



Mini-Track ID: AMCIS-PR-100-2008  
Mini-Track Title: Offshoring: Trends, Issues, and Management  
Track: General Topics Track

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## Description

The offshoring phenomenon has become pervasive and almost all large-sized companies in the US and other countries now routinely offshore some of their IT and IT-enabled services to offshore locations in the Asia Pacific. However, the debate over the global outsourcing has become quite heated. On the one hand, press reports mention that by the year 2015, \$151.2 billion in wages will have been shifted from the United States to lower-wage countries. On the other hand, other reports mention that outsourcing and offshoring reduces labor costs and, as a result, the savings allowed U.S. companies to create an additional 90,000 jobs in 2003.

Offshoring is generally taken to mean offshore outsourcing. However, offshoring includes both the outsourcing of work pertaining to IT and IT-enabled services to offshore locations as well as the distribution of such work by client firms to their own captive centers at offshore locations. This mini-track is interested in both types of offshoring. While some of the issues in offshore outsourcing remain the same as in conventional outsourcing, many new issues arise in offshoring in general due to the globally-distributed nature of the work to countries that are not only culturally very different and diverse but also have different native languages, different educational systems, different legal and regulatory systems, and different social values and economic systems. The 24-hour work cycle that comes into play due to time zone differences between the US and provider countries in the Asia Pacific introduces several new issues as well. Nearshoring is an offshoot of this that merits investigation.

Researchers have noted the importance of vendor management and system integration, among other factors, in offshoring. The issue of trust between client(s) and vendor(s) also appears to be a major consideration. Theoretical frameworks are needed to better understand the offshoring process. Additionally, offshoring impacts a client nation's employment behavior as a result of the reduction of IT jobs, elimination of certain positions, and a restructuring of the management-employee relationship. Consequently, issues of incorporating offshoring technical and management skills in IS curriculums must be addressed, as IS experts and researchers have already called for.

## Suggested Topics

- Strategic, economic, transformational, geopolitical, organizational, infrastructural, legal, cultural, social issues of the offshoring phenomenon

- Current business models and patterns of offshoring
- Organizational forms, governance structures and alliance issues in offshoring
- Enabling technologies, processes, and structures for offshoring
- Assessing costs, benefits, and risks of the offshoring venture and reasons for back sourcing
- Communication and knowledge transfer issues in virtual, multi-cultural and globally-distributed teams
- Issues in evaluating, selecting, managing vendor relationships and system integration in offshoring
- Educational and curriculum implications of offshoring
- Impact of offshoring including work and career issues
- Offshoring, nearshoring, insourcing and outsourcing comparative studies