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How do we create an
Effective IT Service
Management Strategy?

BUPA
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Junichi Ishikawa,
CEO

SIG GLOBAL

THE ICT POWERHOUSE

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SIG GLOBAL

THE ICT POWERHOUSE

It's here. It's real. And, it's both challenging and stressful. The "war for talent" has been raging for years and the major crisis has finally set in, looming over organizations and economies across the globe. The story of Japan's IT sector is no different. As this talent shortage hits the country hard, companies focus on shoring up their dwindling pool of high-end IT workers with the skills necessary for the management of their IT. In doing so, companies are in a pickle wherein they either scramble to lure top talent with lucrative pay packages or recruit workers from overseas. Core objectives of such businesses take a back seat to the relentless pursuit of hiring the highly-skilled IT professionals. One might wonder what's wrong with that pursuit?

Nothing. That's the paradox.

Set against this backdrop, SIG Global is changing this narrative for large-scale enterprises, in the restaurant and retail industries. The company is turning the tide for enterprises with multiple bases and stores operating in an environment where the dynamics for talent acquisition regularly changes.

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WE BELIEVE
THAT THE
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THE SIG GROUP
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PERSONNEL



Junichi Ishikawa,
CEO

SIG Global provides a set of IT resources required for businesses in the restaurant and retail industry in ASEAN countries. SIG Global through its subsidiaries, GulfNet Co., Ltd., GulfNet Singapore Pte. Ltd., GulfNet (Thailand) Co., Ltd. (collectively called as The SIG Group) has developed a set of IT resources labeled as Business Based Platform (BBP) to alleviate asset burden for ITSM and the onerous task of hiring and training IT staff. Each company of The SIG Group conducts the operation and management of BBP—an ICT platform that allows ICT activities and management of multiple stores from a single operation.

that the strategies of The SIG Group are effective against the problem of low-skilled personnel,” Ishikawa adds.

Apart from empowering clients with its ICT powerhouse, The SIG Group also offers a wide range of services for networks, data center, information applications, 24/365 service desk and more. Attendance management with shift scheduling, biometric authentication, sales management with advanced BI analytics, stock management with EDI, and instruction management with auto-summary of stores’ replies further beef up the services portfolio. In light of its comprehensive services portfolio, it

services forming the underlying fabric of BBP can be classified into five layers. The first layer constitutes the statistical outsourcing services that help to analyze customers’ problems based on industry data such as POS data and resolves issues. The consulting services in this layer focus on the customer’s needs and solve management issues. The new business support layer involves a service desk that supports business operation round the clock. It also includes educational services for store clerks, asset management service for managing customers’ IT assets, and equipment installation service from network arrangement to equipment setup for new stores. CAPS service in this layer enables cash collection at the stores periodically and deposits money to the customer’s account based on the deposit data in the cash machine. That’s not all; the support layer also provides store fixtures and other logistics agency services along with reservation acceptance agency service.

BBP’s real-time architecture layer empowers clients with the enterprise SNS GulfTMT that enables everyone to report, communicate, and consult within the company in real time. The push tool GroupCast in this layer can instruct all stores directly from the headquarter, in real time, to automatically summarize the report of the results, and share them. The real-time groupware comprises mail, calendar, network storage, word processor, spreadsheet, presentations, video conference, and more.

Next in line is BBP’s new business platform layer, designed especially for chain store management and associated business activities. This module’s AI-driven sales management system analyzes sales, leveraging data from POS and predicts future sales. The firm’s time management system manages employees’ shift-related tasks based on the forecast of sales and records actual working hours with biometrics such as face authentication. Consolidation of product planning and



“Our customers cannot secure employees who have the skills necessary for their IT management. In some cases, professionals with low skills in IT as well as store management are employed at a high salary level,” reveals Junichi Ishikawa, CEO, SIG Global. In order to solve this problem, The SIG Group’s BBP eliminates the need to secure a large number of IT engineers and strengthens store management with a focus on three areas: AI to support judgments, mobile applications to facilitate operations, and IoT to support activities. “We believe

stands to reason that renowned retailers and restaurants in the ASEAN region rely on SIG Global and its subsidiaries to support management strategies, increase their sales and profits, and reduce their losses and costs.

IT FROM A COST CENTER TO A VALUE CENTER

Instead of purchasing IT resources immediately, owning it as an asset, and instantly destroying it, BBP offers a set of necessary IT resources for customers based on a pay-per-use subscription model. These unlimited

inventory and calculation of optimum purchase quantity is carried out with BBP's stock management system. This layer also comprises a "robotics board" that presents an overview of the store and urges sales clerks to act—as and when needed—by comprehending the current store situation. Besides, an employees' point system improves welfare benefits and motivation. These operations can be quickly performed through BBP's mobile applications. For large chain stores, the new business platform layer draws in GulfNet Chainstore Management System (GulfCSM), a business software package to help users with AI prediction function.

Lastly, the infrastructure platform layer encompasses cloud infrastructure operated on the internet data center and secure business network infrastructure for connecting stores and headquarters, and communication devices such as proprietary routers that can control IoT devices.



EMPLOYEES CAN FOCUS ON SALES PROMOTION ACTIVITIES, WHICH IS THE ORIGINAL OBJECTIVE OF THE BUSINESS, WITHOUT BEING BOTHERED BY EXTRA WORK SUCH AS ACQUIRING IT OPERATION AND TROUBLESHOOTING SKILLS AT CUSTOMERS' STORES

MORE THAN JUST A SOFTWARE SERVICE

The uniqueness of BBP stems from not only its software services, but also its network, third-party hardware and software, logistics, finance, and support services. Whether it is a store management system, a third-party POS, a network, or a fax machine, The SIG Group's exhaustive hardware services cover all aspects.

Ishikawa goes on to mention, "There are important reasons for bringing software services as well as a set of IT resources, network or other infrastructure services under one umbrella." First, a software can be cumbersome for the ITSM teams to manage and maintain, which demands the additional responsibility of selecting networks, hardware, and other infrastructure individually, and operating them in combination. The SIG Group aims to take over this burden from customers. Secondly, the surrounding infrastructure along with the software provides a stable, high-quality IT environment optimized in its entirety to customers. Third, these services collectively charge a usage fee bringing a significant reduction in the overall costs of IT management.

As a result of shouldering the administrative burden, The SIG Group advocates investing in areas such as the development of new products leading to profit growth in a client's core business and marketing. "Employees can focus on important business objectives and sales

promotion activities, without being bothered by extra work such as acquiring IT operation and troubleshooting skills at customers' stores," says Ishikawa.

TESTIMONY OF EXCELLENCE

SIG Global is competing with large competitors like IBM that can offer a set of IT-related services to customers. As Ishikawa puts it, "Such large vendors can undoubtedly provide a complete set of services. However, since each department that provides services is divided, it takes time to coordinate and meet the customer's request fully. This is what SIG Global intends to change."

Even after 25 years of its formation, the company takes pride in maintaining its status of a startup. While the innovation and focus of startups are highly sought-after by large enterprises, SIG Global, as a startup, holds a sweet spot to take prompt and flexible actions, deliver quick response to customers' requests, and allow rapid adoption of new technology, and development of new services. Besides, with SIG Global's services, clients can always use the latest technology and optimize for each customer. In essence, these attributes are precisely what makes SIG Global different from its competitors.

The company has worked 'in the trenches' with customers to accumulate rich experience and industry know-how. This proficiency can be best illustrated through SIG Global's collaboration with Pepper Food Service Co., Ltd.—a Japan-based restaurant-chain. GulfNet's secure enterprise network, the communication and collaboration tool, the chain store management system, 24/7 service desk have proved immensely beneficial to Pepper Food Service's 500 stores in Japan. "With SIG Global's one-stop services, Pepper Food Service realized a decrease in the IT cost. Also, now there is no necessity to maintain IT systems by Pepper Food Service's human resources. All of the human resources in Pepper Food Service can focus on their main business," he adds.

CARVING A SUCCESSFUL ROUTE

For the future, The SIG Group is focused on fortifying its services with AI support function, mobile application UX, and IoT control functions. Ishikawa reveals, "Currently, we are considering adding settlement services to our service lineup. There are multiple projects; for example, we plan to expand the function of the product catalog application service that places and receives orders between wholesalers and their business partners in Thailand. A payment platform based on blockchain technology is also in the pipeline."

Continuing its rapid growth and success, The SIG Group's BBP for ASEAN countries will be further explained at the GulfNet Singapore exhibition booth at Seamless Asia 2019 to be held at the Suntec Singapore Convention Center on June 26th and 27th. **ACO**

CIO Outlook

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Top 10 ITSM Consulting/Services Companies - 2019

With digital transformation gathering pace in the business world, ITSM leaders recognize a growing need for superior service delivery and customer support. As the line between business and technology blurs, IT service management has to come of age to interact with the complex IT environment that can span multiple clouds in different geographies. Today, there is a greater demand for the automation-driven orchestration of process execution as well as monitoring, and troubleshooting of the network and IT issues.

The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) and service automation has made life easier for IT service professionals by providing them assistance with various tasks. However, these professionals have to be acquainted with cutting edge analytics and AI. SMBs investing in cloud technologies need tools to migrate

their IT infrastructure to cloud seamlessly. In such a scenario, access to quality and holistic data about the infrastructure can help IT service teams in their decision making. The real-time insights delivered through AI-based tools can streamline change management, allowing companies to remain agile and competitive. As more organizations adopt subscription-based technologies to manage their operations, the IT service providers require nimble technologies that help them meet the evolving demands of modern businesses.

To help CIOs navigate through the list of ITSM service providers, our distinguished selection panel, comprising CEOs, CIOs and VCs, industry analysts and the editorial board of APAC narrowed the 10 most promising ITSM service providers that exhibit competence in facilitating modern IT experience.

We present to you APAC “10 Most Promising Top 10 ITSM Consulting/Services Companies - 2019.”



Company:

SIG Global

Key Person:

unichi Ishikawa
CEO

Description:

A management partner in ICT strategic planning and business process providing a change-oriented management support ICT platform that supports the management strategies of chain store companies

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