



ICT outsourcing to Gaza?

Over the last decade, the ICT-sector in Palestine has shown continuous growth in products and services. Thirteen universities have IT-faculties, with 2500 yearly graduates. There are more than 300 ICT-related companies, both in the West Bank as in Gaza, with a total of around 5000 employees.

Some Palestinian firms have been able to get a foothold in markets beyond Palestinian borders, a high proportion is with Israel and they have created reputation for reliability and quality in the Middle East, Europe and North America. Palestine is now an upcoming outsourcing destination, and some of the local companies work solely for foreign clients. Well-known users of Palestinian ICT services are Alcatel-Lucent, Volvo, HP and Cisco.

Other Palestinian companies have been exporting software products to markets such as Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. A few of the Palestinian ICT firms have also setup subsidiaries abroad. Apart from this, some major western enterprises such as Intel and Siemens have setup joint ventures with Palestinian ICT firms to do R&D work from Palestine.

By utilising the capabilities and skills of ICT service providers in Palestine, clients can:

- Focus on your core business competencies
- Reduce your ICT-related costs
- Expand your business more rapidly with faster time-to-market cycles
- Increase flexibility and scalability of your ICT processes
- Have access to a large pool of highly educated and skilled personnel
- Explore new export opportunities in the Middle-East & Gulfregion.

Most of the foreign outsourcing projects are done by Palestinian companies on the Westbank (e.g. in Ramallah) and Gaza is a lesser known destination. For this reason, we have added a general impression about Gaza, plus the profile of [Unit One](#), an ICT services provider based in Gaza.

1. The Gaza You Don't Know: Beautiful Gaza

When you Google "Gaza", you usually get news and images of occupation, despotism, blood, cries, destruction, death... and the list goes on. And it makes you think, why are these the only results we get when we search, hear, talk or even think about Gaza? Maybe because they overlap the good parts, but there is a completely different side of Gaza buried under all these negativities, this part that you don't know is that Gaza is beautiful.



Why say so? Because when you know what you know about Gaza, you don't expect us to smile, but we do. Because there are things that compensate for what make us miserable, let's take a tour into some of them;

Our Pride

We are some of the most proud people in the world! We take pride of our history, land and wise elders. Gaza is one of the oldest and biggest Palestinian cities and it goes back to 3000 BC. It is considered Palestine's second capital and it holds around 60% of the Palestinian population, making it a block of the Palestinian soul. Its strategic geographical location has made it the target of, failure, colonialism.

Overlooking the Mediterranean, Gaza has forever been a painting colored by the refreshing orange and yellow, and prudent green of its citruses and olives; and scented by their fresh sour and sweetened bitter essences. It is the basket of fresh natural fruits. It has also been the home of some of the world's best fish resource. We are proud of our farmers, fishers, and simplest workers who make this small land a home for large industrial exports; we export fruits and vegetables, furniture, flowers, and industrial food to The Middle East and Europe.

Gaza's ground if crafted by its ancient greats. Its monuments stand to tell stories about its glorious history that makes every inch of it a page of a silver book. One example of its most glorious historical monuments is Al-Basha Palace built for Gaza's prince Jamal Al-Dein Al-Shaqiqi at the time of Bebars since 1260. Lots of other cherished landmarks like Almasjid Alomari and Masjid Sayed Hashim, and Orthodox Church remind us of who we are and where we belong with a simple gaze.

Gaza isn't nicknamed "Gaza Al-Izza" - Gaza of Pride - for nothing. Its strategic geographical location and vast reputation in spite of its size has made it the target of the eyes of colonialism. Gaza was able to stand up for itself and call every colonialist a failure. Our pride to our mother land makes us feel connected with a supreme purpose of life.

Our Unity

There are a lot of Gazans who come back to live here after at least 10 years of living abroad, there are also a lot of Gazans who refuse to leave Gaza no matter what. Ask them: "what brings/keeps you here?" and they will answer: "family."



The family unity is unbreakable. Our religion, tradition, history and humanity keep us together. We form a tight rope of similar behaviors, thoughts and emotions. You see others in you, and others see you in them. We understand one another, and that makes us happy. Our families start from our parents and siblings, going to our relatives, and then expands to the neighborhood. Everybody knows everybody. When you need a hand; you will find 10; when you seek an advice, you get several; when you look for something, there's a race to who finds it first; when you mourn, many will stand by you; when you are happy, many will share it with you.

Children who play in the streets grow up to be best friends for a lifetime; the more the fight as kids, the closer the tights as grownups. They stay together during their school years, and once any of them leaves to study or work abroad, their friends won't stop bugging them to come back. Those children don't only form a group of friends, but they involve their families, too. The parents become parents for their children's friends; they can only feel joyful when they welcome their children's friends in their homes, feed them, suggest them games, tell them stories; and before they know it, they parents become friends, too.

Our weddings are huge family gatherers. They are the big day for both the bride and the groom, and their families, and their relatives, and their friends, and their neighbors, and their acquaintance, and a couple of intruders who just want to dance. The wedding "Fadous" - parade - passes joyfully throughout the streets as if they tell everyone, "rejoice with us!" It continues from the bride's house until the wedding hall. During the wedding, everybody takes turns in dancing and assisting as if it were a competition; from the kids to the old granny's on canes, everybody gets on their feet. In the end, everyone feels responsible for a good wedding day and a beautiful wedding photo. This unforgettable night stays a years-long memory to be talked about with jolly facial features, and two wedding stories are never faulty mixed.

With or without a special occasion, a family member decides to hold a family gathering at their humble house. It is usually the elderlies who decide to collect the crowd. They make sure they bring the finest food in town, they dress up and finely plan the settings. When it's time, everyone arrive in hope to see their loved ones and pick up what they have missed. A house in the neighborhood is suddenly filled with people where you can hear talks and laughter kick off. Before everyone returns home, they exchange words like, "let's meet up again soon", or, "don't forget to come by sometime," and they often do.

These old and widely spread relationships reflect in the Gazan society's integrity; we all rejoice or mourn together, we all get angry or feel comfortable for the same reasons, we feel one another and read one another. One example is when one of Palestine's sons, Mohammed Assaf, left for what is an irregular and new situation to us, which is competing in one of the world's top shows, Arab Idol. Gazans broke their phones voting. When Assaf won, the streets were filled with festive shouts, people jumped in their cars holding Palestine's flags and let loose of their horns, cheerful whistles broke through the night. Whenever we hear a story of a Palestinian who made it to the international news for whatever successful (good) achievement, we keep talking about it for weeks. We feel proud because they represented all of us, and represented Palestine.



Our Beach

There is something about the beach that draws in. People from all parts of the world go to places of beaches for vacations. People who live near the beach are often considered lucky. Gaza's whole west side is-on-the-beach. Gaza beach is one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. The white sand the sparkles gold in the sun, the mini sea of bubbly seashells lining from north to south, the sound of the waves that reach to you speaking the same language of the waves around the world mixed with the sounds of Gaza; giggles of playing kids, calls of street vendors, fishing boats, seagulls, and families having a good time.



Our love for fish alone is a story! Our fishing men are some of the hardest working people. They wake up in the early morning aiming not only to feed their family, but entire Gaza. They make up these specialized groups of teams, each team having its own duty; there are the crafty ones who set and maintain their old-but-gold handmade wooden boats that impress you with their ability to "stand" until this day; and there are the macho experienced fishers who do the chasing, and net throwing and pulling, setting new daily "how heavy will my net be this time!" kind of goals; there are also the helping kids who count the fish probably from 1 to 5 until they start over and feel achieved; and finally the vendors who present their fellows' colorful delicious catches by either spreading them in the fishery and beyond, or by going around the city in their simple carts selling. The citizens enjoy all of these stages. They love to watch the fishers set up the boats, go on their daily fishing trips, and of course gather around the vendors picking up their favorite types of catch. And every time we see a new type of sea creature, we make a big deal out of it because we love surprises.



Our Food!

Food is one pleasure of life. This might seem like a mundane reason to be happy, but it is. Arabian food is the most delicious food in the world! Gazans add their little touch to the traditional Arab food, and they have their own dishes. If you ever visit Gaza, you should try the flafel, knafa, qedra, somaqeya, arayes, kabab... we can keep going.



One thing we have a lot of is restaurants. From the atmosphere to the interior design to the food, you feel like going into different moods in each restaurant, and soon will have a favorite. Restaurant staff shows great welcome and courtesy. They love to impress you with their service and food every time, especially if you are a regular visitor. They are very friendly and every customer is a top priority. You always leave with a full stomach and a happy smirk of a good platter choice.



Who doesn't love the traditional markets that take you back in time to where your grandparents used to shop. They amount of variable eatables you can find there is astonishing. If you are the type of person who loves new food challenges, this place is heaven. It gives you the urge to wanting to try everything you see, and you end up with a few unplanned for extra bags.



Not only the food is delicious, but we are very generous people, so prepare to gain some weight.

Your People

We appreciate the westerners who come to work in humanitarian and relief causes. Their presence in Gaza makes us feel connected to the other side of the border. When we see someone who looks slightly like someone who's not from around here, we start to smile and wave, and off our I-can-speak-your-language skills, and we get the urge to grab their hands and show them around.



If you like to visit Gaza, there are places for you; elegant places that make you feel at home, the Arc-med hotel, Al-Mathaf Hotel, Al-Deira Hotel, the Blue Beach Resort and more. You will love the company of your Gazan friends and coworkers who will spoil you and feed you well. You will never feel alone, bored or hungry. You simply make us happy because you add a different touch to our lives when you share your culture and way of living, and you link the term "Tourism" to Gaza.

Foreigners who come to Gaza love it here. They work as messengers between us and the world. They testify to the friendly people, peaceful minds and beautiful city regardless of the unstable political and security conditions. Behind it all, they see the real us; people who learn from the past, love to live the present and long for a better future; people who are connected by land, religion and blood; people with an enviable amount of honor, pride and dignity, and people who are misunderstood.

In the end we smile, and **we smile big** because we love life, **we love Gaza**.



Note: this impression is based on the LinkedIn article: “The Gaza You Don’t Know: Beautiful Gaza”, written by Saady Lozon, co-founder of [Unit One](#) in Gaza.

2. Profile of Unit One



THE LEADING ICT COMPANY IN PALESTINE



Introduction

Unit One is a professional Palestinian ICT company which has evolved since 2005 providing Enterprise Software Development, Business Process Outsourcing, Branding and Identity Development and Online Presence services targeting the global market.

Unit One is providing its services by utilizing the skills of more than 180 qualified and innovative employees and experts who are specialized in different ICT fields. Because of our work for foreign clients, Unit One received the ‘Exporter of the Year Award for ICT services’ in the year 2015.

Why to use the services from Unit One?

- 1) Access to highly qualified teams, with deep knowledge and expertise to develop the most innovative services.
- 2) For customized system development: to ensure the development is according to the clients' requirements.
- 3) For continuous testing, to keep the quality level that satisfies the clients' need.
- 4) For timely and accurate delivery: delivering the services based on the agreed time schedule with the required specifications.
- 5) To keep pace with new technologies, and to be creative in developing the services.
- 6) Commitment to global quality standards: for the best practices and a professional delivery of the services.

Unit One Team

The backbone of the success of Unit One is its qualified team who is keen to continuously keeping pace with the latest technologies and techniques.

Working cooperatively is the basis of the Unit One culture. Continuous checking and testing is the core when delivering products and services.

Unit One is able to set-up professional teams in different ICT fields, such as web development, mobile apps development and testing. Unit One is committed to provide highly qualified staff for its clients.

The advantages of using Unit One:

- Saving up to 50% of the costs by using its nearshore resources (compared with having local on-site staff).
- Providing senior or junior level of employees based on the clients' needs.
- Conducting quality control to ensure high quality delivery.

Services of Unit One



1. Enterprise Software Development

Starting with a deep understanding of your business, Unit One combines its superiority in design and development. For a professional website, web or desktop application, mobile application, Unit One team develops modern and attractive software from scratch or integrates the new software with the current systems.

Dozens of clients in Palestine, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, USA and other countries have used the creative ideas of the Unit One team.



2. Business Process Outsourcing

Unit One provides its clients with various cost effective BPO services and solutions, including data entry, content creation, translation, call centers and others in order to enable the companies reaching their goals.

Unit One achieved different success stories in offering its services to leading companies in different countries. An example is a project of Arabic Trade Marks Archiving which was implemented for a Dutch client for 3 years, and more than 500.000.000 characters were entered by 152 employees. Also, a project with a duration of one year for Jordan for content creation, where Arabic articles were written by 100 employees. Unit One provided all the requirements to build a suitable infrastructure for up to 500 employees working on different BPO projects.



3. Online Presence

Unit One can take your brands online, and portray the products and services electronically in order to connect easily with customers everywhere. A process of acquiring more traffic to your website includes web design, search engine optimization, and social media management in order to create a long term and strong image of the brands in the minds of your potential clients in the target market.

4. Branding and Identity

Enhancing the brand image in the mind of the customer and visualizing offerings of your company requires professional designs, including logo designs, stationary, and promotional material which can be developed by us using the latest versions of design programs. Moreover, different solutions for marketing campaigns including packages, exhibition displays, booth designs and newspapers layouts can be developed by the qualified teams of Unit One.



Contact Unit One in Palestine

Unit One has partnerships in various countries, including Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, United Arab Emirates, USA and the Netherlands.

The office in Palestine can be contacted through various means:

Tel: 00 972 82883607

Fax: 00 972 82843130

Mobile: 00 972 595760009

E-mail: info@unitone.co

Skype: unit.one.it

Website: www.unitone.co

To contact Unit One in the Netherlands



Mr. Paul Tjia, GPI Consultancy

P.O. Box 26151, 3002 ED Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Tel.: 00 31 10 4254172, E-mail: paul@gpic.nl Web: www.gpic.nl

Paul Tjia, founder of GPI Consultancy, is the co-author of the handbook: "Offshoring Information Technology - Sourcing and Outsourcing to a Global Workforce" (Cambridge University Press). With more than 300 pages, it is one of the most informative publications on this topic. The fifth print can be ordered via Amazon: <http://amzn.to/rVrQGZ>

