Overcoming the Challenges and Complexities of doing International Business
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The international business landscape

In today’s global economic landscape, business needs have evolved to rely heavily on international operational and logistical capabilities. With competition within the global market at an all time high, organisations are increasingly finding that the complexities of doing business globally waste valuable resources and expose them to multiple areas of risk. To take advantage of the opportunities that international business affords, businesses need to understand these complexities in order to maximise efficiency and maintain their competitive edge.

The challenges and complexities of doing international business

While international business expansion presents many opportunities, there are also a myriad of challenges that companies face when deciding to operate on this scale.

The importance of having an IT infrastructure that supports doing business internationally cannot be overestimated; it is a critical factor in successfully being able to conduct international business. Detailed knowledge of the target country – whether it be tax and logistics laws, import duties, currencies, language or culture – is crucial. Products themselves may also need to be adapted for certain markets. The economic and political environments of some countries can also have a tremendous impact on global operations. It is important to abide by the rules, laws and regulations of the country you wish to expand into and it is essential to be aware of the risks associated with potential expansions into emerging markets.

Economies of scale, leveraging global buying power, corporate governance, business alignment and cost containment are the most common challenges facing both IT and procurement departments within the modern international organisation. Factor in the complexities of managing local business across multiple geographies, and the rollout of any international IT initiative can seem an insurmountable task. Many multinational organisations have traditionally tried to manage numerous service providers in various regions, leading to escalating costs, delays, multiple points of accountability and poor service delivery.

To take advantage of the opportunities that international business affords, businesses need to understand these complexities in order to maximise efficiency and maintain their competitive edge.
Ease of doing business delivers sustainable outcomes

Multinational organisations have traditionally tried to manage numerous service providers in various regions, leading to escalating costs, delays, multiple points of accountability and poor service delivery. In its 2010 Magic Quadrant for Communications Outsourcing and Professional Services, Worldwide*, report, Gartner states:

“...In Gartner’s survey of vendor references, over 20% of respondents cited ‘ease of doing business’ as the single biggest weakness of their Communications Outsourcing Professional Services provider. For multinational clients (MNCs), ease of doing business takes the form of many different issues in the vendor-client relationship. Chief among these were: pricing and contract flexibility; single contracts for ordering and provisioning work orders across targeted geographies; billing in local currency; and single global support and maintenance contracts.”

As an international organisation, you need an IT partner that understands the intricacies of international business.

As a multinational client are you looking for or require:
- Flexibility and scalability
- Minimisation of capital investment in costly infrastructure
- A single point of accountability for all IT procurement and logistics needs
- Specialised IT skills
- Insight into the total cost sourcing for your IT products and services
- Improvement in staff collaboration and productivity
- Exploitation of the convergence of technology to optimise existing infrastructure
- Management of the risk inherent in cross-border shipping including customs clearance and the payment and reclamation of VATs, duties and other taxes
- Visibility and management at every step of the procurement process from quote to invoice
- An increase in efficiency and a streamlined procurement process through automation and systems integration

Our international business value proposition
- Deliver multi-vendor solutions across the globe
- Accommodate different ways in which you wish to do business in a manner that is commercially efficient to you
- Offer flexible and guaranteed SLAs and deliver with excellence consistently around the world
- Help you manage international projects or manage projects on your behalf
- Internal expertise, processes and systems

Dimension Data takes the complexity out of international expansion by delivering global solutions and services that help support your business objectives, today and tomorrow.

Key goals for international companies wanting to do **business on a global stage** is to create demand for their products and services in foreign markets, drive efficiencies through the use of low cost resources, **maximise flexibility** and control and to meet demands by operating seamlessly across geographies.

**Preferred Partner Programme**

In order for Dimension Data to optimally meet the requirements of our international clients and provide worldwide multi-vendor solutions the Preferred Partner Programme (PPP) was born. The programme enables Dimension Data to deliver multi-vendor solutions in over 140 countries on five continents. PPP is therefore aligned with Dimension Data Supply Chain Services to provide a seamless delivery of multi-vendor solutions across the globe.

**For the client, the benefits of the programme include:**

- Consistent, effective service delivery that extends across both geographies and technologies
- Global pricing, meaning multinational clients can benefit from the convenience of receiving only one quote, in one currency, if they so wish
- Central or local (in country) billing models
- A single point of contact accountability and ownership
- Global Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
Consistent and flexible solutions and services for your IT requirements

Technology must serve as a business-enabler in the drive for greater competitive advantage and growth. As a result, we have evolved our networking expertise into related areas that enable and support everyday business operations and efficiency.

We work with our clients to solve critical business issues through technology, including:

- Driving operational efficiency of IT infrastructures, regardless of location or geographical disparity.
- Creating profitable customer relationships – Improve communication channels across the world.
- Improving employee productivity – Partner ‘anywhere, anytime’ collaboration, improved information sharing and knowledge management.
- Reducing risk by securing networks, applications and data.
- Maximising the value of information assets while minimising the cost of creating, sharing and storing the information.

Our Consulting Services enable our clients to plan, architect, integrate, improve, and innovate in their IT landscape, ensuring that their IT portfolio is effective, efficient and aligned to their business requirements.

Our Professional Services support clients in the procurement, logistics, staging and installation, and project delivery of new solutions for their businesses across the world.

Our Managed Services offerings are expressly designed to align to our clients’ need for a high degree of flexibility in the way they procure IT services, and we can deliver multiple services around the globe across multiple technologies and multiple vendors.

If clients are looking to transfer complete responsibility for the management of an IT function or domain, Dimension Data offers IT Outsourced Services, which typically include the transfer of both people and assets to our organisation.

Our Managed Services offerings are expressly designed to align to our clients’ need for a high degree of flexibility in the way they procure IT services, and we can deliver multiple services around the globe across multiple technologies and multiple vendors.
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Supporting your international procurement needs

The complexities of international business are exposing many organisations to increased costs, delays, custom issues and productivity losses.

Dimension Data is fully equipped to help international organisations address the business issues they face, by providing visibility, control, efficiency and risk management – all supported via our extensive global footprint and expertise.

We deliver consistently across multiple geographies, technologies and vendors, and with our in depth understanding of international laws and taxes, we can take the headache out of international procurement and allow you to focus your attention on your mission critical business issues.

Dimension Data has internal processes that are specifically geared for international business. Furthermore, we continuously strive to improve and evolve our approach to international business by taking what we’ve learned in partnering with over 6000 clients and using it to craft better solutions for you.

IT Supply Chain Services

When it comes to acquiring and managing an IT infrastructure, both procurement and IT departments within international organisations are looking to achieve alignment with corporate best practices, a common corporate governance strategy, the ability to leverage global buying power and economies of scale.

Dimension Data’s IT Supply Chain Services provide clients with efficiency, control, risk management and visibility through each step of the IT procurement process: Quote, Procure, Source, Ship, Clear, Deliver, and Invoice, all supported via our global footprint and expertise.

We don’t just understand IT, we understand the complexities and intricacies of international procurement, and the unique laws, taxes and customs procedures involved with shipping IT equipment into countries all over the world.

We manage the entire supply chain process, regardless of how many borders and time-zones your order needs to cross. We also provide our clients with a single point of contact and accountability for all your international procurement needs.

It’s the SMART choice!

| S | Single point of contact and accountability |
| M | Monitoring and tracking |
| A | Advice, expertise and experience |
| R | Relationships – with IT vendors and carriers |
| T | Technology expertise |

Dimension Data’s team of international eProcurement, shipping and logistics experts utilises the following systems and partnerships:

- Dimension Data Direct
  - eProcurement
  - Track (shipment track and trace)
  - SMART (standard manual for applied rates and tariffs)
- Partnerships (shipping and delivery)
  - DHL
  - UTI
  - FedEx

Client success story

Global Fortune 500 Organisation turns to Dimension Data for assistance in navigating the perils of a complex multi-geography technology rollout

Faced with the challenge of a large scale IPT deployment and upgrade, this Global Fortune 500 document management company turned to Dimension Data for assistance. Leveraging the capabilities of its International Programme Office (IPO) Dimension Data rolled out the solution to 51 countries at 163 sites – all within an eight month timeframe. The client accrued cost savings amounting to approximately $400,000 per month throughout the deployment. All installations were delivered within budget and error rates were almost zero. The client not only recouped money from taxes and duties, it was also able to obtain and deploy equipment in half the time it would have, had it not engaged with Dimension Data.

“To say that the IPT phone system roll-out has been a success would be a significant understatement. The seamless nature of the implementation with zero disruption to the business was impressive to see and, as a veteran of many new technology deployments I can say with honesty that this was the best I have ever witnessed.”

Document Management Company CEO
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**Dimension Data Direct – our eProcurement portal**

Through our eProcurement portal, Dimension Data Direct, we help clients predict and optimise their transaction costs, beginning at the Quote step. Clients have real-time access to vendor catalogues with their negotiated contract pricing. They can also view information on product lead time and availability, to assist in determining if order expediting is required. We also provide information on logistics pricing as well as duty and tax advice.

Our eProcurement portal enables clients to do all of this on an international scale. Quotes can be created in up to 24 different currencies – including complex quotes requiring multiple currencies – and in multiple languages. The ability to offer electronic quoting on an international scale and through a single portal is something that none of our competitors can match.

Direct also allows you to leverage your existing eProcurement system or you can use Direct as your own eProcurement system. In other words, for the ultimate in connectivity we can integrate with your existing ERP or procurement systems, allowing for a faster, more accurate and seamless quote to invoice process.

**Client success story**

Global financial services firm utilises eProcurement to reduce its time to market

The client had invested in an eProcurement eXchange and was looking to unlock the value of investment, while reducing cost per purchase and optimising the procurement process. Dimension Data integrated the client’s Ariba eProcurement system into Dimension Data Direct. The client now receives quotes and submits POs electronically.

**The value derived from this solution:**

- Reduced quote to purchase order turnaround time from an average of two weeks to two days
- Reduced time to market and need for additional cost to expedite orders
- Reduction in cost per purchase, employee empowerment, and control: ensure adherence to national/global pricing
- Mitigation against transcription errors and RMAs
- Guarantee that PO has been received by the vendor with PO acknowledgement
- Minimised transcription cost

**Electronic quoting including predicting and optimising transaction costs on an international scale through a single portal.**

- Pre-configured multi-vendor bundles
- Full or self-services pricing and ordering
- Create quotes and orders in local language with local currencies
- Automated work-flow approval
- Optional integration into your internal procurement engine
- Integration with Cisco configurator
- Three-way match for quote, PO and invoice
- Option to receive Invoices
- On-the-fly reporting and status information

**Benefits you can achieve through Dimension Data Direct**

- Reduce quote to pay process by up to 80%
- Reduce cost per transaction by up to 70%
- Improve order accuracy and visibility
- Reduce carbon footprint by going paperless
Aligning service delivery to best practice frameworks

One of the reasons we are able to deliver consistently around the world is because we have chosen to align our service delivery to ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library Version 3). ITIL is a framework of best practice processes and is fast becoming the worldwide industry standard for IT service management.

We understand that you want to engage with service providers who are willing and able to allow a degree of flexibility into the contract and we have invested in our service offerings and capabilities to provide the utmost flexibility to our clients. We accommodate the different ways in which you wish to do business by providing you with commercially efficient options, including presenting various competitive pricing options and offering you choices around how you wish to transact.

Flexible and guaranteed SLAs

Dimension Data has the ability to offer flexible and guaranteed SLAs. Our international clients can select a SLA according to an offering, a capability or a functional level in the country in which they choose to do business. No matter where you choose to do business, at Dimension Data we put our clients at the centre of every solution we develop and give them control of their IT procurement 24x7, 365 days a year. Our flexible and customised service models are designed around our clients’ unique business ambitions.

Our clients need only call one single contact point for service – the Dimension Data Global Service Centres (GSCs). The GSCs manage all client requests and ensure consistency in the quality of service delivered to them.

Managing international projects

We understand the complexities of doing business internationally and have extensive experience and a proven track record in managing international projects. We always strive to embrace international best practice throughout our business.

Due to our experience in assessing, planning and managing international projects we are able to properly qualify deals and deliver accordingly, with excellence. In Dimension Data, Global Bid Management is defined as the focused management of complex opportunities through the sales engagement cycle to ensure that what is proposed to our clients at the start of an engagement is clearly defined, competitively and profitably priced, deliverable under the terms agreed, and risk-appropriate for ourselves, our partners and our clients.

Our International Programme Office (IPO) builds and operates international teams to address logistical, cultural, commercial, communication and governance challenges.

Our flexible and customised service models are designed around our clients’ unique business ambition.

Client success story

**Flexibility and commitment sustain our relationship with a global telecommunications service provider**

The client provides telecommunications solutions over the world’s first integrated global IP-based network, delivering services to 500 major cities in 60 countries. The company transmits approximately 1.8 billion VoIP minutes per month and boasts among the top three fastest network transmission speeds globally.

The client required a partner that could deliver support for its global networks consistently on a local, regional and global basis. Dimension Data offered a flexible support contract which accommodates changes and challenges within the client’s business.

**The value derived from this solution:**

- Consistent support for the client’s networks on a local, regional and global basis
- Variable SLAs in line with the respective commitments the client had with its end customers
- Dimension Data and the client collaborated to successfully reduce the client’s global operations costs
- Commitment and flexibility resulted in a win-win outcome during a period of instability
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Our people, processes and systems
Our people, process and systems enable us to provide an identical service experience across all geographies.

Our people
Dimension Data employs highly trained professionals, who specialise in technical service delivery and service management. Dimension Data’s people have a deep knowledge of business issues faced by clients with an international expansion agenda. Moreover, our people are skilled enough to use the IT toolbox to craft practical solutions and services to solve international business challenges.

Our processes
Our skills and expertise have made us the IT solutions and services partner of choice for companies that want to perform at a consistently high level across multiple geographies. Our processes are adapted to suit the needs of businesses that want to expand their reach without compromising on the quality of their offering. These processes are defined across the entire Dimension Data group and are deployed consistently, enabling a uniform service across our regions and countries. Our working procedures have been directly derived from our processes and include the local specificities that enable us to meet the individual requirements of our clients in each geography and culture.

Our global and international client engagement model

- Multi-vendor solutions across the globe: Our global footprint enables us to deliver multi-vendor solutions in over 140 countries on five continents
- International expertise: Our people, process and systems enable us to provide an identical service experience across all geographies
- Accommodating the different ways in which you wish to do business: We offer you a degree of flexibility and accommodate the different ways you wish to do business
- Flexible and customised service models: Putting you at the centre of every solution we develop and giving you control of your IT procurement 24x7, 365 days a year
- Consistent delivery: We align our service delivery to Information Technology Infrastructure Library Version 3 (ITIL) – a framework of best practice processes
- Integration of international programmes: Execute and support global programme management and co-ordinate regional/multinational deployments while focusing on client satisfaction
- Services Management: Global service delivery management’s core focus is to work progressively with clients to encourage greater consistency, collaboration and overall communication across the world
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