

INFORMATION SERVICES • PHILIPPINES

The trusted-answer standard: the executive economics of information services outsourcing to the Philippines.

An analysis of why records processed is a volume vanity metric, how information accuracy and answer trustworthiness — never lookup throughput — decide the true cost of an information-services operation once stale records, wrong answers, unsourced responses, and re-work are counted, and the vendor-selection discipline that keeps the record current and the answer sourced.

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ABOUT THIS SERIES — VOLUME 71

Every information-services proposal is priced per record or per lookup, because activity is easy to count. This volume is about the only outcome the people who rely on the information actually depend on: the answer that is accurate, current, and sourced — a record that reflects reality today, not the day it was last touched. The gap between processing a record and serving a trusted answer is where stale data, wrong responses, and re-work live. The full series lives at piton-global.com.

THE PITON-GLOBAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

About the authors



John Maczynski
Chief Executive Officer

John has bought information-desk capacity for three decades, and learned that the operation that processes every record and lets a share of them go stale is the most expensive one a knowledge or records leader can hire — because a wrong answer given confidently is a decision made on bad data, an out-of-date record is a liability nobody sees until it matters, and an unsourced response is one nobody can defend. His standing question ignores the throughput report: of the records you touched, how many are accurate, current, and sourced today?

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Ralf Ellspermann
Chief Strategy Officer

Ralf has spent twenty-five years running Philippine information-services floors, and he judges a desk by its information accuracy and currency, not its lookups-per-day: whether the record is right and current and the answer sourced, or merely touched and moved on. The information contract in Section 3 codifies what he learned rebuilding desks that cleared queues fast and let the knowledge base rot — the ones that hit the throughput number and served answers no one could trust.

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ABOUT PITON-GLOBAL

PITON-Global is a buyer-side advisory practice, Manila-based since 2001, that has never operated a delivery floor or taken a placement commission. Its stock-in-trade is knowing the Philippine provider market at the operating level — 1,000+ mapped operations, re-verified continuously, including each information-services team's real accuracy and currency record rather than its lookups-per-day headline — and converting that knowledge into a shortlist of six to ten genuinely qualified partners per engagement. Buyers from Tripadvisor, Garmin, TSYS, HealthPartners, Yetipay, Workrise, and Norman Disney & Young have run their searches through the practice.

SECTION 01

Executive summary

-58%

Fully-loaded cost per trusted answer vs. US onshore

99.3%+

Information accuracy on vetted teams, up from 88-94%

<2%

Stale-record rate on maintained corpora, vs. 15-25%

6.3×

First-year ROI, reconstructed case (Section 6)

An information-services engagement is bought on the price per record or per lookup and paid for on the answers it gets wrong. The vendor reports millions of records processed at a fraction of the onshore cost; the knowledge leader, the records manager, and the teams downstream find the entries that went stale months ago, the answers served confidently from data that had since changed, the responses no one could trace to a source, and the decisions made — and later reversed — on all three. The operation hit its throughput number and the organization inherited a knowledge base it could no longer trust. The gap between processing a record and serving a trusted answer is where the real cost of cheap information services hides, because a stale or unsourced record is not throughput delivered — it is a wrong decision waiting to be made.

The Philippines — English-fluent, detail-disciplined, with a deep records-and-knowledge talent pool — is where information services are delivered with the most accuracy-and-currency discipline. Five findings:

- 1 Records processed is the industry's most flattering number.** Any desk can touch a record and log it. Vetted teams are measured on outcome: information accuracy, currency, and answer sourcing. Weak providers quote a low per-record price the organization repays in stale data, wrong answers, and re-work. Section 2 shows the gap.
- 2 The trusted answer, not the fast lookup, is the product.** An answer someone can act on comes from an accurate record, kept current, with a source attached — not from clearing a queue. Teams that maintain accuracy serve answers that hold; teams that clear throughput serve a corpus that quietly rots and answers no one can defend.
- 3 A bad answer cuts both ways — wrong data and stale data.** An outright error misleads on the spot; a record that was right once but is now out of date misleads exactly when it is trusted most. Vetted teams hold accuracy above 99.3% and staleness under 2% precisely because both tails cost — the error caught and the currency lost.
- 4 The wrong decision and the re-work, not the lookup, are what cost.** A record served wrong costs the re-research, the correction cascade, and the decision made on it before anyone noticed — many times the per-record saving. Teams that maintain accuracy and currency keep the corpus trustworthy, and that avoided cost — not the offshore rate alone — is where the case study's return is built.

- 5 **Contract on the trusted answer, not the processed record.** The contracting failure of information services is paying per record and hoping it is accurate, current, and sourced. Vetted deals price against accuracy floors, currency targets, and sourcing standards, making trusted answers the team's problem, which is where it belongs.

The intended reader is a chief knowledge officer, head of records or library services, or operations leader buying information services per record or per lookup and paying for it in stale data, wrong answers, and re-work. Sections 2-4 separate the teams that serve trusted answers from the teams that clear records; Sections 5-7, the method and the proof.

SECTION 02

The volume mirage: records processed versus trusted answers

Figure 1 reads a maintained corpus as a trust ladder: of every 100 records the vendor reports as "processed," how many actually clear each rung to become an answer someone can act on. A weak provider bills against the top rung; the organization lives on the bottom one.

FIG. 1 — THE TRUST LADDER: OF 100 "PROCESSED" RECORDS, HOW MANY BECOME A TRUSTED ANSWER



Amber = what the weak provider bills. Blue rungs = how a "processed" corpus erodes to just 63 trusted answers per 100 when accuracy, currency, and sourcing are each imperfect. Green bottom bar = a vetted team's maintained corpus, where 98 of 100 clear all three rungs. PITON-Global engagement instrumentation, 2025-26, vs. pre-engagement composite.

The economics follow the bottom rung, not the top. On the weak side, 100 records are billed but only 63 survive accuracy, currency, and sourcing to become an answer anyone should act on — the other 37 are wrong, stale, or unattributable, and each is a decision hazard the organization pays for later. On the vetted side, 98 of 100 clear every rung because accuracy is held, currency is maintained on a refresh cadence, and every answer carries its source. A low per-record price that yields a 63% trust rate is not a saving; it is a corpus that misleads a third of the time it is relied on. The trust-ladder audit — accuracy, currency, sourcing — is the cheapest due-diligence instrument in this paper.

SECTION 03

The information contract: get it right, keep it current, source the answer

Figure 2 lays out the three clauses of a working information-services contract as one continuous cycle — because a corpus is never "done," only kept trustworthy — the machinery a floor read verifies before any per-record price is believed.

FIG. 2 – THE MAINTENANCE CYCLE, AS OPERATED ON VETTED TEAMS

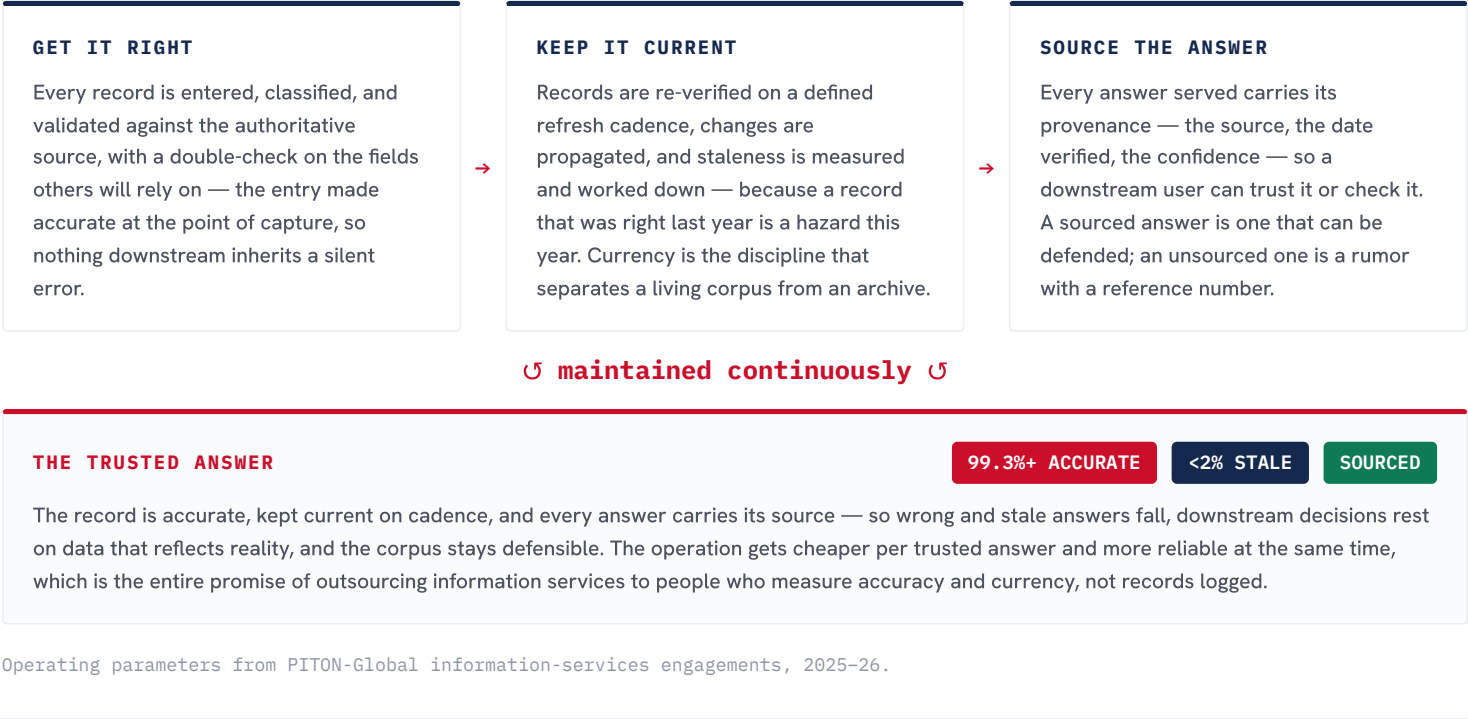


TABLE 2 – INFORMATION-SERVICES BENCHMARKS, VETTED VS. BASELINE (2025-26)			
METRIC	VETTED TOP TIER	BASELINE	EXECUTIVE READING
Information accuracy rate	99.3%+	88-94%	The only number a decision follows
Stale-record rate	<2%	15-25%	Living corpus, or an archive
Answer-sourcing rate	98%+	50-70%	Defensible, or a rumor
Re-work / correction rate vs. baseline	-64%	baseline	"Get it right" — held or not
Query turnaround (median)	<4 hrs	1-3 days	Answer when needed, or too late

Source: PITON-Global information-services engagement data 2025-26; baseline = typical pre-engagement operations billed on records.

The strategic read: the lookup mill's -31% per record is a false economy — re-research, correction cascades, and decisions made on stale data lift its true cost per trusted answer far above the per-record gap, and a wrong decision is a cost no rate recovers. The vetted Manila team's -58% is real because it is measured where the value is: the answer that is accurate, current, and sourced. Buy on records processed and you buy the amber bar of Figure 1; buy on cost-per-trusted-answer and you buy accuracy and currency — the same discipline every volume in this series keeps arriving at from a different door.

SECTION 05

Sourcing discipline: the 7-Step Vendor Vetting Framework, applied to information services

Information-services diligence adds one hard requirement to every step: a per-record price is real only when the accuracy and currency behind it survive a re-check against the authoritative source and a staleness sample. The funnel below is representative of a 30-70-seat information-desk search.

FIG. 3 – THE 7-STEP FRAMEWORK AS AN INFORMATION-SERVICES FUNNEL

STEP	WHAT IT ELIMINATES IN AN INFORMATION-SERVICES SEARCH	FIELD REMAINING
1 Requirements definition	Throughput-first scoping: fixes the accuracy floor, the currency and sourcing targets, the re-work ceiling, and the turnaround the desk must meet by information domain	1,000+
2 Market mapping	Lookup mills: operations that bill records and treat staleness and wrong answers as the client's problem, and generalist floors with no records, research, or knowledge-management depth	~42
3 Capability screening	Teams without the machinery: audited accuracy history, a currency/refresh cadence, source-citation discipline, a validation-and-QA workflow, and coverage across your information domains	~12
4 Compliance & security audit	Weak governance: data protection and IP/licensing handling, access controls on the corpus and source systems, provenance retention, SOC 2 scope covering the information-services stack	~7
5 Operational diligence	The corpus read: re-check maintained records against source for accuracy; sample for staleness against the refresh cadence; trace answers to sources; interview on how they handle a conflicting-source case	4–6
6 Competitive RFP & negotiation	Per-record pricing: finalists bid against accuracy floors, currency and sourcing targets, and re-work ceilings — all carrying credits for stale, wrong, or unsourced records	2–3
7 Transition & launch governance	Cold start: the team calibrates against your domains, sources, and refresh cadence on a sample before it owns the live corpus, with the accuracy floor and currency cadence certified before steady state, PITON-Global embedded buyer-side	1

Field-remaining counts represent a 30–70-seat information-desk search, PITON-Global engagements 2024–26.

The standing guarantees hold: **vendor neutrality** — PITON-Global operates no information desks, maintains no corpus, and takes no placement economics, so the shortlist reflects audited accuracy and currency performance, not inventory; **right-sizing** — teams for whom your operation is a flagship account. Six to ten genuinely qualified providers, delivered within 48–72 hours, free to the buyer, competing through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP.

SECTION 06 • ANONYMIZED CASE STUDY

Re-basing the desk on answer trustworthiness: a 55-seat information-services rebuild, reconstructed

Engagement IF-084 is a US data-and-information provider and enterprise knowledge group — maintaining a reference corpus of roughly 3.4 million records and answering 190,000 lookups a year — that had offshored the desk to a per-record vendor. The record price was excellent; the trust was not: information accuracy sat near 92%, roughly a fifth of the corpus had gone stale against its refresh schedule, over a third of answers went out without a traceable source, and internal teams had stopped trusting the desk. The chief knowledge officer wanted the reach without the stale data and the unsourced answers. Identifying details are anonymized under NDA.

SELECTION (WEEKS 0–8, CORPUS READS)

Requirements fixed a 99.3% accuracy floor, a <2% staleness ceiling, a 98% sourcing target, and a re-work ceiling. Mapping produced 42 claimants; the machinery screen — audited accuracy, refresh cadence, source-citation discipline, QA workflow — left 12; the compliance-and-security audit left 7. Blind record re-checks against source, plus staleness samples, shortlisted 5. A Manila team won priced against accuracy and currency, with a corpus re-check written into the reporting spec.

TRANSITION (MONTHS 2–7, CALIBRATED FIRST)

The team calibrated against the provider's domains, sources, and refresh cadence on sample records before owning the live corpus; the accuracy floor was certified in month 3, and a staleness work-down cleared the backlog by month 6. The validation-and-QA loop fed coaching from day one. By month 7 information accuracy reached 99.4%, staleness fell below 2%, answer-sourcing hit 98%, and re-work dropped 64%. PITON-Global chaired the answer-trust review board to steady state.

TABLE 3 – IF-084 FIRST-YEAR VALUE BUILD-UP (US\$)		
VALUE COMPONENT	YEAR 1	BASIS
Labor arbitrage on the 55-seat desk	\$1.32M	103.1k productive hrs × (\$22.30 – \$9.50)
Bad-decision & correction-cascade cost avoided	\$0.78M	Decisions on stale/wrong data, now prevented
Re-research & re-work reduction	\$0.34M	Re-lookup of unsourced/stale records removed
Product-trust & retention value	\$0.18M	Reduced churn where data trust drives renewal
Gross value created	\$2.62M	
Less: engagement & transition costs	(\$0.42M)	Calibration, staleness work-down, source-system integration; advisory fee \$0 (provider-paid model)
Net value ÷ cost = first-year ROI	6.3×	\$2.62M ÷ \$0.42M

Figures rounded; accuracy, currency, and re-work effects audit-verified. Method in Methodology & notes.

Fifty percent arbitrage, fifty percent from avoided bad decisions, reduced re-research, and restored product trust — a typical split for the series, earned because the desk was re-based on answer trustworthiness rather than record volume. Every line traces to a diligence step: the accuracy floor to Step 1, the accuracy-and-currency pricing to Step 6, the validation-and-QA workflow to Step 3's contract. The chief knowledge officer's line at the year-one review: "The record price barely moved. What moved is that people trust the answer again — and they stopped checking it twice."

SECTION 07

The executive playbook: governance for the first 180 days

An information-services transition succeeds when the team is measured and paid on accuracy and currency — client in command throughout.

DAYS 0–30
Define trust, contract on it

Set the accuracy floor, the currency and sourcing targets, and the re-work and turnaround thresholds with knowledge and records leadership before launch, and document the get-it-right / keep-it-current / source-the-answer workflow by domain. Contract against accuracy and currency — never per record alone — with floors and targets carrying credits. Stand up the corpus re-check and staleness sample as the program's arbiters of truth.

DAYS 30-90

Calibrate, clear the staleness backlog

Calibrate the team against your domains, sources, and refresh cadence on sample records before it owns the live corpus; certify the accuracy floor and work down the staleness backlog. Switch on the validation-and-QA loop from day one. Publish the information dashboard: accuracy, staleness, sourcing rate, re-work rate, query turnaround.

DAYS 90-180

Own the corpus, certify steady state

Hand the live corpus to the team only after it holds the accuracy floor and the currency cadence. Review the board monthly with the staleness and sourcing trends on the table. Certify steady state on two full refresh cycles at floor; hand over on documented criteria; keep the quarterly corpus re-check and staleness sample standing.

THE FIVE FAILURE MODES WE ARE HIRED TO PREVENT

Paying per record while the corpus goes stale · clearing lookups instead of maintaining accuracy · serving answers with no source · letting currency lapse against the refresh cadence · owning the live corpus before accuracy and currency are proven. All five are settled at selection and contract.

The information-services argument, in one sentence: a processed record is activity and a trusted answer is an accurate, current, sourced record someone can act on, and a vetted Philippine team delivers -58% cost per trusted answer with 99.3%+ accuracy, staleness under 2%, and 98% of answers sourced — for buyers who audit the corpus and sample for staleness instead of counting records, and compete the finalists through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP. Anyone can process a record. We make sure you buy the team whose answer you can trust.

METHODOLOGY & NOTES

How the numbers were built

Accuracy and currency figures (Fig. 1, Table 2) derive from engagement instrumentation in PITON-Global information-services engagements, 2025-26. Information accuracy and staleness are measured by re-checking maintained records against the authoritative source and sampling against the refresh cadence; answer-sourcing and re-work are measured against the client's pre-engagement baseline. The weak-provider column is a composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence, shown for contrast.

Cost-per-trusted-answer figures (Table 1) are fully loaded — wages, benefits and statutory charges, facilities, corpus and source-system tooling, management and QA overhead including record auditors and currency specialists, attrition-driven recruiting — divided by records that are accurate, current, and sourced, with stale, wrong, or unsourced records excluded from the denominator; US comparators reflect fully-loaded in-house cost. A trusted answer is accurate, current, and traceable to a source.

The case study (IF-084) is anonymized under NDA; volumes and dates are generalized, figures rounded. Accuracy, currency, and re-work effects are audit-verified; the bad-decision-avoided line is a conservative estimate of decisions prevented on stale or wrong data, and the product-trust line reflects retention where data trust drives renewal. $ROI = \text{net first-year value} \div \text{all engagement-related client costs}$. PITON-Global's advisory fee is provider-paid and appears at \$0 in the client cost base; neutrality safeguards are documented at piton-global.com.

Market context draws on IBPAP reporting and PITON-Global's proprietary provider mapping (1,000+ operations; accuracy and currency performance re-verified May 2026). Source licensing and IP handling follow the client's terms. Estimates and projections are PITON-Global analysis and should be cited as such. The full series is available at piton-global.com.



Would your provider's record price survive a corpus-and-staleness audit?

Thirty minutes with John will tell you. Free to buyers, strictly vendor-neutral — an accuracy-and-currency-verified shortlist within two to three business days.

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