



*Infosys Recognized for*

**2021**

**Competitive Strategy Leadership**

Global

BPM Outsourcing Industry

*Excellence in Best Practices*

## Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. Infosys excels in many of the criteria in the BPM outsourcing space.

AWARD CRITERIA	
<i>Strategy Innovation</i>	<i>Customer Impact</i>
Strategy Effectiveness	Price/Performance Value
Strategy Execution	Customer Purchase Experience
Competitive Differentiation	Customer Ownership Experience
Executive Team Alignment	Customer Service Experience
Stakeholder Integration	Brand Equity

### ***Pandemic Challenges Reveal Resilience***

For some businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted and forced a change in every single function. Service providers and clients in the business process outsourcing (BPM) space previously relied on relationships and in-person experience to build up trust, but also to learn the processes and practices of a particular client’s service lines. For BPMs, or business process management (BPM) providers, the particular nature of the disruptions challenged every aspect of normal operations in a delivery center. Organizations had to re-deploy large number of workers, who were dependent on localized hardware, to a work from home (WFH) format.

As a consequence of that physical disruption, the BPM’s operations experienced tremendous pressure to adjust methods across all areas i.e., security practices, technology allocation, client migration, onboarding, service quality, and management. In the pandemic, national and state governments worldwide enacted their own version of quarantine, stay at home, policies with unique requirements and environments. In some counties, the military enforced limits on movement. Citizens in many locales found themselves with only hours to prepare for an extended lockdown period, and some retreated out of cities and returned to distant hometowns and native regions. Businesses also struggled to formulate business continuity plans in light of unforeseen circumstances.

The pandemic and disruptions that occurred during 2020 reset many market imperatives, but simultaneously consumer expectations and customer-service functions remained high and even grown in importance. Many BPMs found themselves forced into unexpected and significant investments just to continue operating during the pandemic, which strained the cash-flow for many and placed them in precarious positions. In fact, the pandemic intensified many preexisting trends and accelerated digital transformation efforts across the board, only serving to underline the importance of customer experience. The BPMs that achieve success in the "new normal" will be those with the foresight and agility to adapt and overcome new challenges, and even to find new opportunities to capitalize on the rising trends to deliver high-quality and scalable service to clients.

Most notably, Infosys BPM (Infosys) did not simply react to the challenges of the pandemic. Instead, the company responded with admirable composure to support clients and employees by drawing from its unmatched focus on business continuity and experience managing disruption. While the pandemic exposed weaknesses in all types of businesses, it also revealed the resilience of character and abilities that Infosys has been cultivating for years. A recognized technology leader and innovator in the BPM space, Infosys rose to the challenge like few global organizations during the pandemic. No business imagined the exact potential impacts and interruptions that 2020 could bring. Yet, Infosys demonstrated the strength of its plans and ability to adapt. From top to bottom, the company exhibited an outstanding commitment to the mission and trust in one another. Company leadership put themselves on the front line of the response, literally rolling up their sleeves to deliver endpoint devices to employees, and displaying an inclusive and comprehensive commitment to action.

### ***Strategic Leadership and Federated Execution***

Infosys responded to the crisis with a highly competent and flexible action plan, guided from its "War Room" a cross-functional team that worked tirelessly to coordinate action. At the onset of the pandemic, Infosys immediately established the War Room team to shape its response. The fast mobilization drew from the company's experience handling disasters across the globe. More than 30 centers around the world Infosys have dealt with natural disasters, such as flooding, typhoons, earthquakes, energy crisis, and protests, in various geographies to restore normal business. Additionally, the company's operations in China gave it an early indicator to begin preparing alternative strategies.

When Infosys realized that the pandemic would impact client delivery, it made transparent assessment and communications paramount. Working intimately with the clients' operations and security teams, from the first conversation to the ongoing evolution of the situation throughout the year, Infosys ensured it observed best practices and adhered to compliance requirements. This speedy organization on the part of Infosys simplified agreements with clients, translating to rapid implementation. Similarly, close connections with local governments and administrators facilitated necessary staff and equipment movements.

The War Room team includes individuals from across all parts of Infosys, from business and technology functions and global offices. Input, from all departments and levels, has been essential to the company's resilience and the success of the War Room's strategy. Embracing perspectives from up and down the company, the War Room empowered many Infosys employees who are not typically considered management to help develop a strategy and drive its implementation worldwide. Bringing together a

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**- Alpa Shah, Global Vice President CX Practice**

diverse team to discuss issues and take steps to resolve them inspires sharper decision-making and creates better policy than with a small homogenous executive cluster. It allows more careful consideration of information and how it impacts clients and employees.

A crucial aspect of the Infosys response has been the distributed decision-making. The War Room provided leadership but allowed individual offices to make local determinations. Immediately upon forming

the War Room, the team began developing guidelines for how to operate in the pandemic and facilitate work-from-home continuity. In a federated style, the guidelines were just that; the company empowered each of the more than 30 offices to implement measures and adapt to local situations. The War Room team avoided dictating commands and holding control at the India head office, yet it remained available 24 hours per day (in the first 100 days) to assist any crisis. This federated style ensured that Infosys locations could execute a strategy and take the means required to deliver for the client as fast as possible.

### ***Making Work from Home Work for Over 30,000***

In the most visible response to the pandemic, Infosys undertook the massive effort to enable work from home for more than 30,000 employees. In a reflection of the company's resilience, competence, and extraordinary effort, Infosys made a seamless transition without compromising client delivery and continuing service level agreements. Within one week, most employees across the company were working from home, and within one month, 100% of production employees were WFH enabled across geographies. With a vast WFH workforce, Infosys adjusted its quality control and centralized information system that measure performance, and most impressively, clients noted the continued productivity.

*“I made a first person review of the status that I would like to share with you.*

*First, the contingency plan done in the past were working properly and you got from the company all the HW and accesses to run your BCP without affecting the business*

*Second, Infosys has proven flexibility and proactivity in this difficult situation and always keeping us informed (customer orientation)*

*Third, our daily business has not been impacted even when you have been providing the service in “home office” mode*

**-Manager with a German Multinational Automotive Corporation**

Most visibly, after government lockdown orders and permissions to begin WFH, the company started the massive effort to distribute endpoints, desktops, and laptops, to employees. This asset allocation began as soon as practicable in each location. For example in India, when the shift covering the United States East Coast ended at 2:30 am local time, employees logged off and the information technology (IT) team configured their device to work from home with a remote access gateway. They provided credentials to access the virtual private network, boxed it up, and sent it home with the employee to begin work the next day. Critically, the company made bulk purchases of additional laptops to provide more flexibility and advantages, accelerating the transition away from traditional desktops and better addressing the new stresses of WFH. Now, Infosys counts approximately 30,000 laptops, shipped about 20,000 machines to local addresses, and made bulk purchases of WiFi adaptors, data dongles, and Subscriber Identification Module cards for mobile data connectivity.

Infosys took the principled step of providing connectivity for employees. In the early days of the WFH transition, the company reimbursed employees' cost of using their mobile data plans or broadband. As the year evolved, employees received a regular allowance for bandwidth requirements. Moreover, some locations lacked reliable power supplies, so Infosys sent these employees their own uninterrupted power supply system

Remote access and data security became paramount in the move to WFH; consequently, Infosys made a significant effort to assure clients, especially those in financial services, that privacy and compliance regulations are studiously observed. In cooperation with the client's security teams, Infosys implemented additional data encryption procedures on 'dumb' terminals and applied encryption to the newly purchased laptops. Additionally, the Infosys security team installed data leakage protection software and partnered with a leading cloud security platform provider to add another coverage layer. These security measures came in addition to the network security measures and training on "do's and don'ts."

### ***Social Capital from Mutual Trust***

Infosys performed incredible feats and implemented swift changes because of the fundamental social capital and trust that it cultivates with all employees. The pandemic revealed a deep expression of mutual respect between the company and employees, making asset allocation, at great distances, an honest and uncomplicated process for more than 30,000 individuals. As employees shifted to WFH, many volunteered beyond what was asked to make the transition effective, using their own vehicles to transport endpoints. They showed dedication to clients by working extra hours if necessary to meet timelines and commitments. Infosys had planned to arrange for equipment transport through couriers, but the most efficient means was an across the organization and geographies effort to support one another. This elegant simplicity allowed Infosys to bring operations back to normal much earlier than many competing companies.

Moreover, Infosys showed its commitment to health and safety throughout the year. Regular health check-ins became the norm for office locations, and in the event of a documented infection, the entire site was closed, deep cleaned, and unoccupied for 48 hours. Despite any interruption in businesses, Infosys showed employees how seriously it valued safe procedures.

Cooperation across the organization, in all functions, enabled speedy and orderly evacuation within two hours when the center identified an infection. In addition to transitioning to WFH without compromising service delivery, Infosys also retained all employees by cross-skilling where necessary.

Further, throughout the challenging year, Infosys prioritized the physical and overall well-being of employees. The company created numerous programs to support employees, making counseling available for mental health, nutrition, and fitness. Additionally, the company coordinated volunteer programs during the pandemic, focusing on education and community public service. These programs came in addition to efforts to transition in-person activities to online video, continuing to recognize milestones and birthdays, as well as frequent forums to interact over parenting advice, hobbies, and informal conversation. Infosys also made an effort to set up sessions for the children of employees, including them in the engagement and acknowledging their sacrifice and struggle. This frequent engagement is a continuation of the themes that Infosys has cultivated and that engendered mutual respect.

### ***Satisfying Customers and Continuing Growth Despite Challenging Year***

Infosys not only succeeded in delivering as promised to customers during the pandemic, but it thrived and found continued growth and customer satisfaction. In 2020, Infosys received the highest customer satisfaction scores in its history and crossed the line for \$1 billion in revenues. As a zero-debt company, Infosys demonstrated its stability and ability to invest, even in a crisis, a quality that clients seek out. Infosys attracted numerous new clients during the pandemic, completing 14 new client transitions via remote methods (including hiring, training, and deployment). Most notably, Infosys finalized a deal (one of the largest in the BPM industry) with Vanguard to handle recordkeeping operations for its defined contributions business. Infosys BPM has garnered over 150 client testimonials, praising the company's performance, which is quite impressive especially given the ongoing pandemic.

*“(I) would like to acknowledge the Infosys team, who did a fantastic job implementing a business continuity plan in an unpredictable environment. Working in an agile mode, Infosys moved all team members to work from home in an extremely short period. Each employee’s health and safety was taken into consideration while focusing on business continuity. Let’s stay mobilized and focused to overcome this challenging situation, as one Team.”*

*– Client Program Director for a French Multinational*

*“The pandemic revealed a deep expression of mutual respect between the company and employees, making asset allocation, at great distances, an honest and uncomplicated process for more than 30,000 individuals. As employees shifted to WFH, many volunteered beyond what was asked to make the transition effective, using their own vehicles to transport endpoints.”*

***- Nick Baugh, Best Practices Research Analyst***

*“Thank you all for remaining focused on what is important. All our teams are still working from home with various local lockdown requirements. We have continued to deliver through this time –paying people and suppliers and closing the books on time. This has been the result of many hours of hard work from you all, on top of the challenges of working remotely. Thank you for everything you put in each day to make Group Services a well-run internal business and a great place to work.”*

*- Head of Group Services for a leading mining company*

Infosys achieved this growth and received accolades with its new WFH/hybrid model, reflecting the effort to make it function smoothly and with practices that likely will remain in place. Infosys’s transitions team adapted to the new dynamic and market imperatives superlatively from introductions to implementing technology, infrastructure, and training. The team built new technology tools and adjusted processes effectively to undertake the knowledge transfers that previously required significant and sustained in-person meetings. Indeed, with the latest toolset and experience, Infosys has taken the opportunity to expand its reach to labor pools in new locations to serve clients with specific language needs.

### ***Donating Service to Society***

In addition to adapting its business, Infosys undertook a philanthropic effort in coordination with the government of Karnataka to build a digital solution aiding in contact tracing and health services. In collaboration with the health secretary in Karnataka, Infosys quickly assembled a special development team. Extraordinarily, the team designed, developed, and launched a mobile application (app) titled Apthamitra (meaning close friend) in just 14 days. Initially, the app served to scan and digitize passenger logs and aid in tracing infections and risks. As the year evolved, Apthamitra integrated with the state’s healthcare system to connect citizens with support services, a helpline, and telemedicine as well as support those in the medical field. Infosys tied the app with one of its delivery centers, to aid health services. Moreover, Infosys created a similar app for its Rhode Island, United States office to assist in contract tracing, health monitoring, and broadcasting relevant updates and information for employees. Most strikingly, Frost & Sullivan applauds Infosys for pursuing all of these initiatives purely pro bono, to contribute to society in a crisis.

## Conclusion

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As the COVID-19 pandemic stunned and disrupted businesses throughout 2020, business processes management (BPM) service providers found themselves changing every internal process while clients depended on service continuity for their operations. Infosys BPM (Infosys) displayed a remarkable composure in strategically responding to the crisis rather than merely reacting. Recognizing that conditions differ from location to location, Infosys's leadership created guidelines from the central War Room team. It empowered local offices to make their own decisions to take fast action. Streamlined adaptations in asset allocation, connectivity, security, and quality control enabled agile business continuity for clients. The company's solid foundation of trust and mutual respect throughout the organization facilitated the swift response and allowed Infosys to continue growing past the mark of \$1billion in revenues. Further, Infosys expressed a depth of character and philanthropic conscience in helping the state of Karnataka to build and launch a contact tracing and health support application at an impressive speed.

For its strong federated strategy, agile execution, and commitment to its employees and serving society, Infosys BPM is recognized with Frost & Sullivan's 2021 Global Competitive Strategy Leadership Award in the BPM outsourcing space.



## What You Need to Know about the Competitive Strategy Leadership Recognition

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Frost & Sullivan's Competitive Strategy Leadership Award recognizes the company with a stand-out approach to achieving top-line growth and a superior customer experience.

### Best Practices Award Analysis

For the Competitive Strategy Leadership Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

#### *Strategy Innovation*

**Strategy Effectiveness:** Effective strategy balances short-term performance needs with long-term aspirations and overall company vision

**Strategy Execution:** Company strategy utilizes Best Practices to support consistent and efficient processes

**Competitive Differentiation:** Solutions or products articulate and display unique competitive advantages

**Executive Team Alignment:** Executive team focuses on staying ahead of key competitors via a unified execution of its organization's mission, vision, and strategy

**Stakeholder Integration:** Company strategy reflects the needs or circumstances of all industry stakeholders, including competitors, customers, investors, and employees

#### *Customer Impact*

**Price/Performance Value:** Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

**Customer Purchase Experience:** Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

**Customer Ownership Experience:** Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

**Customer Service Experience:** Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

**Brand Equity:** Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty

