

Build vs. Buy:

A how-to session featuring a behind-the-scenes look at how Best-in-Show winner, HCSS, decides when to outsource and when to create from within

KARA MACDONALD

Director of Marketing Operations,
HCSS



Kara MacDonald

Director of Marketing Operations,
HCSS

How HCSS Serves Their Customers

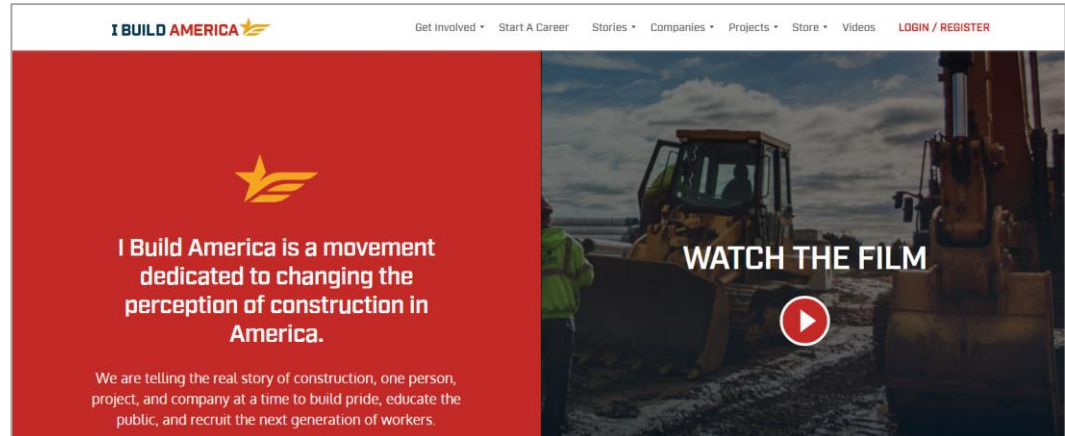
- Small (roughly 200 employees), private construction software company
- Helps construction companies streamline their operations
- 4,000 companies with 45,000 end-users in the US and Canada
- Recognized by the *Wall Street Journal* as one of the “Top Small Workplaces in America”

THE
WALL STREET
JOURNAL



"I Build America"

- A movement dedicated to changing the perception of construction in America
- A place to share stories and ideas that show the value of and pride in construction

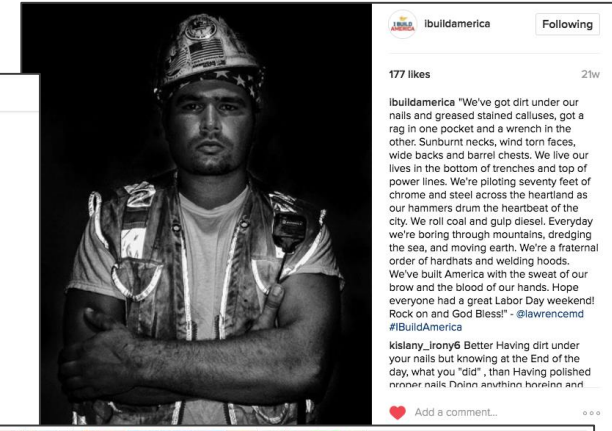
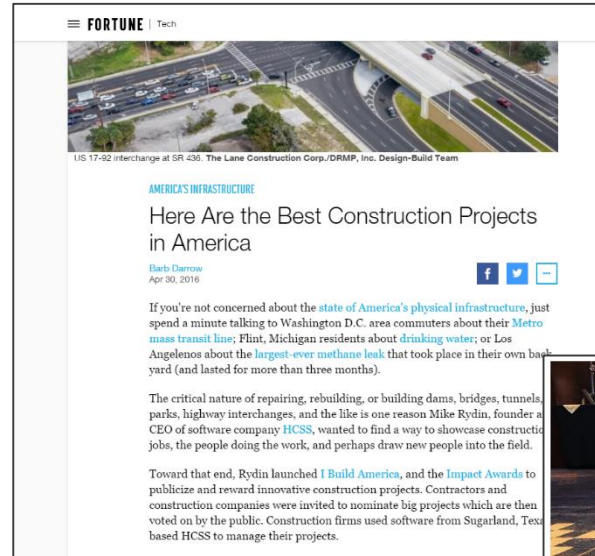


2017
MarketingSherpa Summit
Best-in-Show winner



"I Build America" Results

- 30K social network
- Industry partnerships
- \$1,000 donations from 50 founding members
- 130,000 web visitors
- State collaborations – Wyoming, Texas, California
- Built pride in employees for what we do



Challenge

- More demand on marketing resources
- Realized inefficiencies in projects that were being outsourced
- Internal team knew customer best



Determining if an In-house Creative Team is Right for Your Company



Outsource or Create from Within?

- Know what your team is good at and what you should outsource

Public Relations

- Very successful but agent retired
- Tried to do our own PR

Telematics Helps Firms Keep Track of Fleets

New tracking software cuts costs by reducing paperwork, eliminating waste and improving maintenance schedules **BY TONY ILLIA**



To better manage equipment fleets and cut costs, contractors are increasingly using telematics technology, which blends on-board instrumentation and Internet computing. The recession has forced firms to do more with less, fueling innovation to remain competitive. Telematics has become a digital-age toolbox for succeeding in today's tight economy.

Just ask Jeff Ciampa. As operations manager for Aggregate Industries' Northeast region, he processes 25,000 invoices annually from 120 vendors that transport building materials on the company's behalf. Ciampa has reduced paperwork by 70% by combining a global positioning system with payroll accounting software. Both are uniquely configured to reflect regional prevailing wage rates. The materials company first implemented a custom-tailored, hybrid system from software provider HCSS, Sugar Land, Texas, for its Sanguis, Mass.-based Northeast region in 2011.

"We generate a daily statement and send it to our vendors by e-mail. They can either accept or dispute it,"

says Ciampa. "It allows us to see our costs on a real-time basis rather than waiting six weeks to get an invoice from a driver." Telematics also allows Aggregate Industries to gauge truck travel speed, fuel consumption and work production.

But the process hasn't been without hiccups. Larger vendors quickly embraced the format and its subsequent faster payment process while some smaller firms resisted the change. "Some of these guys are telling me that it's the first time they have used e-mail," Ciampa says. "There is also a struggle matching our invoice number with their ac-

counting systems. Technically, however, the system works fine. This is definitely the way of the future."

Telematics 2.0

Equipment makers agree, and they are integrating telematics into machines at breakneck speed with features that monitor fluid levels, idle time and maintenance schedules. Telematics can give owners greater management control over the jobsite and allow them, for instance, to create an invisible, electronic boundary around equipment or a jobsite area by using GPS or radio frequency identification. Machines that stray past the electronic border trigger an alert via text message or e-mail. Some manufacturers like Volvo additionally provide a so-called "time fence" for specific hours of machine operation.

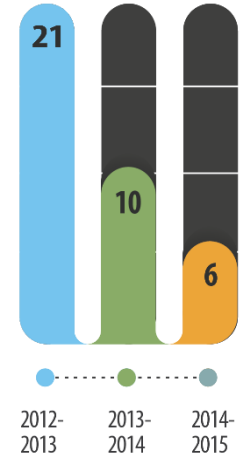
Telematics 2.0, which incorporates interconnectivity to smartphones and tablet devices, is quickly being embraced by manufacturers. Caterpillar, for example, now uses a VisionLink system that melds GPS with digital cellular technology for real-time diagnostics.

PAPER CUT
Telematics cuts paperwork and unneeded office trips, thereby reducing waste, time and boosting productivity.

70%

The amount of paperwork eliminated by Aggregate Industries through combining a global positioning system with payroll accounting.

Articles



enr.com

September 2012 • ENR Contractor Business Quarterly CBQ17

Public Relations

- Very successful but agent retired
- Tried to do our own PR

Telematics Helps Firms Keep Track of Fleets

New tracking software cuts costs by reducing paperwork, eliminating waste and improving maintenance schedules **BY TONY ILLIA**



To better manage equipment fleets and cut costs, contractors are increasingly using telematics technology, which blends on-board instrumentation and Internet computing. The recession has forced firms to do more with less, fueling innovation to remain competitive. Telematics has become a digital-age

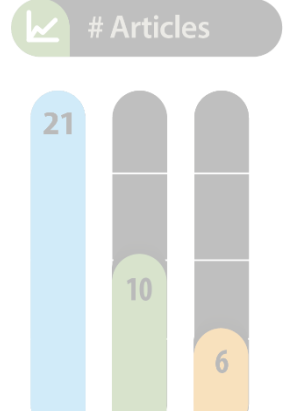
says Ciampa. "It allows us to see our costs on a real-time basis rather than waiting six weeks to get an invoice from a driver." Telematics also allows Aggregate Industries to gauge truck travel speed, fuel consumption and work production.

But the process hasn't been without hiccups. Larger vendors quickly embraced the format and its subsequent faster payment process while some smaller firms resisted the change. "Some of these guys are telling me that it's the first time they have used e-mail," Ciampa says. "There is also a struggle matching our invoice number with their accounting systems. Technically, however, the system works fine. This is definitely the way of the future."

Telematics 2.0

Equipment makers agree, and they are integrating telematics into machines at breakneck speed with features that monitor fluid levels, idle time and main-

PAPER CUT
Telematics cuts paperwork and needless office trips, thereby reducing waste and boosting productivity.



71% Relative Decrease in Press Mentions

By doing our own PR, we decreased press mentions by 71%.

Outsource or Create from Within?

- Know what your team is good at and what you should outsource
- Make sure the consultants you hire understand your customer and brand expectations

Content Writing

- Agency couldn't find the correct voice for brand and customer
- All content was high-level only
- Outsourced — 20 pieces, 1,200 views, 3 form submissions, no new leads or sales
- In House — 15 pieces, 2,200 views, 532 form submissions, 208 new leads



Content Writing

- Agency couldn't find the correct voice for brand and customer
- All content was high-level only
- Outsourced – 20 Pieces, 1,200 views, 3 form submissions, no new leads or sales.



From 0 to 208 Leads Captured

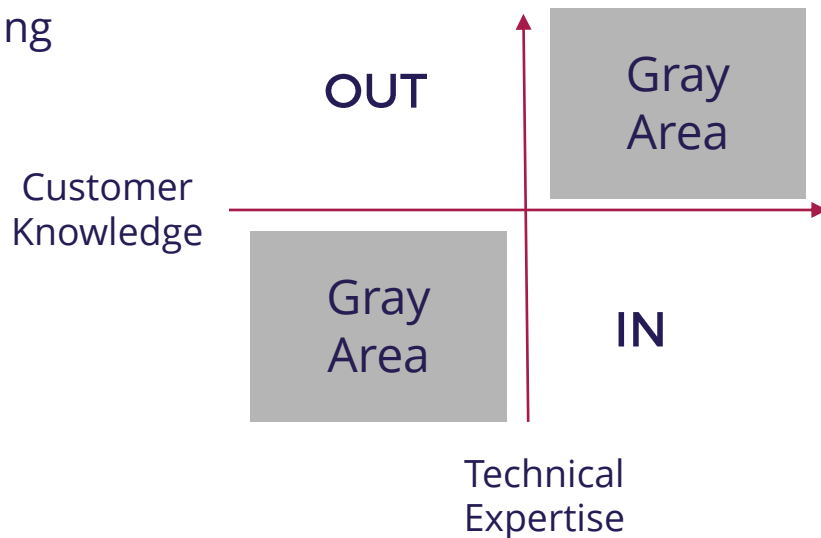
Our in-house content produced 208x more leads than the outsourced content.

Outsource or Create from Within?

- Know what your team is good at and what you should outsource
- Make sure the consultants you hire understand your customer and brand expectations
- Understand the trade-offs of building vs. buying
 - Better vs. faster
 - Long-term decision vs. short-term decision
 - A hybrid of the two

Outsource or Create from Within?

- Know what your team is good at and what you should outsource
- Make sure the consultants you hire understand your customer and brand expectations
- Understand the trade-offs of building vs. buying
 - Better vs. faster
 - Long-term decision vs. short-term decision
 - A hybrid of the two

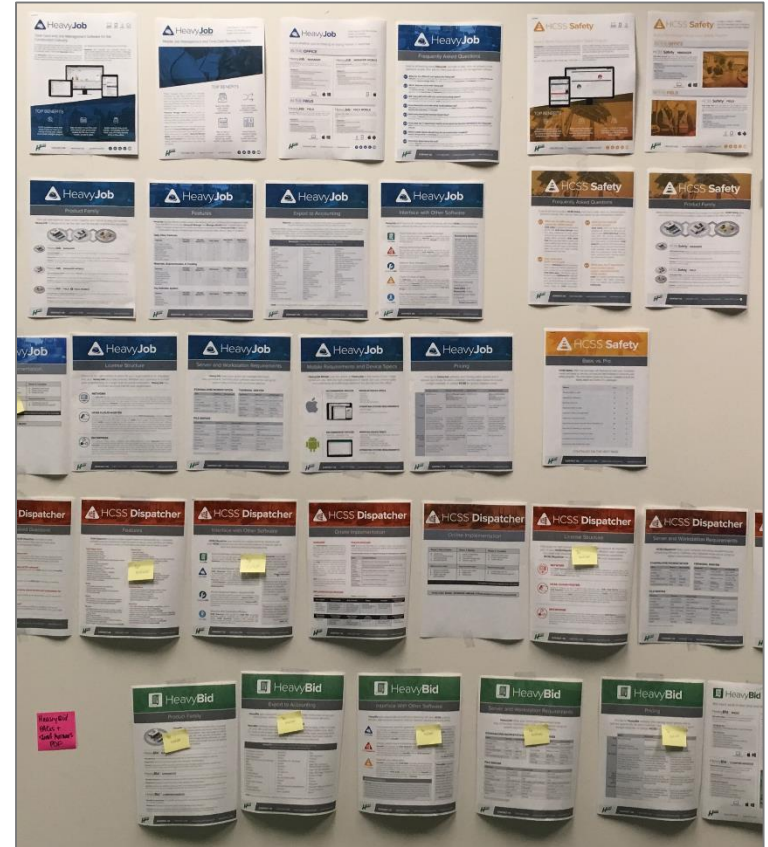


Building Successful In-house Capabilities



Solve for Bottlenecks

- Pinpoint where the process is being bottlenecked
 - Number of items in each graphic designer's queue
 - Items still waiting on approval from sales team
- Start filling in the gaps
 - Hire more graphic designers to take on some of the workload
 - Created a process with hard deadlines



Report Back on Your Successes

- Must have content to have results
- Be willing to try different things
- Must have some big wins to get buy-in

Contact Us | Sales | 1-800-683-3196

HCSS INNOVATIVE SOFTWARE
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

SOFTWARE SERVICES CAREERS EVENTS ABOUT US MOST INTERESTING PROJECT

Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Email Google+ View the HeavyJob Bracket

Check out all the descriptions and photos, then pick your winner for each match-up.
Each user can vote only once per matchup per day. Share with friends to get your favorites to the finals.

HCSS MOST INTERESTING PROJECT BRACKET CHALLENGE

HeavyBid BRACKET

Winner: Alexander Ave.

Levee Bridge

Wapahum Dam

Levee Bridge

HCSS INNOVATIVE SOFTWARE
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Project Timeline

March 2015

"Most Interesting Project"

400 man hours –
5 ppl / 2 weeks

November 2015

"I Build America"
1,920 man hours –
4 ppl / 3 months

January 2016
In-house
team created

August 2016

Construction Intern
Awards \$50K
80 man hours –
1 person / 1 week

January 2017
IBA / AGC
partnership

1 (2) hour meeting

August 2015

Construction Intern
Awards \$25K
240 man hours –
3 ppl / 2 weeks

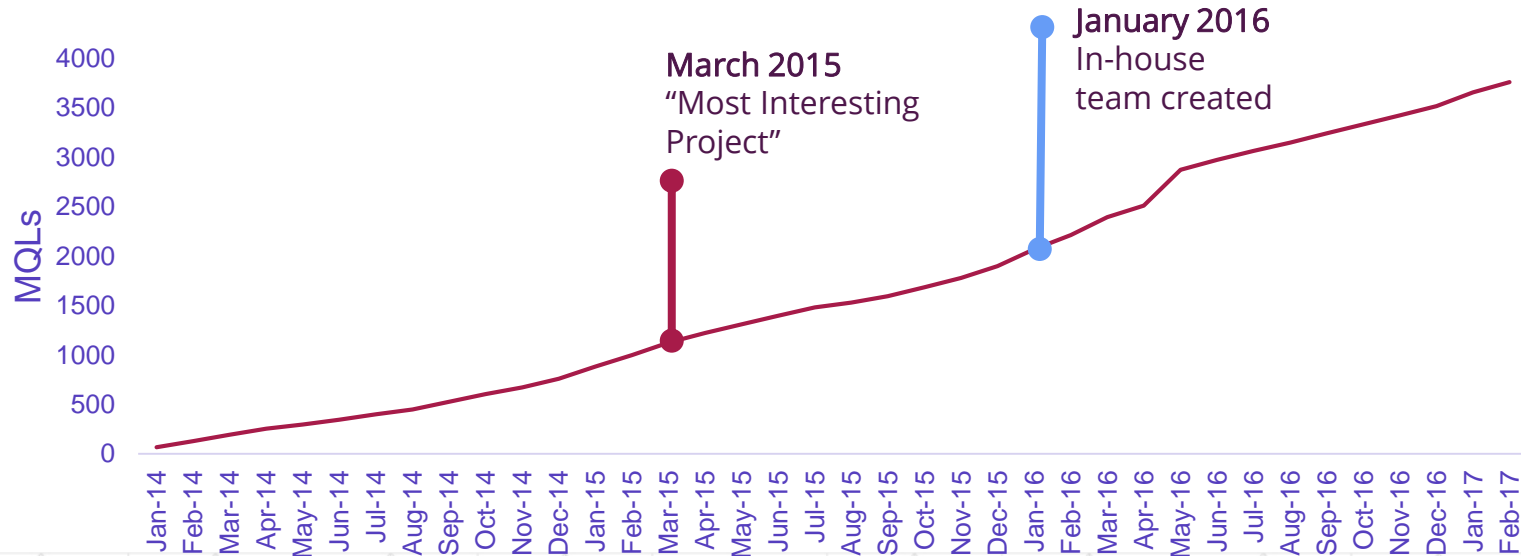
February 2016
Construction
Impact Awards
240 man hours –
3 ppl / 2 weeks

September 2016
"I Build America" –
Wyoming
2400 man hours –
6 ppl / 3 months

February 2017
IBA / ABC
partnership
1 email

Results of Shifting to an In-House Creative Team

- Doubled website traffic
- **42% increase in MQLs**
- Website was more helpful
- Revenue up 30% a year
- Decreased expenses and increased the time to market



"I Build America"- creative assets

Stories



BAILEY REIMAN-GARRETT

Bailey Reiman-Garrett of Cheyenne, Wyo., grew up around construction. But the granddaughter of the Bob Reiman, who founded Reiman Corp. in 1948, never actually thought she'd be working for her grandfather's commercial and heavy highway construction company.

[READ MORE »](#)



IAN ALVSTAD

Ian Alvstad spent his whole life working in construction in some form or another. When he tried to go to school or get a job, the industry kept calling him. Now he's sharing his love of construction with high schoolers in Wyoming through the Wyoming Young Contractors Association, which promotes the industry and works to better the lives of workers in the state.



Social Media

Building Wyoming, One Person At a Time



KYLE RADEMACHER



DAVID CURRY



CALEB PECK



NED KSAIBATI



RAY FERTIG



LESLIE



Videos

Resources

Schools



Partnerships

External Projects

- Designed to help our customers tell their company's story
- Offer services such as:
 - Video
 - Photography
 - Website development
 - Search engine optimization
 - Social media
 - Apparel



Balancing Projects



Prioritizing

- Success has sent internal demand for services through the roof
- Sprint planning/backlog planning
 - Using agile format
- Hard deadlines always a priority
- Value-driven scoring:
 - Track by opportunity and value
 - Generates sales \$ = 5 points
 - Recruits new employees = 3 points
 - Improves customer experience = 3 points
 - Brand recognition = 2 points
 - Internal use only = 1 point

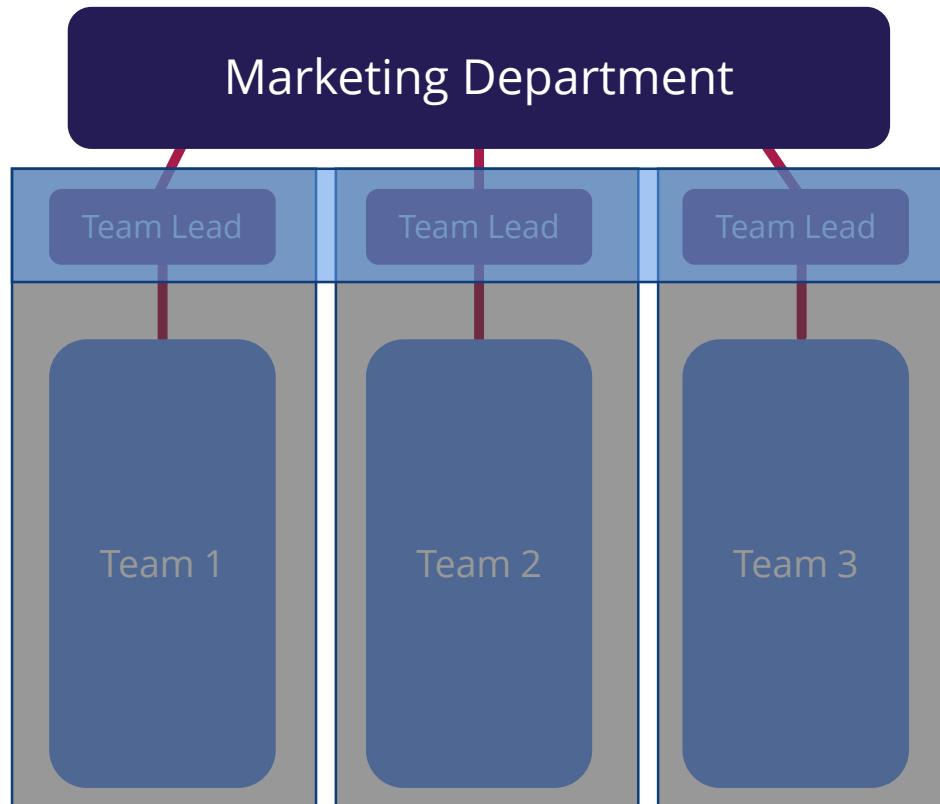
Low priority:
internal use only



High priority:
generates sales & brand
recognition

How to Scale

- Went from 6-person marketing department to 25-person marketing department
 - Each sub-team does daily stand-ups (agile)
 - Broader team leads meet weekly
- Meet to catch red flags
 - Talk about anything that may block project progress
 - Forward looking as opposed to status updates



Top Takeaways

- Know what you're good at and what you're not
 - Outsource for specific skills
- Don't be afraid to experiment
 - Ask for an easy out; don't sign long-term contract
- Make your victories visible
 - Internal marketing can be just as important





Thank You!

Kara MacDonald, HCSS