FIRST is a New Hampshire based global non-profit and is recognized as the leading STEM engagement program for kids worldwide. FIRST sponsors 4 annual age-based STEM programs. Parents register their kids on teams and volunteers coach, judge and run the competitions. Competitions are complex logistical time-bound undertakings.

FIRST engaged Ahmad Sinno to develop an IT strategy that enables their business strategy and maximizes the value of their IT investments

Business Strategy

FIRST has aggressive plans to grow 3-5X over 5 the next years

Current IT Situation

Current IT systems and processes were deployed when FIRST was a much smaller organization with less programs and much simpler operations. Key challenges are:

➢ Operational success is predicated on the extraordinary efforts of the IT team and the users of the IT systems

➢ 85%+ of IT budget was dedicated to support programs and to "keep the lights on"

➢ Complex and duplicative systems are not integrated and are missing critical functions

➢ Data is siloed and difficult to leverage for business decisions

➢ Technology footprint and processes are not scalable

Complications

To enable its aggressive business strategy, FIRST intends to upgrade its Field Operations Ecosystems. The purpose is to enable regional growth, improve program quality, and improve sustainability and scalability for support field partners and volunteers

Proposed IT Strategy

Effective IT strategies are developed in collaboration with business leaders so that the roadmap and outcomes are aligned to business objectives, timelines and strategy.

Furthermore, effective IT strategies consider a blend of four key drivers: People, Process, Technology and Financials.

People Initiatives

- ➢ Engage a Fractional-CIO to coach IT leaders and launch the approved initiatives
- ➢ Provide clear stewardship for custom systems
- ➢ Leverage offshore development to expedite value creation

Process Initiatives

- ➢ Enhance and expand IT Governance capabilities to include all Support Services Initiatives
- ➢ Assess current business processes with a focus on automation and optimization

Technology Initiatives

- ➢ Replace current ERP systems with one system that will simplify current processes and integrate with other systems
- ➢ Leverage 3rd party systems to reduce reliance on custom systems
- ➢ Develop a data warehouse to enhance use of analytics
- ➢ Consolidate all training on a common Learning Management System

"Ahmad Sinno, made sure to understand our business goals and objectives, resulting in an IT strategy and roadmap that prioritized our most-critical needs and addressed key business drivers."

Don Bossi, former CEO, FIRST