

All-in-One Web-Based Business Management Platform

BlueCamroo's mission is to provide the most complete and best value all-in-one web-based CRM, Social CRM, Project Management and collaboration platform for mid-sized and smaller businesses. We are constantly evolving and enhancing the system to respond to the needs of our users and remain ahead of the market.

**Interview with Tomek Maszkiewicz, CEO and Paul Clark, CMO
Conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine**



Tomek Maszkiewicz
CEO

CEOCFO: Mr. Clark, what is the concept at BlueCamroo?

Mr. Clark: Fundamentally, what BlueCamroo offers is an all in one online business management platform, comprising lead management, customer relations management, project management, customer service management and a number of other services, such as marketing, social media, time tracking, expenses management and billing, all in a single online platform. It is designed to meet the needs of medium sized and smaller companies; predominantly knowledge based service companies. These are companies that often deliver their work as repeatable projects. Examples may be consultants, designers, developers; the whole range of the knowledge industry.

Mr. Maszkiewicz: However, our customers also include Professionals - law offices and accountants.

CEOCFO: There are certainly many systems available today. What is different, better, faster or easier at BlueCamroo?

Mr. Maszkiewicz: In fact, there are not that many systems available today that attempt to provide all BlueCamroo's features in a single solution. It is true that there are many systems available which are specialized in certain areas like, for example, CRM, sales force automation, or customer support. For example, the billing could be Freshbooks and project management could be Microsoft Project. However, for all in one systems like ours, there are just a few which could be identified. We are different because of the attention to what we call "all-in-oneness". Each section or each functionality of the system needs to work fully with the whole and also, to compete very well, we have to match the stand-alone solutions, like Salesforce. Our CRM or sales piece is to their standards and in many areas exceeds the standards. In some areas it is not, but from the pricing perspective there is much greater value. We have customers who are coming, for example, from Salesforce and they are paying a fraction of the cost of what they would pay for Salesforce, yet with much broader functionality.

CEOCFO: Is it a lot easier than Salesforce as well?

Mr. Maszkiewicz: In a sense, yes it is. However, as with any big sales or CRM system, one has to pay attention to learning throughout. With Salesforce having thousands of consulting offices around the world, helping; obviously charging very heavily, but helping users to get acquainted with the software, we faced that fact that we are not as big as Salesforce, which means our customers, because of the sophistication of the system, could struggle. Therefore, we have developed certain internal systems that allow them to get the application going very quickly. However, we have also launched what we call "on boarding services" which are paid services and the customers are willing to pay for us to help them to get on board.

CEOCFO: What were some of the challenges in putting the system together?

Mr. Clark: There are a couple of important challenges in creating a new all-in-one CRM-based system like BlueCamroo. One thing that was very important was architecture. We did not want build a CRM system just like every other CRM. The main way that I would say it is different is that we developed different architecture. In a traditional CRM system, fundamental to the system is the idea of a customer account. You can typically record details of the organization that you do business with. Then the contacts in the CRM database work at that customer account. These people are incidental, therefore, when someone leaves the company the CRM system really has no further use or interest in them. We felt that the way the world is moving, many people have lots of jobs, people's jobs change much more often and there is a whole emergence of social media based on online social networking, that connections between people are at least as important

as or more important than connections between organizations. Therefore, we wanted to make people very fundamental. We have actually built a system around a completely unique and patent pending architecture that puts, if you like, the organization and the person on equal levels of importance and then fully manages the relationship between people in connection with each of the organizations where they work. However, if you have a client who is a contact at one organization, and that person also works with another company or consults somewhere else or has their own business on the side, in BlueCamroo it is possible to interact with that person, understanding it is the same person in all different contexts, but keeping that cohesiveness and at the time keeping separate each of these interactions to develop and to retain a complete and accurate understanding of dealings with the contact. Therefore, getting the architecture right is the key piece. Your question was what the challenge was. The biggest challenge in building an all-in-one is simply the scope of functionality and the need to satisfy users of every subcategory.

Mr. Maszkiewicz: The architecture and the approach to how we treat customers is the second differentiator between BlueCamroo and other, for example CRM systems.

CEOCFO: *When is a company likely to come to you for services? How do they find you?*

Mr. Maszkiewicz: There are several ways. The natural way would obviously be through our website. That's the most important marketing approach that we have. We have the website which we are constantly updating; which we are actually changing again. This is the annual process as we change applications to be still complex but more approachable. We also change the website and our approach to how we market through the website. Another one is that we are active on many social networks. We are active within different communities as well. I would still call this a soft marketing, because we are not spending too much money on it yet. This year actually calls for a much larger scope, from the marketing perspective, where we created a much larger budget. We are going to do hard traditional marketing, which is basically extensive search marketing as well as more trade shows. We are in one or two trade shows every year. This year we are planning to be much more active.

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CEOCFO: *Why is this the time to change your approach?*

Mr. Maszkiewicz: For four years running we have heavily changed the applications twice. We update every two months. With the last few we finished the major upgrade to the user interface, which is quite unique as well. We feel that there is enough functionality in the system that not only our users, but also our technology communities are telling us we are ready. For example last year over one hundred companies globally, entered CRM Idol, which is a CRM industry contest for emerging companies. We ended up in the final five of the global CRM final competition. Two years ago we did not even qualify for the semi-finals. However, this year we found ourselves amongst the final five. We did not win, but we were told that we were a very strong second and making an impact on the industry judges. Our size was most likely the critical factor; all the other companies were heavily venture funded, for example. We are still not heavily funded. We are actively looking for additional funds, basically to grow, especially within the marketing. We are actually very close to finalizing something here. Unfortunately, it is most likely that we did not win because of that. However, this year we feel that because of the industry telling us that we are ready we are contestants, not only in the sense of the Canadian or North American market, but also globally. We are someone that is being watched by industry experts. We are waiting for a final decision from the US patent office for over two years. We attract more and more and better customers. By that I mean larger companies in the size of fifty, sixty or seventy users. There is an overall opinion that we are a company that can actually make a global impact on the industry. If we were imagining it that would be a different story, but we are actually being told. Since the CRM Idol competition we have been in contact with many of the industry experts as well, who are actually taking an interest in us.

CEOCFO: *What have you changed since the first version? What is different today?*

Mr. Clark: The first thing to answer would be what has **not** changed, which is the mission and the concept to provide the most complete and best value all-in-one online business solution for our target niche, which is mid-sized and smaller companies. At the functional level, what we have changed is very extensive. The scope of what we provide has been extended. We started out with CRM, project management, and customer support. We have added a great deal of interaction to the online social networks. We have added an email marketing system. We have extended collaboration features and a whole variety of other features as we build through the system. The other important thing that has changed has been fully exposing the architecture, as I referred to earlier, to really focus on organizations and people and provide a twenty first century paradigm for the application. We have completely redeployed the interface; moving from a traditional online CRM workspace to a single page application, to be much more dynamic and more of an application feel than a web feel. We are constantly in harmony with our customers working our way through issues and ideas and reviewing features

with our different customers; looking at best practices in the industry. Every couple of months we are releasing an update and enhancing parts of the application.

Mr. Maszkiewicz: What is also quite interesting, in less than twelve months we have integrated to a key system, like digital marketing for example. We have integrated HubSpot. We obviously have a wish list for this year for some of the integrated systems. We integrated several accounting systems and several payment processors. We provide very close integration with Google Apps. We already integrated certain parts of it including a Gmail gadget; that we have put it in the Google marketplace. We are actually getting even more sophistications with that. Therefore, we are heading in the direction of pretty much connecting with all major categories of system. If you were to say, four years ago, if someone were looking for the appropriate application to choose for their business, you would see what people call "check boxes". These check boxes represent the features that the application must have; it is a wish list. In the last four years we have eliminated all the gaps that would be on someone's check list in our target market. That means that even our users, who did trials four years ago; they joined us within the last year because the application has changed so much that we have pretty much eliminated the doubt that we can fulfill the wish list that normal companies would have. Now, we are still trying to add more and more additional features and integrations that will make our system even more comprehensive and desirable.

CEOCFO: *Why should BlueCamroo be the CRM of choice?*

Mr. Clark: There is a simple answer for that. For those organizations that BlueCamroo was designed for; those smaller, knowledge based businesses; BlueCamroo offers an alternative to pulling together four, five or six different systems, trying to provide a platform for everyone to work together cohesively and productively. Therefore, for those kinds of companies, BlueCamroo offers a simpler way to get everyone working together. It offers better support and control of the business and is replacing maybe four or five different applications. It also offers potentially large cost savings by subscribing to just one application that contains different tools.

Mr. Maszkiewicz: The cost being a big factor for many--we find that the cost savings are very important. We are not talking about one user or two users; we are talking twenty or thirty users. It is really substantial. The customers, especially now, are watching for money savings. If, for example, I can save twenty to thirty thousand dollars and put that into the marketing to bring more customers and more sales, at the end it is a choice.



BlueCamroo

3100 Steeles Avenue West Suite 400

Concord, Ontario, CA L4K 3R1

+1.905.660.1481

www.bluecamroo.com