

About

Sampson Consulting is a boutique freelance consulting firm focused on helping business to innovate using modern software technologies. Chris Sampson is the principal of the business and has worked with medium and large enterprises within the Business Analysis and Software Development space for his entire career.

Recent years has seen an influx of capabilities via cloud computing and service-based software solutions. This is levelling the playing field between enterprises large and small no matter if city or regionally based. As the technology is falling into place, it is evident that the knowledge and knowhow in small/medium enterprises is still well behind that of big business. Our goal is to bring practices and methods to businesses of all scales that help them realise the benefits of business process automation using modern software technologies.

To keep a competitive edge, all enterprises must continually innovate and evolve to not only supply great service to their customers but to also look for more efficient ways to carry on business. Being accepting of ideas and concepts, no matter if they come from outside your business or industry sector, is the key driver for innovation.

Core Focus

We believe our core skillset and competencies allow us to be highly effective within these activities:

- **Business Process Automation** - Looking for opportunities to enable better customer delivery or a reduction in time and effort is a constant process. Computer software technology makes a significant contribution to the operational efficiency of a business and can improve the customer experience. Today most large-scale enterprises run a continual process improvement programme and business analysis and software development teams are at the front edge of this.
- **Emphasis on “Line of Business”** - Software technology divides into two core use cases within a business. Those for administrative purposes (e.g. Ledger Software, Email Systems etc) and solutions that drive the mission critical and/or unique aspects of the business. The later, Line of Business applications often get the most benefit from process automation.
- **Business Analysis and Requirements Gathering** – To improve or create a new process using technology, understanding existing business procedures and needs is critical for success. A process of analysis, gathering information and collaborating with stakeholders is the best way to get the level of understanding needed to find process improvement opportunities. This is true with well-seasoned businesses and start-ups alike.

Core Focus Continued...

- **Solution Concept Designs/Proof of Concept/Prototyping/Feasibility** – Many times we know the answers to solve business problems but more often we do not. Validating and verifying the options around proposed change is essential before committing resources to a single idea. For a new start-up idea this is especially important.
- **Custom Software Solutions** – When needs mandate a unique solution, the only choice is to have purpose-built software put in place. Most modern software solutions use modular frameworks to enable a consistent set of common functionalities. This cuts the software engineering time significantly because there is no need to recreate capabilities common to all systems using the framework. The modularity of modern software is extremely high, and it is commonplace to reuse internal and externally sourced components. Business now pays significantly less to build a customised software solution today than in days past.
- **Software Integration** – Cloud software technologies and SaaS solutions have become part of the modern-day business technology landscape. They are also part of the software developer's arsenal to deliver a solution. Many of today's software projects revolve around creating solutions that integrate multiple disconnected systems together to deliver efficiency. Many modern on-premise systems or those in the cloud can take part in an integrated solution.
- **Data Analytics** – A significant amount of information collects in databases of all businesses today. For businesses where Internet of Things (IOT) devices are present even more data accumulates. Understanding your data structure, how and where it exists and having an ability to use it is invaluable for planning and process improvement. As algorithm sophistication grows and becomes more accessible through Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies, the resulting knowledge will inevitably dominate decision-making processes for all enterprises.
- **Specification/Tender Preparation** – When sourcing external technology software products and services, often suppliers drive the process. More common than not, businesses end up with a solution that does not fully satisfy the need and results with complex workarounds and inefficient process. Spending effort upfront and preparing documentation that supplies a decisive set of requirements makes easier analysis of competing solutions. The likelihood of choosing the right solution and meeting the overall business need significantly increases.
- **Project Management** – All change needs some level of project management. As project teams grow and complexity increases, it is necessary to deploy a project manager to ensure the team meets the goals within the defined constraints. Good practitioners working in the Information Technology space will always adopt and adapt proper methodologies depending on scale and scope of a project.

As A Matter of Course

Many businesses will also get benefit in these areas which are often a precursor to or a result of our core focus.

- **General Strategy and Business Process/Automation Reviews** – Software technology changes at a rapid pace and there is little chance any business owner can keep up with new and evolving solutions and practices. Large organisations have dedicated resources to continually review available technologies and propose ideas and concepts for trial. Smaller businesses do not have the luxury to dedicate full time resources and as a result may not become aware that their business has become less competitive. One method to combat this is to enlist trusted advisors for regular discussions about the business and the opportunities for innovation. Having worked in information technology roles up to executive management, I can supply a balanced and unbiased view and actively participate in the formation of plans and strategies.
- **Software customisation** – More and more companies taking advantage of off the shelf (on-premise or cloud base) solutions to deal with the administrative aspect of running a business. Products such as Office 365 have capabilities well beyond those generally known about and with a little know how they can bring significant benefit. As a first step of any project involving technology, we should always look to what we already have in place and how that may be better utilised.
- **Software Selection** – When making new software choices it is important to remember that the functionality will be in place for many years. In addition, there can be a significant implementation cost to the business over and above the software cost. We need to make the best choice based on the information at hand and ensure it meets the need. There are many techniques to determine the best fit but at the core is the requirements gathering process to ensure any choice meets the demands of the business. Suppliers can sway us all that their product is better but, in our view, it is always better to seek advice from unbiased parties.
- **Provider Selection** – The cost of running an IT department is significant and for smaller firms this is not a choice. Managed Service Providers can function as an IT department for a business and they all offer a range of services, capabilities, compliance certifications and guarantees. Most providers are in the business of supplying the best service they can within the constraints they have. It is difficult to navigate and decide which provider best suits a company and often expectations are quite different from the reality. It is important that thorough research around the offerings, capabilities and most importantly the skill sets of the technical engineers occurs before arriving at a final choice. All business today is reliant on computer technology and making a wrong choice can have devastating effects on the health of an enterprise.

Outside Our Realm

Sampson Consulting focuses on solving business problems using software automation but often people ask about areas outside of this. We take a pragmatic approach and will always help where we can with general advice and or by conducting further research. In saying this we believe that some areas need specialized skills, in these cases, we can help identify the right resources when needed. Some areas that typically fall into this category would be:

- Infrastructure (hardware installation, hardware maintenance, Network configurations, desktop support, etc.)
- Ongoing operating system software and configuration and/or maintenance and support.
- Security Software/Firewall configuration and/or maintenance and support.
- Specialised advice around specific products and/or vendors.