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Outsourcing system support

Infrastructure Management Services is emerging as a key area in the IT industry, says Amit Chanda

A National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) Market Intelligence Service March 2005 report outlines global market for Remote Infrastructure Management Services (RIMS) to lie between \$86 billion to \$150 billion.

But what is RIMS all about? RIMS deal in the management of a company's IT-infrastructure to a specialised vendor at a remote location in areas like security, storage, databases, desktops, servers, systems, applications and networks of an organisation. In fact, RIMS encompasses all the services related to monitoring, managing and enhancing performance of IT infrastructure of a company.

The report says that RIMS represents a large and relatively untapped segment for offshore Indian vendors. In India, HCL's Infrastructure Services Division (HCL ISD) has emerged as a pioneer in RIMS. A claimant to be a world leader in this area while offering services to more than 20 Fortune/Global 500 clients, HCL ISD offers services in Data Center Operations Management Services, End User Computing Services, Managed Security Services, Networking Services and Tools and Process Consulting. The profile of the companies ranges from banking

and financial services, manufacturing, pharma and healthcare.

Anant Gupta, COO, HCL Comnet, says, "From infrastructure and IT outsourcing, new custom application/ software development, application management and consulting, these are infrastructure devices which keep the systems up and running. What makes

Kalyanaraman, senior vice president, Human Capital Management, HCL Comnet, remarks, "The trainees also undergo necessary skills' upgradation programme depending upon their interest areas and the specialised operation. As a large portion of work is tool-based, the trainees learn the tricks of trade during the specialisation."

RIMS is emerging as an exciting career option. It offers professionals to work on best-of-breed technologies and IT infrastructure of some of the biggest corporations of the world. In terms of career growth too, a specialist in RIMS can look for a bright future. In the career road map, after three years a professional can become a senior analyst or lead a small team. After six years, he can become a consultant or lead a larger team. The salary can range between Rs 5 lakh to Rs 7 lakh per annum in a 3-5 year time-frame.

"In our system, the salary structure is not commensurate to your professional qualifications. You can have a situation where an engineer might have handled just two to three servers in a lifetime whereas a diploma engineer might be handling 100 servers. We are looking for those qualities. The quality of experience will decide compensation," adds Kalyanaraman.

E-mail: careers@hclcomnet.co.in
www.hcl.comnet.com

New Career

RIMS different from BPO is that it requires professionals from technical background which includes diploma holders, engineers and certified professionals."

The Remote IMS business out of India, as the NASSCOM report suggests, may be just \$200-300 million but as Gupta adds, "It's emerging as the next big thing with companies across the globe in the process of reducing the cost of IT infrastructure - data centres, networks, databases and software tools that support businesses."

The HCL Comnet looks for professionals with two to four years of academic training for the various operations under RIMS. It ranges from engineers, diploma holders and certified professional. As J