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Neighborhood America - customer touch specialists

Neighborhood America can make an in-house project from hell manageable

[Web Applications Newsletter](#) By [Mark Gibbs](#), Network World, 03/19/07

One of the biggest wastes of resources in enterprise IT is reinventing the wheel. How often has your organization needed a solution and invested hundreds of man hours and millions of dollars only to find that there's a product or service that could have done the job either better or more cost effectively or both.

Managing online customer interaction in the form of soliciting, managing, and distributing user created content, running contests and promotions, or collecting user input in the form of forums, surveys, and polls is an area where the risks are particularly great. You could easily expend a huge effort to build an in-house solution and then either miss your market window or, worse still, find that because you built it in-house the detailed requirements analysis that should precede such a project wasn't complete (or maybe even done).

Enabling and managing these kinds of customer-facing activities is definitely the province of experts which is why, when your enterprise needs such skills, outsourcing the effort to an expert third party should be the first thing you look for.

Today's company, [Neighborhood America](#), fills that role. Neighborhood America provides a customizable platform that supports a wide range of interaction features such as forums, user feedback, content uploading and downloading, and surveys along with built-in analytics that include GIS mapping.

Although the company's primary focus is on-demand online delivery they also support kiosk implementations, interactive voice response (IVR), multi-language service, and IBM's [Intelligent Forms Processing](#).

The newest component of Neighborhood America's services is [Movo](#), a set of carrier agnostic interactive mobile marketing and mobile social networking features. The service supports SMS, MMS and WAP messaging; provides tools for migrating your current content to a mobile-friendly format; is integrated with Google maps and IVR; provides real time analytics; and offers an API for client integration.

Neighborhood America has an impressive client roster that includes ABC, CBS, and [CNN](#) and their [Movo service has gained them](#) Adidas, Gillette, and Berkeley College.

Something I find interesting, is that Neighborhood America is a sort of next generation Software as a Service provider because they provide a whole range of consulting and advisory services that surround their offerings –

you might think of them as providing Service as a Service.

But more than anything else, what outsourcing service providers such as Neighborhood America offer, is the opportunity to redefine what could be an in-house project from hell as a manageable; quantifiable; outsourced solution. More and more noncore enterprise functions will go this way over the next decade which makes me wonder; will we see the rise of a new CxO position – Chief External Services Officer?

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