How To Reconfigure IT Roles To Come Out Stronger

COVID-19 Advice from Leapfrog Services, Inc.

A lot of organizations are thinking about how they can better leverage IT following the COVID-19 outbreak. The business environment has changed — technology is front and center. Customer needs and preferences, service delivery and speeds, performance benchmarks, revenue opportunities, and more have all changed for many organizations.

How can your organization respond quickly in a way that makes the most of your IT? Look at reconfiguring IT roles as part of your process to innovate and streamline.

1. First, put out potential fires and update your IT plan
If something in your IT environment may break soon, address it quickly so it doesn't interfere with business continuity. Then:

- Ask your IT team to identify any emergencies that may come up during the rest of the year and develop mitigation plans
- Gather leadership to identify, clarify, and prioritize revenue opportunities for the next one to three years
- Update your IT roadmap to reflect the revenue opportunities — include your IT team in this process

2. Analyze your current IT team
As you update your IT roadmap, look at how you can best use your IT team to meet business goals and revenue opportunities:

- Does your current team of internal and outsourced IT personnel match up with your updated roadmap? If not, where do you come up short and where are you overstaffed?
- Can your current team implement and manage the new solutions, services, or tools you need? And, conversely, are there solutions, services, or tools you no longer need?
- Are any of our current vendors experiencing supply chain, bandwidth, or other issues that may create bottlenecks in your roadmap? If so, can you find viable alternatives?

IT Responsibilities Matrix

To help clients clarify who should be responsible for IT activities within a coordinated IT operation, Leapfrog provides a matrix. The matrix axes divide top-level IT responsibilities by category and team members by business function. The recommended roles — Owner, Influencer, Operator, or Adviser — are presented in the matrix fields. Vendors do not appear on the matrix because they complete assignments from Operators.

IT Responsibilities

	Strategy	Design and Standards	Budget	Service Delivery	Risk Management
Executive Leadership	INFLUENCER and OPERATOR	INFLUENCER and/or ADVISER	OWNER	INFLUENCER and ADVISER	OWNER
CIO	OWNER	INFLUENCER and/or ADVISER	INFLUENCER and OPERATOR	INFLUENCER and ADVISER	OWNER
Internal IT	ADVISER and/or OPERATOR	OWNER	INFLUENCER and/or ADVISER	OWNER and/or OPERATOR	INFLUENCER, ADVISER and/or OPERATOR
IT Partner	ADVISER and/or OPERATOR	OWNER	INFLUENCER and/or ADVISER	OWNER and/or OPERATOR	INFLUENCER, ADVISER and/or OPERATOR

3. Assign IT operator roles based knowledge and skillsets

Leapfrog recommends assigning IT roles based on the type of activity involved — specialized activities that are unique to your organization should be handled in-house and activities that can be standardized across many organizations for efficiency should be outsourced.

- **Internal IT: Focus on innovative IT activities that help your organization gain a competitive advantage.** Your internal team knows the ins-and-outs of your business and how it generates revenue. When the team concentrates on new or improved technologies that directly tie to revenue-generation, you're getting the most value from their expertise. For example, while adapting to the pandemic, they might look at developing or improving mobile apps, implementing touchless interactions for customers, or launching augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) tours. To help keep your staff healthy, they could explore innovations like remote facilities monitoring, automated inventory tracking, and disinfecting by drone.

- **IT Partner: Focus on standardized IT activities that deliver performance, stability, and security.** Your outsourced partner has the expertise to design and run optimized IT environments and the breadth and depth to deploy changes quickly. Their systematized processes for day-to-day IT management, including end-user support, are designed for efficiency and to prevent repetitive tasks (like backups and anomaly detection) from falling through the cracks. To speed up digital transformation, an important consideration during this pandemic, organizations can task their IT partner with migrating resources to the cloud, updating infrastructure for a hybrid environment, integrating new tools and platforms, and ensuring any new procedures meet compliance requirements.

- **IT Vendors: Focus on completing tactical assignments from operators.** Vendors execute the scope of work from internal and outsourced IT teams as one-off projects or as part of an ongoing contract. For example, if you need to buy new laptops to improve secure teleworking, you can task a vendor with sourcing and procuring computers based on your requirements, then configuring and deploying the computers to your employees. You can do the same for software licenses and other procurement needs. Ongoing vendor contracts include activities such as providing internet service or supply-chain logistics.

Consultants and professional service providers are additional roles to consider, depending on your needs. In general, it's best to assign responsibilities in a way that simplifies rather than complicates IT activities and keeps everyone working within their areas of expertise.

Leapfrog has seen hundreds of organizations grow stronger and more profitable by delegating IT roles using this strategy. When IT roles complement each other, the organization does better. We believe this is an especially strong approach as we emerge in this post-COVID environment.