



HFS OneOffice™ Hot Vendors: Q2 2022

JULY 2022

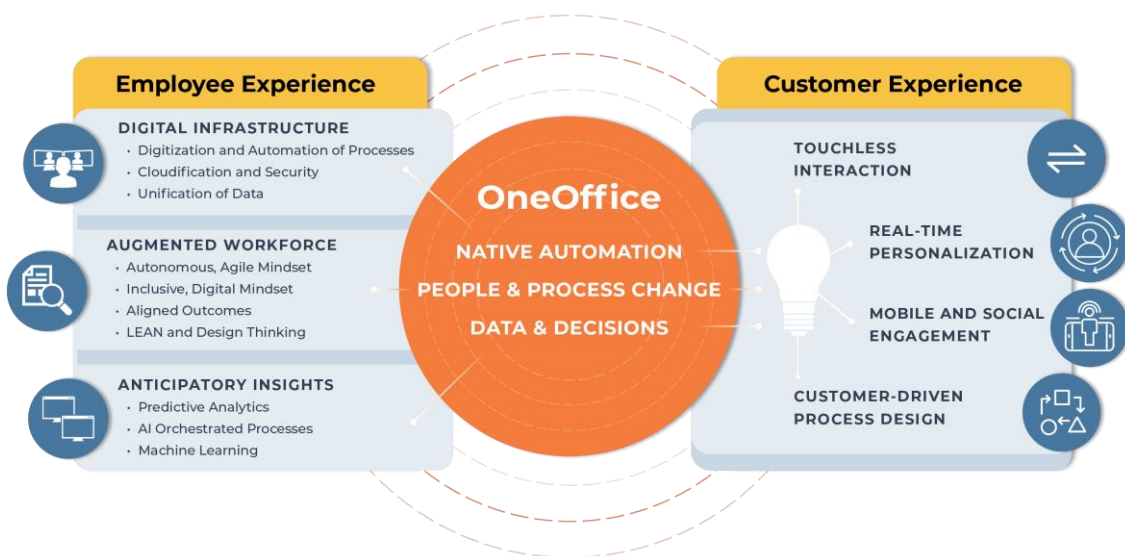
Excerpt for Working Solutions

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HFS Hot Vendors are an exclusive group of emerging players, each with a differentiated value proposition for the HFS OneOffice™ in Exhibit 1 or the HFS OneEcosystem™ in Exhibit 2.

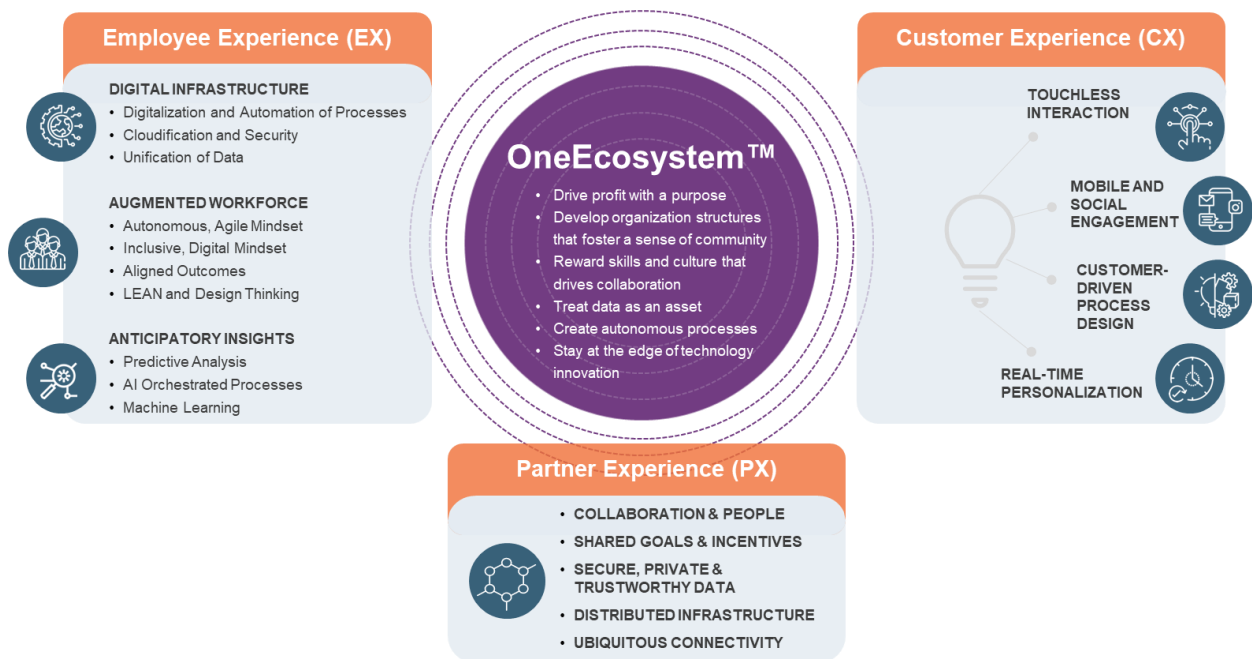
Exhibit 1: The HFS OneOffice™ Organization



Source: HFS Research, 2022

HFS analysts regularly speak with numerous exciting start-ups and emerging players. We designate a select group as the HFS Hot Vendors based on their offerings' distinctiveness, ecosystem robustness, client impact, financial position, and impact in our OneOffice or OneEcosystem frameworks. The HFS Hot Vendors may not have the scale and size required to feature them in our Top 10 reports, but they have the vision and strategy to impact and disrupt the market.

Exhibit 2: HFS OneEcosystem™ adds partner experience to employee and customer experience



Source: HFS Research, 2022

In the rapidly changing space of digital operations, enterprises realize they cannot be everything to everyone. Whether you are an enterprise consuming third-party services, a service provider, or a technology provider, you will need a smart ecosystem to succeed and survive in the future. HFS Hot Vendors are service and technology providers hand-picked by our analysts to help you flesh out your smart ecosystem with offerings that solve today's complex business problems and exploit market

opportunities. HFS Hot Vendors display truly differentiated offerings and out-of-the-box thinking that can be both inspiring and useful. This report profiles five shortlisted players we designated as HFS Hot Vendors, listed in Exhibit 3, based on our rigorous five-step assessment during Q2 2022. The HFS Hot Vendor designation for the following players will remain in place until the end of Q2 2023 (one year) when we will repeat the process for renewing the HFS Hot Vendors designation.

Exhibit 3: HFS OneOffice™/OneEcoSystem™ Hot Vendors Q2 2022 Edition (in alphabetical order)

 GoCodeGreen

Aligning software and technology to sustainability

 PEOPLE SHORES

Impact sourcing for socially conscious corporations

 Singularity AI
From Singularity Systems

Advanced machine learning platform focused on IDP

 WORKING SOLUTIONS

Flexible CX services in a remote gig model

 xelix

Data-science-based bolt-ons to improve procure-to-pay systems

Note: Logos are hyperlinks.

Note: The HFS OneOffice™/OneEcoSystem™ Hot Vendor Designation is valid for one year from Q2 2022 to Q2 2023.

Source: HFS Research, 2022

Flexible CX services in a remote gig model

Authors: Krupa KS, Melissa O'Brien

While the pandemic accelerated work-from-home and crowdsourcing trends, these models have been maturing for decades. One early mover from long before lockdowns forced remote contact centers is Working Solutions, an onshore, completely “virtual” contact center BPO provider. The private company’s remote workforce includes sales, customer care, and technical experts providing multichannel customer experience (CX) services, analytics, and back-office support.

Working Solutions has a network of 150,000+ “on demand” contact center work-from-home agents, all independent contractors, across the United States and Canada. The company is known for flexible workforce capabilities to scale up and down sales and customer service quickly for clients. The solution supports companies with everyday business, unforeseen events, such as COVID 19, and long-range projects.

Working Solutions’ sophisticated virtual workforce recruiting, education, and operations capabilities are its strengths and differentiators. The service provider has a unique mobile workforce model consisting of agents grouped by their skills and availability and a scheduling tool that enables simple required slot fulfillment. Its stringent recruitment process is complemented by automation and AI-enabled testing to identify potentially successful agents. Analytics tools, such as Power BI, are used to consistently improve the reach and matching of potential candidates. Once onboarded, its online agent-training modules are taught 100% by college-degreed educators with in-person and virtual-classroom experience. A college-level learning management system further ensures quality results. Working Solutions finds these competencies to be critical to its success in quality services and agent retention. The company reports an average agent tenure of 2.8 years and significantly lower attrition rates than the industry average.

Another point of differentiation is that Working Solutions is a woman-owned, woman-founded business, with women in 70% of senior management, 60+% of front-line leadership, and 85% of customer-facing agent roles. Given this distinction, Working Solutions has an edge to win government and corporate work reserved for women-owned businesses. As diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) come to the forefront in business conversations, Working Solutions’ 26-year history of commitment to recruiting from underserved communities and targeting segments such as the differently-abled, veterans, and veterans’ spouses is more important than ever.

Client references attest to a strong partnership approach Working Solutions brings to its relationships, and they applaud the quality of its services. More importantly, clients verify that Working Solutions’ “secret sauce” lies in its unique, proven recruitment, education and operations models, maintaining an excellent standard of agent skill and quality of service delivery. Clients raved that the rigor Working Solutions puts into onboarding and training is best in class in the industry, streamlining their own agent curriculum and elevating it, often with double-digit improvements.

HFS' take

HFS has named Working Solutions an HFS OneOffice/OneEcosystem Hot Vendor for its effective answer to questions of workforce models and employee engagement—among the most important hot button issues of 2022. So, while many companies continue to grapple with the nuances of remote and hybrid working and how to leverage gig models to augment the workforce as a new reality, companies like Working Solutions are resources with decades of experience. While working from home is no doubt a basic feature of Working Solutions' offering, the company rightfully does not lead its go-to-market based on remote work. The world of remote CX services emerged long before the pandemic with the value proposition of quick ramp-ups, flexibility, and agility, with cost efficiency as a perk. Remote and gig work is just a way of enabling that agility that companies require in their CX models.

What stands out to HFS is Working Solutions' unique approach to its agent engagement model. Crowdsourcing and gig work are still areas where enterprise buyers and workforces require education around issues such as employment models, tax implications, and, most importantly, quality control. Working Solutions seems to have carved out a niche with its educator-delivered training and development that is satisfying and exceeds the clients' quality expectations while enabling great agent experience. This support and enablement of customer experience through developing and empowering customer-facing people is one of the most important focus areas for business leaders today and a key theme HFS is exploring in its research this year.

Vendor factsheet

- **Founded:** 1996
- **Headquarters:** Dallas, Texas
- **Key personnel:** Kim Houlne, President and CEO; Cathy Metry, CFO; Gail Rigler, CMO; Ashok Narayan, Strategy Technology Officer; Gary Ash, Senior VP Business Development; Kristin Skiko, VP, Talent Management; Tamara Schroer, VP, Education and Development; April Wiita, VP, Program Success; Tracey Sloan, VP, Innovative Solutions and Support; Billy West, VP, IT
- **Funding:** Housatonic Partners
- **Solution portfolio:** Customer care, sales support, analytics, back-office support, technology
- **Industry coverage:** Consumer services, energy, financial, healthcare, telecom and media, retail, and travel/hospitality
- **Notable clients:** A Place for Mom, Biotel, FedPoint, Intuit, Learning A-Z, Peloton, PlanetArt, Sabre, Zillow

HFS Research authors



David Cushman

Hot Vendors – Editor in Chief, Practice Leader

David is Editor-in-Chief for the HFS OneOffice™ Hot Vendors publications. He also leads our OneOffice™ Emerging Technology Practice and is our strategic lead on automation. David is a published author (*The 10 Principles of Open Business*, Palgrave-Macmillan), a former Tier 1 consulting director, and a digital strategy and innovation expert with experience in start-up, scale-up, and large-scale digital transformation programs. He is based in the UK.



Hridika Biswas

Senior Analyst

Hridika's focus is on the domains of finance and accounting, and BPO/outsourcing. A recent addition to our analyst team, she aims to extend her experience and work across domains, building connections with clients and providers across different functions. Prior to joining, she gained seven years of experience in quantitative research and analysis at Kantar. She holds an MBA in marketing from IBS Hyderabad and a bachelor of commerce degree from JD Birla Institute Kolkata.



Khalda De Souza

Associate Practice Leader

Based in London, UK, Khalda is part of the leadership team for the HFS SaaS XXV program, which helps innovative, up-and-coming, and impactful SaaS software vendors maximize their potential by leveraging meaningful partnerships with service providers. Khalda has extensive experience in providing strategic advice to both IT services providers and customer organizations globally.

HFS Research authors



Reetika Fleming
Research Leader

Reetika leads coverage for smart analytics, insurance, and finance and accounting at HFS Research. She studies the broad use of data and analytics within enterprises with a research focus on emerging strategies to institutionalize machine learning and other AI techniques. Her research extends into the impact of digital business models, IoT, smart analytics, and AI on business process services for insurance specifically and finance and accounting broadly.



Krupa KS
Senior Analyst

Krupa is part of our data products team. She is responsible for ITO-BPO outsourcing contracts, merger and acquisition data collection, and analysis for different service lines. She also works with practice leads on a range of research reports. She holds a bachelor's degree in electrical and electronics engineering from Visvesvaraya Technological University. She is based in India.



Josh Matthews
Practice Leader

Josh leads HFS' coverage of sustainability and the energy and utilities industries, built on academic and industry expertise across chemical engineering, management, and sustainability; he spoke at COP26, the 2021 UN climate summit, presenting the latest HFS sustainability research study. Josh also focuses on supply chain, the TMT (telecom, media, and technology) industry, and the HFS Triple-A Trifecta of automation, analytics, and AI segments. He is UK based.

HFS Research authors



Melissa O'Brien

Research Leader

Melissa leads HFS' research initiatives for digital front-office services, including customer engagement operations, digital marketing, cognitive agents, and CX design and consulting, focusing on the trends and change agents driving customer experience across the enterprise. In addition, her industry research focuses on key dynamics within retail, CPG, travel, and hospitality with regards to customer-centric strategies, intelligent operations, and service delivery. She is US based.



About HFS

Insight. Inspiration. Impact.

HFS is a unique analyst organization that combines deep visionary expertise with rapid demand side analysis of the Global 2000. Its outlook for the future is admired across the global technology and business operations industries.

Its analysts are respected for their no-nonsense insights based on demand side data and engagements with industry practitioners.

HFS Research introduced the world to terms such as "RPA" (Robotic Process Automation) in 2012 and more recently, the HFS OneOffice™. The HFS mission is to provide visionary insight into the major innovations impacting business operations such as Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Internet of Things, Digital Business Models and Smart Analytics.

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