

# Worth Knowing About



## GETTING TECHNICAL!

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### Embracing Technology

For decades we have been told of the miraculous and marvellous ways that technology is going to change the workplace. Many have not been realized (I've yet to zoom to work in my jetpack and the "paperless office" has choked recycling depots across North America.) while others have caused dramatic societal changes (computerized manufacturing, nanotechnology, email, etc.).

Although small businesses can be quick to adopt new technologies, often the initial cost is too great a barrier or the owner is simply too busy managing day-to-day business to be investigating and implementing new technology.

The cost of hardware, software, and even professional IT services have dropped drastically over the past several years—such that now there are affordable solutions that small businesses can ill afford to overlook. It's almost at the point where not investing in newer technology will mean you can no longer effectively compete in the marketplace. Improved efficiencies, better communications, smarter networking, tighter cost controls, greater capacity, detailed quality control, faster delivery times,...

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480 Somerset St. West  
Ottawa, ON K1R 5J8  
Tel.: 613 234-3410

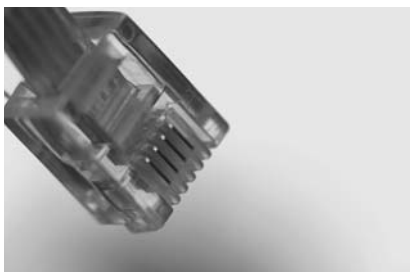
[www.prosar.com](http://www.prosar.com)

26 Avondale Drive  
Oshawa, ON L1E 2Z2  
Tel.: 905 432-9822



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With our move, PROSAR is benefiting from newly implemented tech systems. With our secure Virtual Private Network (VPN),



customized enterprise software, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone system and high speed Internet access, our team can function as a coordinated and focused group whether we are in the office or not. For example, the phone system can be programmed to ring my extension at the office, as well as an extension at my home

office and my laptop, and if I'm not available the system could leave a message at each of those locations, as well as on my cell phone and email. So when you call to discuss the distribution schedule on that direct mail piece, I could be at home sitting by the fireplace in my slippers—of course that would NEVER be the case, but I could!

Frontiva is enterprise software developed for the design and communications industry. It allows us unprecedented management and quality control. It is incredibly powerful at tracking and administering projects of any scope, providing an almost intuitive central production and communication hub for the team.

Electronic efficiencies cannot replace human creativity and strategic thinking. However, by embracing technology we are able to offer premium and comprehensive marketing, design and project management services cost-efficiently and professionally.

**WANT TO RECEIVE OUR  
NEWSLETTER ELECTRONICALLY?**



Send your email address to [editor@prosar.com](mailto:editor@prosar.com) with PROSAR newsletter as the subject. Our next newsletter (Spring 2005) will be sent to you as a PDF.

04 WINTER

### New Location!

We've just moved our Ottawa office to 480 Somerset Street West. The new space provides a fully wired (and wireless) zone to allow us full benefit of our new technological efficiencies. It's also a cozy and creative environment!

Please change your contact info:

PROSAR Canada Inc.  
480 Somerset Street W.  
Ottawa, ON K1R 5J8  
Same Tel.: 613 234-3410  
Same Email Addresses

No Fax Number (If you're going to embrace new technologies you've got to let go of the old!)

### New Look!

After almost 13 years of basically the same logo, it was time to hit the refresh button! It is both timely and appropriate as PROSAR is experiencing so much change...new location, new technologies and innovative systems, new Internet products and services through our partnership with WSI, and even though we are blessed to still have the guidance and direction of the original PROSAR team, we have added many new faces and strengths to the team over the past few years.

### New Face!

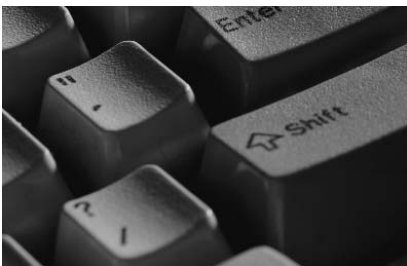


Trizana Parillo has been part of the PROSAR team since the summer and she's fitting in just fine. In addition to several years of PR and marketing experience in Toronto and a Political Science Degree from Carleton University, she's a perpetually pleasant and happy person. You'll enjoy her company as much as her insight!

Unfortunately, Antonio Cassandra is no longer with PROSAR. We wish him well and hope that he'll keep in touch with his comrades.

## WHO TECHS CARE OF IT?

*Wondering if you should be outsourcing your IT? Consider this Top 10 list compiled with Paul Emond of TechSupport.ca.*



### 1- Do your research and ask the hard questions.

You'd be surprised at how many small businesses partner with an IT outsourcing service provider without even visiting their facilities or finding out how many technicians they have on staff. It is critical for the customer to collect as much information as possible about the provider to make a sound decision. Levels of service and expertise are not the same from one provider to the next and you don't want to find out the hard way, so do your homework.

### 2- Have a plan.

Decide in advance whether you need to outsource your complete infrastructure or just part of it (called outtasking as opposed to outsourcing). Know what your costs are (both the

hard costs and the hidden ones) as best you can so that you can evaluate potential suppliers based on true value, not simply lowest quoted price.

### 3- Have management or ownership buy-in.

IT outsourcing relationships that provide real value are more of a partnership than a vendor/customer relationship. The IT outsourcer needs to understand your business to be able to provide real-world solutions. A professional IT provider should be concerned with leveraging technology to help you grow, but they need senior management support to succeed. Many benefits of the relationship are lost when management doesn't appreciate the resource that the IT outsourcer brings to the table.

### 4- Commit to the relationship.

It's better to have a three-year horizon than a month-to-month viewpoint. Committing to the relationship allows the IT outsourcer to take the time necessary to understand your business processes and propose solutions (even unsolicited ones). Customers who aren't committed to their IT provider may find them unwilling to invest much of their own time to find new and creative solutions.

### 5- Designate a point person.

It's important to have someone on staff to manage the outsourcing relationship. This is the person who will monitor the performance of the supplier and be available in case something goes wrong or to provide clarification.

### 6- Negotiate enhanced Service Level Agreements that include penalties.

Most small businesses don't pay nearly enough attention to the Service Level Agreement (SLA) section of the contract. Your IT provider should be able to commit to specific response times and face penalties if they are missed. Don't accept the standard SLA—these are almost always negotiable but most people don't take the time and the resulting SLA is skewed in favour of the IT outsourcer.

### 7- Demand performance reports and hold the supplier accountable.

One way to find out if you're interviewing a reputable and professional IT outsourcing company is to ask to see examples of the performance reports they produce for their existing customers. If they are unable to show you this, they're probably too small to be able to help your business grow and prosper. Performance reports should list specific criteria such

as support tickets, response times and resolutions.

### 8- Acknowledge change.

During a three-year term contract, things are likely to change. Your business needs will evolve, as will technology; make sure that fees are variable to the number of supported workstations so that you can accommodate this change. Remember, your IT outsourcer is a partner and should be willing to work with you.

### 9- Insist on options.

A good IT outsourcing partner will be investing in R&D in order to provide you with technology options for your business. If you're a small enterprise, make sure to select a supplier who specializes in this market; small businesses need low cost and reliable options.

### 10- Plan ahead.

When choosing your IT outsource provider, don't think only about what your needs are today, but consider what your needs will be in five years. Can they help get you there? Before you invest time and money, have confidence that they'll be able to support your growth.



## Measuring Marketing Effectiveness

Apparently technology has now made it possible to accurately measure the effectiveness of your marketing efforts. Is direct mail truly responsible for sales growth? Did that print and radio ad campaign successfully position your brand? What effect are your in-store promotions having on existing and new customers? Wouldn't it be great to be able to quantify these results and assess where your advertising dollars should be spent?



When it comes to marketing, sales are seldom the only objective and results are usually appreciated over a longer time period—the benefits of a strong brand are enjoyed long after the campaign has ended. It is often difficult to assess how a particular campaign has really worked for you. There are many metrics to gain some insight into the effect of a campaign, such as

Return On Investment (ROI), market share, brand awareness, sales, profitability, customer retention, new inquiries generated,...but none of these are true indicators that can isolate the impact of a campaign. Unfortunately, companies often rely on "gut feel," and experimentation to "hit 'n' miss" their way through marketing.

However, over the past several years sophisticated computer models have been used to accurately gauge the effectiveness of campaigns; including the intangibles such as effect of word-of-mouth, brand strength, customer satisfaction, etc. With good survey information and expert analysis, Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI) programs can determine where your best return is generated and provide great insight into future budget allocation.

However, putting some science into the art of marketing doesn't come cheap, firms offering the service charge around \$100,000 per campaign! If that seems a little steep, there are less expensive ways to get usable, albeit less accurate, feedback regarding your marketing efforts. A sound marketing plan designed by experts with built in milestones and a means to capture strategic feedback is your best ROMI. Give us a call and we'll help you out.

## MARKETING

- Market Research & Interpretation
- Development, Execution & Analysis of Strategic Plans
- Market Plans
- Creation & Implementation of Promotions, Campaigns & Contests
- Advertising & Media Assessment
- Direct Marketing & Advertising Campaigns
- Survey Design, Implementation & Evaluation
- Education Sector Strategic Plans

## CREATIVE & GRAPHIC DESIGN

- Conceptual Artwork
- Concept & Design of Promotional & Educational Materials
- Publications & Advertisements
- Logo & Corporate Identity Packages
- Fine Art, Illustration & Cartooning (traditional and digital)

(Our design team has years of experience in fully preparing digital files for film output, including scanning, photo manipulation and colour separations.)

## EDITORIAL

- Writing, Editing & Translation
- Promotional & Ad Copy
- Advertorials
- Curriculum-based Editorial & Activities
- Radio & Television Ad Scripts (including musical themes and jingles)
- Telemarketing & Prospecting Scripts

## MULTIMEDIA

- Web Site Planning, Creation & Marketing
- Email Campaigns
- Listing, Ranking & Web Site Analysis
- E-commerce, Database Design & Programming
- Site Hosting & Email Service
- Promotional & Educational CD-Rom Planning & Creation

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Art & Photography Direction
- Program Development & Implementation
- Event Planning, Promotion & Execution
- Print Management
- Distribution Planning & Supervision

"If we don't  
change, we  
don't grow.

If we don't  
grow, we  
aren't really  
living."

-Gail Sheehy  
Political Writer

MERRY CHRISTMAS  
&  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Scott

Trigena

Marlene

Juliet

Edi

S. Bordale

Chris

Catherine  
Lyane

