

A Camarès White Paper

On Broadband, Immigration and Being a Micro Global

HOW ONE SMALL COMPANY LEVERAGES TECHNOLOGY, OUTSOURCING AND NEW NJ RESIDENTS, BRINGING MORE JOBS TO NEW JERSEY.

By Deb Di Gregorio
CEO Camarès

This election season our presidential candidates are saying just about anything to get votes. One thing we hear repeatedly: *US companies who take US jobs offshore ought to be penalized!* This is the worst sort of populist pandering.

Life is hard if you have lost your job in mid-life, but it's not the end of your life. Blaming "big companies that take US jobs away" gets us nowhere fast.

In actuality, globalization of the workplace has been happening for decades. If you remember the tune "*Look for the union label when you are buying a shirt, dress or blouse...*" you remember the wholesale export of sewing jobs in the sixties and seventies to one nation after another – wherever the cheapest labor could be found. After the seamstresses disappeared, the shoe manufacturers went, then the auto manufacturers and so on and so on.

In truth, most jobs are already gone. A new market landscape is upon us, one that offers huge opportunities. To succeed, we must embrace it and embrace radical change. This new world forces us to embark on a rigorous climb up the value ladder as the lower commoditized rungs are sawed off beneath our feet.

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ABOUT CAMARÈS

Camarès: Triaging, Accelerating and Inventing E-business.

We measurably increases revenue, improving the bottom lines of companies that sell products and services to consumers and business. We also work with online publishers and improve their revenues. We do this by systematically reviewing their specific markets, determining their differentiators, designing highly optimized web sites and delivering the most efficient online advertising and marketing programs available, anywhere.

Simply put: *we make our clients money.*

Four New Jersey Job Creation Case Studies

The first of the four case studies is our own company. Camarès opened its doors 25 years ago as a traditional marketing communications firm; we had a staff of writers, designers, administrators and account executives. Over the years the staff grew as the company grew; then we shrunk back to a quarter of our size; then we shrunk back to half of that. Today we are a robust, nimble agency that transforms our clients' companies, opening sophisticated online markets and generating measurable profits. All this even though we're a fraction of the size we once were! We are more profitable than ever. Today we are:

“ Remarkably, it is not too different from how my German grandfather built his paper export business in the 1950's. He exported US paper leveraging his European business connections. Only today, the process is super charged with technology: we don't have to take the Queen Mary transatlantic to seal the deal. ”

— or what we call *growth initiatives* — are within financial reach. Not only can these companies make the investment, they can swiftly realize their return on investment. It's a win, win, win. Here are three examples:

A Mid-sized NJ Company Can Now Afford a Massive Re-branding That Enables it to Compete Globally.

Camarès recently completed a total re-organization and re-branding program for a mid-sized service company. Not just a new logo, but new messaging, and new visuals across everything from location signage to uniforms to trucks to letterhead to web. This is the sort of project that is well out of reach of companies this size when they use US labor alone. Here's who benefitted:

> **Smart:** that means each person does more high level work and learns new skills faster than ever before. And it also means we aggressively leverage technology.

> **Lean:** we don't hire on staff but rely on local contractors who are as smart and versatile as we are, and

> **Global:** we reach out to lower-cost knowledge workers all over the world, paying a fair in-country wage and then passing those savings onto our customers.

I call us a *Micro Global*.

We are able to produce large complex projects for a quarter of the dollars that it would have required five years ago.

Or at half the cost our regional competitors are doing it for today. This has yielded exciting results:

Since we have embraced our Micro Global strategy we have opened a thriving new underserved market: mid-sized New Jersey companies who would never have embarked on large sophisticated projects. Today, these large projects

- > Twenty plus New Jersey companies, from printers to sign installers to uniform companies who would otherwise not had the business.
- > At least a half dozen New Jersey contractors, from writers to designers, animators, voice over talent and audio engineers.
- > Dozens of designers and programmers around the world, from Brazil to India.

And of course, our client benefited. Where once they were a regional company competing with global companies, they now have the brand platform on which to compete and win in a national and global market against those same companies. Re-branding has enabled them to go after higher-level business they would not have been able to reach before. The result: they are hiring.

A Small NJ Manufacturer Opens New Markets Online

A small, cash-strapped NJ manufacturer was seeing its traditional sales channels run dry. They knew they had to quickly shift and move online. Camarès rebranded the company, creating a sophisticated interactive web presence with aggressive online marketing. The company is winning new clients. Our client is hiring and considering a second shift.

A Revered NJ Retailer Can Now Afford to Open a National Market and Grow

A mid-sized NJ retailer wanted to grow beyond the region without investing in bricks and mortar stores outside the state. Instead, the client invested moderate sums testing an e-commerce presence supplemented with aggressive online marketing and analytics. The result? Our client has hired an in-house sales team creating four new New Jersey jobs even though they are selling to customers out of state, and soon to customers internationally.

That's a lot of job creation enabled by one small New Jersey Micro Global company. And I'd be lying if I didn't say how proud we are of our work. However, it would not have been possible without several mission-critical ingredients:

Technology: Specifically Broadband

Camarès is a completely virtual company. Our headquarters can house up to a dozen contractors and employees. But most of our employees choose to work from home, touching down once a week at our, ehem, "World Headquarters"; we use Voice Over IP, a virtual private network (VPN), and visual or text chat to communicate.

- > Our knowledge workers whether onshore in NJ and the greater region, or offshore, work in home offices — keeping our overhead costs and their travel costs low.
- > Our contractors and employees have similar technology in their home offices and access to broadband.
- > Our Voice Over IP phone system allows us to have one main number and extensions directly to our workers — we are one seamless organization.

- > Visual Chat enhances one-on-one communication.
- > Text Chat is used for quick requests.
- > Our design files are large. We use our in house FTP server to store and retrieve files via our virtual private network.
- > All employees have access to the company server via encrypted VPN.
- > Our mobile communications needs are limited to mobile voice – since most of our travel involves visiting with clients and, as a rule, mobile devices are turned off during those meetings.
- > Most employees use laptops as their main computers, so taking their desk from home to office is easy.

A Large Immigrant Community

New Jersey's ethnic diversity is legendary and growing. As retirees flee the state's high property taxes for North Carolina, armies of enthusiastic knowledge workers from all over the world take their places. It is no coincidence that Camarès built a network of offshore resources from Brazil and India. We're located in Essex County, minutes from Newark's Brazilian Iron Bound neighborhood and Edison's India "gateway". We have built our resources through active engagement with these communities. Through our personal connections and their strong ties with workers "in the old country" we have built a network of reliable offshore resources.

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Is it no wonder that Camarès actively promotes and champions aggressive immigration reform? We have experienced first hand the power of being a global company. And we understand full well that the business growth we have enabled in the region cannot continue without a stable immigrant community.

Adherence to Best Practices

There is no doubt that, when you have a dozen creative folks working under the same roof, work is easier. You just saunter into a colleague's office, knock around some ideas and then get to work. Going offshore only works if you formalize business processes. And that means that people must sit down and clearly communicate instructions to others through comprehensive written briefs, technical scope-of-work documents and the like. Voice and visual communication via broadband helps as well, but it must be based on written materials. This has not been an onerous transition, simply one that demands forethought and planning – something that most programs benefit from regardless.

Accepting Limitations

Once companies experience the leverage offshore outsourcing delivers, they respond enthusiastically by demanding more. But there are many things that cannot be outsourced. We use in-country resources for

- Assess which corporate functions can be outsourced offshore.
- Assess which functions in your company can be outsourced "onshore" or within NJ and the greater region.
- Determine the technology required to make that happen – VOIP? VPN? Broadband? Many communications and collaboration services are available via Internet Service Providers at low cost: Skype, Yousendit.com, Wetpaint.com and others.

STEPS TO BECOMING >> A MICRO GLOBAL

- Determine the impact of outsourcing on your bottom line.
- Engage with New Jersey's vibrant immigrant business community. Many sectors have their own chambers. Get involved! Network and connect.
- Decide on the business model: Pass savings onto customers? Use savings to reinvest and grow your company? Among many options.
- Test, conduct a trial, adjust, then launch.

creative work that is culturally sensitive, such as print and paid-search advertising. And, as a small company, dealing with time zone differences can be very taxing. So our first stop in the outsourcing journey was Brazil, because depending on the time of year, we're never more than three hours apart. Later we moved to India, but we had strict criteria: our New Jersey Indian contacts had to manage the time zone challenge for us.

Learning, Learning, Learning

Skill sets are compressing at a swift pace. What was once done by three people is now done by one. Tomorrow four more skill sets will compress to the individual desktop. Each one of our internal employees as well as our outside contractors are on a continual learning curve. We have to take it upon ourselves to not only be up to date on existing technologies, but to push ourselves to expand well beyond them. Designers now must be facile programmers; writers need to be comfortable working with design tools; advertising execs must be on the cutting edge of Internet technologies; and programmers must understand elements of design. Education is now each individual's professional responsibility. So if you are in midlife without a job, it's not the end of your life but the start of the rest of your education!

Extending the Micro Global Model

The Micro Global job creation model showcased here can be extended to other companies and industries in two ways:

Professional services companies: From IT services to accountants and even attorneys can push tasks offshore, freeing capital to hire high level in-country knowledge workers and deliver increasingly sophisticated services to their clients. Or they can pass part of those savings along to their clients. I can hear attorneys scoffing that this is impossible! But it would serve them well to follow their colleagues who are successfully outsourcing legal research, document preparation and document review.

Mid-sized companies can actively seek out suppliers who are engaged in the Micro Global model for everything from marketing to IT services and more. Large corporations have had similar models in place for five to ten years. Now using service providers who are doing this on a smaller scale gives mid-sized companies a huge competitive advantage.

There is no doubt at Camarès that leveraging New Jersey's vibrant immigrant community and harnessing high speed broadband communications enabled us to build personal offshore business relationships that have served as our means to survival and success in the new business landscape. And there is also no doubt that through our cost-effective efforts, we have empowered mid-sized companies to embark on growth initiatives that have created more jobs in New Jersey (many enabled by broadband). And we know that the ongoing projects enabled by offshore outsourcing and technology have provided work for a cohort of nimble New Jersey professionals willing to learn and embrace radical change.

New Jersey's unique assets: immigrants and technology can be synthesized for economic renewal even at the smallest businesses.

Job creation via broadband, technology, and immigrants – that's the reward that one Micro Global has delivered to New Jersey.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF >>

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