

Organization gains multiple benefits by outsourcing through RSM Catamaran

Nonprofits often need to stretch their resources without compromising on service quality. Jared Lyon, president and CEO of Student Veterans of America (SVA), says his organization views outsourcing as a way to not only save money but also to improve operational efficiency.

"Our core focus is delivering programs and services to over 1,600 college chapters," says Lyon. "It's not necessarily some of those more back-of-the-house tasks."

SVA is a nationwide nonprofit that supports military veterans as they transition into higher education. With over 750,000 student veterans across 1,600 college and university campuses in every U.S. state and territory, SVA's mission is to deliver exceptional support to its stakeholders, which include service members, their families, caregivers and survivors.

However, as SVA grew, it faced a challenge typical of nonprofits: balancing operational efficiency with rising costs while staying focused on its core mission. SVA looked to outsourcing as a cost-effective solution.

Handling the details

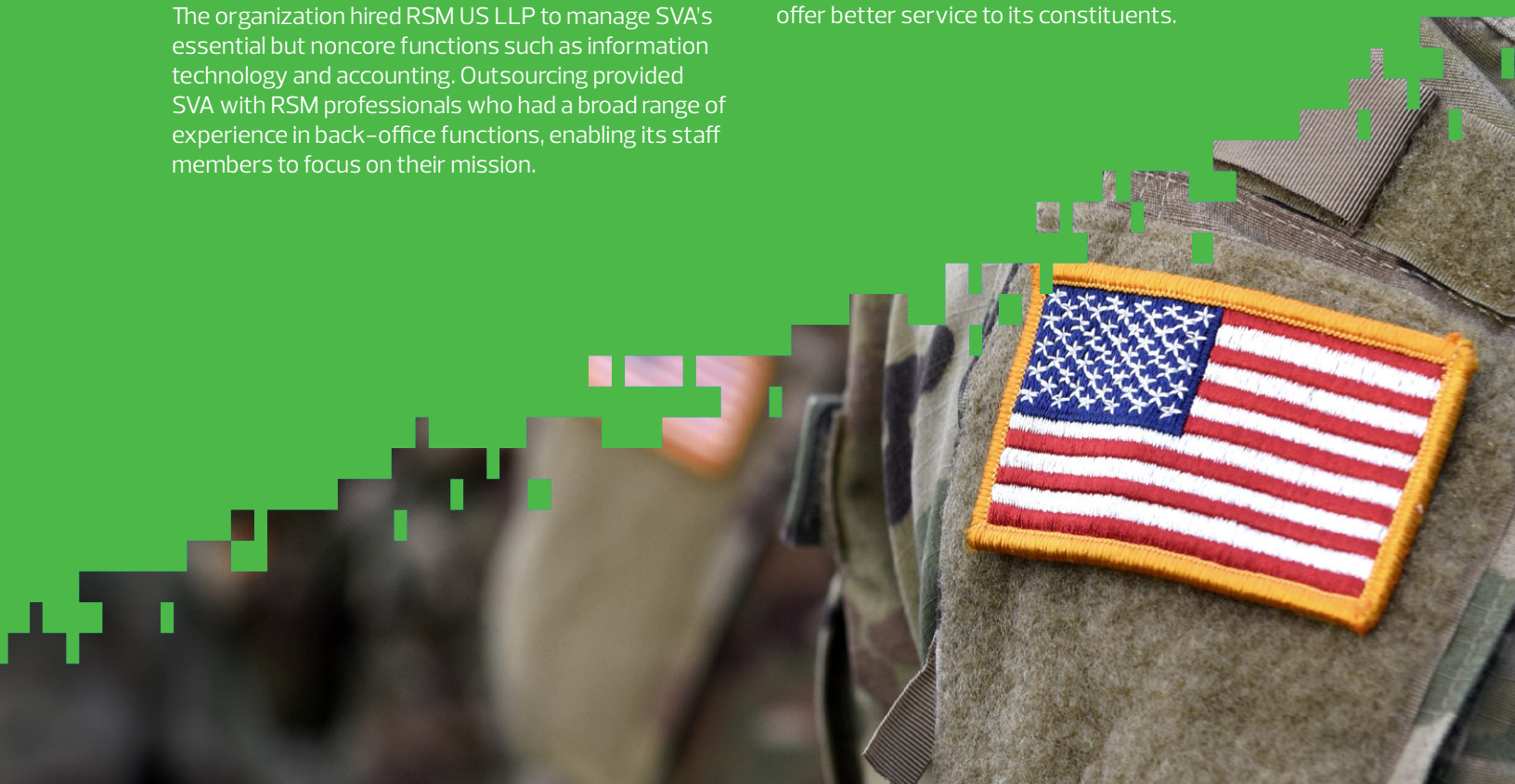
The organization hired RSM US LLP to manage SVA's essential but noncore functions such as information technology and accounting. Outsourcing provided SVA with RSM professionals who had a broad range of experience in back-office functions, enabling its staff members to focus on their mission.

"It saves us money because it'd be a heck of a lot more expensive to hire the number of professionals we have through RSM," said Lyon. "For a team working in multiple time zones, being able to reach out to an IT help desk that's available to us 24/7 allows our team to have technology that keeps pace with our commitment to student veterans."

Lyon says outsourcing to RSM not only saved money but also improved SVA's daily operations and boosted employee morale. By having access to specialized services, employees can avoid getting distracted by technical or operational issues.

In addition, RSM's management of the organization's IT platform meant SVA had more advanced protection against cyberattacks—an increasing risk for national nonprofits. This alleviated SVA leadership's concerns about security and compliance, allowing them to expand the technical tools and resources they can offer to student veterans while keeping vital data secure.

Lyon says that outsourcing allowed SVA to better serve its core constituency. With RSM handling back-office tasks, SVA staff could dedicate more time and energy to providing support and guidance to student veterans. Lyon says the result was a more focused, efficient organization that could offer better service to its constituents.



"Our mission takes a lot of energy," says Lyon. "So if we're worrying about the back-office parts of our business, it takes you away from showing up and meeting stakeholders where they are."

The takeaway

Lyon says that because of RSM Catamaran—RSM's suite of outsourced solutions and managed services—SVA can better focus on what truly matters to the organization while ensuring operational tasks are handled efficiently and effectively.

Since engaging RSM, the organization has seen several improvements, such as enhanced adherence to regulatory and cybersecurity standards. Also, with fewer technical distractions and frustrations, SVA's employees experience a smoother, more productive environment.

"Our staff has a better working experience because of the services that RSM provides," says Lyon. "I really don't know what we'd look like as an organization without the support that we receive for our mission from RSM."

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