet connectivity, email for messaging, storage for research, product, sales, marketing and HR data and so on.

The good part is that you can get practically anything out of a box and set it up with minimal assistance from your vendor.

The real challenges begin to crop up when your systems begin to fail or you need to scale up your system to meeting the growing demands of your business. The truth is that you don't get service and scaling in a box! So what do you do, without having

text, it has become very important for organisations to examine the competitive advantages offered by RIMS.

#### Independent view

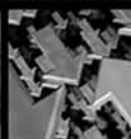
One of the issues that organisations face when confronted with their competition adopting RIMS is fairly simple - what drove the decision and what was the model adopted?

So, instead of waiting for your competition to adopt best practices in IT Infrastructure management, I'd suggest you take an independent view of what applies to your business.

IT Best Practice says that you should do the following four things as your infrastructure grows, especially when it grows across geographic locations:

- Centralise what you can





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to hire, motivate, maintain and retain an IT team? One of the hottest answers to the problem is opting for Remote Infrastructure Management Services (RIMS) through an outsourced partner.

RIMS takes the headache of managing your IT infrastructure away. Suddenly you find that your systems are being managed better - you have higher consistency in their performance because of the sophisticated tools the RIMS vendor uses, higher reliability as the service is SLA-based and best of all, you have lowered people risk in the IT department.

### Booming trend

RIMS is a global trend. A report from McKinsey on the RIMS space called "The next growth opportunity for the Indian IT services industry" says the global RIMS industry has grown at more than 80 per cent CAGR, from \$2 billion in 2006 to \$6 b in 2007 to \$7 b in 2008. India, with its growing expertise in the area, is poised to capture \$13 b to \$15 b of the global opportunity by 2012.

According to McKinsey, a survey undertaken of over 140 CIOs indicated 10 per cent of CIOs had offshored parts of infrastructure in 2006 and the number had increased to 27 per cent by 2007.

The question we need to ask is: does RIMS work only for global companies or does it also work for companies in India, given that an Indian company cannot leverage the cost benefit and labour arbitrage?

### Many benefits

The short answer: labour arbitrage is not the only advantage of adopting RIMS. And the bigger question is not whether to opt for RIMS or not, but how much of RIMS to opt for.

You can begin by outsourcing a small portion of your infrastructure - say the network or the help desk - and gradually increase the amount you outsource as you become familiar with your outsourced partner as well as understand your needs better. In the Indian con-

■ Standardise what you can

■ Automate what you can

■ Create processes for every area you can

Using a RIMS vendor you can achieve all of the above - and best of all, you won't have to go hunting for the IT talent required to manage your systems.

Let's take the example of a bank that is adding branches across the country. At most, the bank would have 30 to 40 people at the branch working 15 hours a day. This would need two onsite IT specialists to manage each such branch.

But they would be occupied for only a couple of days each week, would finally get bored of their jobs, see no growth and leave. The bank would like to avoid the sub-optimal use of manpower - and can outsource the management of its infrastructure to a RIMS vendor, and also save costs in turn as you do not need two people for the job.

Suddenly, it doesn't matter how many branches the bank sets up - the infrastructure for all of them is managed from one location, remotely, using identical processes with a guarantee that IT expertise will always be available.

Additionally, the provider brings cutting-edge tool sets to monitor systems and give you world class service by relying on automation and processes that have already been hardened by the provider.

Today, providers have gained considerable expertise and knowledge in the space through their global experience. As an Indian company, you can take advantage of their expertise.

My suggestion to you - if you have more than 200 people in your company - is to speak to a RIMS provider and see how you can drop your cost of operations and improve the reliability of your IT infrastructure to gain a competitive edge.

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