



**Digital Marketing Agency, Bulldog Solutions is helping BtoB Organizations Accelerate Sales Pipeline and make a Measurable Impact on Revenue with an Approach that Blends Methodology, Technology and Creativity**

**Business Services  
Revenue Performance**

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**Darin Hicks**  
CEO

**BIO:** Darin Hicks is the Chief Executive Officer of Bulldog Solutions. Darin has experience in leading aggressive growth plans focused on multi-channel marketing, customer lifetime value and complex software and services sales.

Prior to Bulldog Solutions, Darin was VP/General Manager of Acxiom, where he grew the technology business unit into the company's first global industry and brought new solutions to market in the insurance vertical. Darin was also Founder and President of Software Leadership

Services, a management consulting company providing domain and operational expertise to early stage software and services companies. Prior to that, he served at Trilogy in a number of key leadership positions in the U.S. and Europe, including general management of their primary industry verticals and leading their professional services organization from \$28 to \$130 million in three years.

Darin graduated from Stanford University in 1992 with a bachelor's of science degree in industrial engineering and is a native of Durand, Michigan.

**Fun Facts:** Darin is a member of an active soccer family; he both plays and coaches youth teams. When he is not on the field, he enjoys water-skiing on Lake Austin and escaping the Texas summer heat in Colorado. His favorite place to brainstorm is on a boat or in the mountains.

**About Bulldog Solutions:**

Bulldog Solutions is new breed of digital marketing agency that helps BtoB organizations accelerate sales pipeline to make a measurable impact on revenue. The company specializes in designing programs that combine proprietary methodologies and technologies with best-in-class creative to deliver transformational results. The company is headquartered in Austin, Texas, with operations throughout North America and Europe. Visit [bulldogsolutions.com](http://bulldogsolutions.com) for more information.

**Interview conducted by:  
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor  
CEOCFO Magazine**

**CEOCFO:** Mr. Hicks, would you explain the concept of Bulldog Solutions?

**Mr. Hicks:** Bulldog is a BtoB marketing agency focused on increasing the measurable impact marketing has on a company's revenue. Chief Marketing Officers are beginning to come under pressure to measure better, and at the same time, they are experiencing a significantly increasing technology budget. This is where Bulldog fits, delivering value in lead generation, lead progression, sales enablement, and marketing technology.

**CEOCFO:** What have you figured out at Bulldog that other companies in the same field have not?

**Mr. Hicks:** We believe Bulldog Solutions is unique in the ability to drive digital marketing strategy, marketing campaigns, and content across all areas of the marketing funnel to realize higher value. Bulldog is able to balance creative and technology to drive better results.

**CEOCFO:** What types of companies typically would be using your services?

**Mr. Hicks:** We focus exclusively on business to business, and within that, we have a specialty in the technology industry. Many of our customers are hardware and software companies, have complex sales cycles and are enterprise level, which we define as above one billion dollars in revenue.

**CEOFO:** Are your customers taking advantage of the full range of your services? If not, not how do you encourage companies to utilize all that you offer?

**Mr. Hicks:** We often start in one area and by having success we earn the right to expand. We might start with a particular division focused on the launch of a new product and then expand services from there. One example of building to our full ranges of services starts with increasing the number of qualified leads for a customer. Following these leads through their decision-making process naturally draws us into what messages and content buyers find valuable and when. What we learn through their digital footprint can then be used to drive a better sales conversation and ultimately higher conversion to revenue.

**CEOFO:** Would you please walk me through a typical encounter with a prospective client?

**Mr. Hicks:** We ask our prospects where their greatest need is with their marketing investments. Sometimes that is in marketing infrastructure, which means they have a problem with their ability to measure in the first place. We consult around their database and target universe to get them on a firmer foundation in order to drive results. Other customers will come to us and say they are driving leads but they are falling out at a high rate. We perform an investigation and develop targeted programs to improve. Finally, our prospects are often focused more today on sales enablement. New opportunities make it successfully to sales conversations, but how can we make those conversations more effective? What tools can empower sales based on the journey their prospects have taken? We are at our best when we integrate all of these things, measure the revenue impact and put a framework in place for continuous improvement.

**CEOFO:** Are you using technology or gut instinct when you assess a company?

**Mr. Hicks:** We often talk about ourselves as a blend of art and science. There is certainly a technology foundation to what we do, but it comes to life with our methodology and creative. Part of that is Bulldog proprietary, and we also leverage the best of other technologies available in the market to provide an answer pointed at a specific business problem. In addition, we have an award-winning creative team. This combination under one roof is special and allows us to create truly integrated programs and exciting results. We work with our customers from creative concept through a program touching customers through banner ads, video, e-mail and custom landing pages. Depending on where a customer is in their buying cycle, who they are, and what company they come from, our client is able to treat them in a more appropriate way so that they drive growth in revenue.

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**- Darin Hicks**

**CEOFO:** Would you give me an example of what you see as innovative in your programs?

**Mr. Hicks:** We recently won an award for an innovative program with SunGard. SunGard provides availability services for many large businesses. They have a very respectable corporate image, and for a particular campaign last year around Halloween time, they asked for something innovative and unique. We came up with campaign that talked about how a corporation could recover from a Zombie Apocalypse. It incorporated topical humor along with a targeted message about how to recover from unexpected events that not only drove short term results but built on the SunGard brand.

**CEOFO:** You personally have experience with aggressive growth plans. What have you learned in prior ventures that are most helpful at Bulldog?

**Mr. Hicks:** The first thing that stands out is that it is all about the people. Developing people, hiring great people, and creating an environment where those people can succeed. That is what stands out here; I am proud of our team and we are actively growing to bring on skill sets that elevate our capabilities and personalities that blend well with and enhance our culture.

**CEOFO:** Would you please tell us more about your corporate culture?

**Mr. Hicks:** We have a great blend of people here from our technologists through our creative team that make the teamwork around client solutions energetic and innovative. We center this energy all around our customers and the fanatical delivery of business value. Bulldogs are passionate about marketing and pathfinders for our customer’s challenges. We reward trying multiple options, generating data and building on the best results. A core part of Bulldog’s culture is to experiment, optimize and grow, learning from the experience and doing it even better the next time.

**CEOFO:** How will you be driving growth in the next year or two?

**Mr. Hicks:** Our growth starts with our existing clients in making sure we are able to measure the value they are getting out of their marketing dollars, and consistently enhancing that value. We think by doing that, growth comes naturally. We are also actively expanding our sales and marketing team to get our message out to more of the right audience. Finally, we are making investments in new tools, technologies and vertical markets to power our services.

**CEOFO:** You recently announced a new revenue analytics platform. What does that bring to the table?

**Mr. Hicks:** It hits the marketing measurement problem head on. Many of our customers have separate stores of information for marketing, sales and revenue and cannot answer basic questions about what are the best performing marketing campaigns. The Revenue Perform-

ance Center at its core is a data model allowing companies to easily pull in data from multiple sources and answer those types of questions. Some degree of complexity comes in as companies want to measure which campaigns are most effective for particular audiences, by industry or buyer persona. The end result is a dashboard where marketers can see on a daily basis what is working and what is not, so they can make better decisions and drive more revenue.

**CEO CFO:** You have been CEO for a little over a month. What attracted to you and why was this the time for the founder to step aside and bring you in to run the company?

**Mr. Hicks:** There are a very small number of startups that reach the size of Bulldog. We have had great success, but over a certain size, the challenges become a bit different. Our founder, Rob Solomon, had the foresight to realize now was the time to bring in additional help to grow the company to the next level. What

attracted me was a combination of factors that had to do with the market itself and Bulldog Solutions in particular. The attention on our market and the potential growth is evidenced by Eloqua's acquisition by Oracle, Marketo's successful initial public offering and most recently Salesforce.com's acquisition of ExactTarget. We believe companies do not just want the software. These technologies do not drive results on their own. Bulldog ensures companies receive full value for their marketing technology investments. There was a great analogy I read on a blog a few weeks ago that marketing technology is like a set of paint brushes, and somehow people expect marketing departments to paint a masterpiece on their own. It is exciting to me to provide the templates, guidance and expertise that help our customers create marketing masterpieces.

**CEO CFO:** Why should people in the business and investment community

pay attention to Bulldog Solutions? What sets you apart as an exceptional company?

**Mr. Hicks:** Our people, process and technology set us apart with the results we deliver for our customers. The amount of investment in marketing today and the myriad technologies makes it impossible for a typical marketing organization to keep track of it all, while focusing on the results their business expects. Partners like Bulldog put the best of what is available to work for them in an efficient way. We make the complex simple for our customers. We believe innovation in this space is just beginning and just as Bulldog was a leader in the first wave of marketing automation adoption for technology companies, we are in a position to lead the next wave of growth with a blend of new solutions and technologies that will change the way marketing is done.



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