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Inside Outsourcing™



INTERVIEWED BY LARRY JANIS

Alan Hansen Sr. Vice President , Neo Group

Neo Group is a leading global firm focused on helping buyers, suppliers, governments and trade bodies better leverage global services and mitigate risks. Neo Group was founded in 1999 with the principle that talent in low-cost locations and outsourcing firms, leveraged appropriately, could create sustainable competitive advantage for nations and organizations. Neo Group helps organizations and locations benefit from the rise of services globalization and outsourcing around the world through outsourcing advisory, governance services, risk monitoring and location development & promotion. Through a blend of consulting and implementation, backed by a robust knowledge database, proven processes, tools, proprietary index and analytics, along with the hands-on experience of global Neo consultants, Neo Group provides objective and actionable solutions to help clients truly leverage globalization and outsourcing to enhance ROI and also mitigate risk.



LJ: *Would you please share with us your current role & responsibilities.*

AH: As Senior Vice President, I lead our solutions, sales and marketing globally. Neo Group provides Globalization Advisory, Governance Solutions, and Supplier and Location risk analytics and monitoring services. All three areas are growing and the supplier risk and analytics services are particularly critical in the market these days as clients turn their attention to meeting regulatory demands and their vendor management objectives of better managing their global operations.

We've invested heavily in an exciting and timely group of offerings. My focus is on defining strategy, working with clients to better leverage the IP, and helping our people better meet client demands.

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FROM THE EDITOR

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Inside Outsourcing's goal is to provide you with articles of interest and with a forum for the exchange of information in this rapidly evolving industry.

Inside with:

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LJ: Given you operate in a very competitive sector, how do you differentiate the firms and its services ?

AH: Neo Group's roots go back to 1999, so as one of the elder statesmen of the industry our clients definitely benefit from the experiences and IP developed, refined, and tested over a long period. Our clients also appreciate that our advisory staff are highly seasoned advisors who have not only guided clients source successfully, but often have been around to help devise governance structures that enable deals to last. They have also frequently spent time on the buy- and/or sell-side, so they understand that crafting operationally sound deals are the imperative.

At the same time, with age comes an appreciation for the maturation of the industry and the need for new approaches and tools. Several years back, the firm had the foresight to work with some of our best clients in creating the industry's first subscription-based, online utility for monitoring global supplier and location risks. That emergent tool, Global Supply Risk Monitor, now subscribed by over 100 companies, is at the heart of what we provide - clients appreciate that it helps them identify what risks and opportunities they encounter in managing their global services supply chain.

LJ: You have worked for firms such as CSC and Genpact both easily recognizable brands, is your approach for the firm different, if so how?

AH: Those are two great firms and I'm proud to have them in my heritage. Tiger and his team have done a terrific job continuing to propel Genpact in the market. CSC, by contrast, was one of the early entry firms in the field. I think while some people may view it as "old-school", it has been at the forefront of a lot of really remarkable advancements in the industry, particularly around technology.

Neo Group is obviously smaller compared to both, but I don't think our brand has been small at all. In many ways Neo has been a real shaper of the industry. What I especially love is that we are able to give our people a lot of room to grow, and we have some enormous growth still in front of us.

I wouldn't describe myself as an Apple acolyte, but I'm fond of Steve Jobs' line that "It's more fun to be a pirate, than to join the Navy." In some ways we're the nimble pirate ship, compared to those larger firms and we are able to act on opportunities to deliver great value to clients quickly

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LJ: As you go out to sell the services of the NeoGroup, who are your targets?

AH: That's a great question. One day I decided to go through my contacts from over the years and run a little test. Of slightly under a thousand or so, only a small fraction have similar titles. There really has been such a proliferation of models and approaches for managing this thing we call sourcing or globalization.

At the end of the day though, the "targets" for us remain client CIOs, CFOs, CPOs and Corporate Services leads and their direct reports, who in each case are really focused on driving their organizations long term success in globalization and lower-cost delivery models.

And for us what's pleasing is that a fair amount of time we are not "selling" anything at all. Many of clients are long time or repeat clients who reach out to us as their organizations move to the next chapter in their development, or as they individually move to new companies and want to "repeat" there pertinence they had working with us at their prior addresses.

LJ: We always like to discuss the concept of success. First, what has enabled the Neo to grow and be successful?

AH: Our people, our clients, and our founder - Atul Vashistha.

First, we have very low turnover, because again people are given a canvas and opportunity to drive their careers, and help clients be successful. Even in instances where some folks have moved on because of travel or other personal choices, these alumni have gone on to be users of Neo's services at buy-side companies, or significant leaders at sell-side companies. In either case, that is a nice testament to the firm's success and their contributions as well.

Second, our clients really have been wonderful in terms of the confidence they bestow upon us in helping them be successful. We have many that have used us for multiple services: sourcing advisory, renegotiations, governance, resource management, executing global low cost strategies, training, and now Global Supplier Risk Monitoring.

Third, our CEO Atul has been a great steward of the Neo brand and a real visionary and ambassador in the larger industry. I think a lot of folks in the industry still remember Atul squaring off with Lou Dobbs at CNN on the merits of outsourcing, and I think Atul and the case for globalization came out ahead on the judge's cards.

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LJ: Now let's turn it over to you, what has made you successful?

AH: I'm my own harshest critic, so I'm not sure I am successful yet. Some things that help are: living in New York near two airports, helping our team bring their best to our clients, always acting with integrity and being earnest with clients - even if it means telling them there is something we can't do, and having great intellectual curiosity.

I'm always interested in new ideas and how we can leverage them for our clients benefit. In fact, every single person in our company regardless of whether their role is on-stage, or backstage has a performance metric related to "customer delight." That's important. I attribute any success I may have to the teams we build and work with: globalization is not a one-man show.

Integrated Search Solutions Group

Integrated Search Solutions does more than just put people into companies. We approach every engagement with a unique focus on the successful alignment of executive talent with the client's business strategy and target markets. Partnering for the long term, we genuinely learn each client's business – operational and strategic - to produce lasting results.

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