

## ECM Consulting and Professional Services Solutions



**Peter Fucarino**  
Founder &  
Managing Partner  
AppTier

**CEOCFO:** *Mr. Fucarino, would you tell us about AppTier?*

**Mr. Fucarino:** AppTier is a consulting and professional services boutique organization specializing in Enterprise Content Management or “ECM” solutions for a variety of industries.

**CEOCFO:** *On a basic level, what do you understand about that process that perhaps others do not understand as well?*

**Mr. Fucarino:** We bring forward deep technical expertise with some of the leading products in the space of enterprise content management. Organizations or our clients rely on our technical aptitude to help implement such solutions and take advantage of the abilities while aiming to achieve optimal return on their investment in software platforms. Additionally, we blend our business acumen of their industry along with deep technical understanding to capitalize on those solutions for those clients.

**CEOCFO:** *Are there specific verticals where you focus?*

**Mr. Fucarino:** We generally serve a variety of verticals but one of our specialties has been life sciences / pharmaceuticals and that has mainly been by demand and opportunity in that vertical. In order to achieve regulatory compliance, a lot of them must use these types of software solutions and platforms and therefore that makes them a key vertical for us.

**CEOCFO:** *How do you stay ahead of that regulatory environment?*

**Mr. Fucarino:** One of the key aspects has been being on the frontlines with our client’s portfolio. We work with a variety of pharmaceutical or life sciences organizations in that specific vertical from small to medium to large. They all have to usually introduce solutions or react to regulatory guidelines that are specific to them. As a boutique organization, we apprise ourselves of the latest and greatest reactions to the regulatory guidelines and help address those issues and challenges for our clients. That collective knowledge base and insight we gather across many client situations is helpful to us and ultimately allows us to get ahead of the environment.

**CEOCFO:** *When might a company turn to you?*

**Mr. Fucarino:** It can start as early as package or software evaluation, to post implementation. The majority of the time it starts at acquisition; meaning a client or an organization has identified a packaged solution and in such cases, we have some partnerships with key products in that space. At point-of-sale, sales teams would begin to involve our team with the implementation planning and strategy around the deployment of that solution and we will go through the implementation lifecycle to deploy the software. Sometimes it is as simple as one or two phases and may expand to multiple phases. We will then assist or “partner” with that client through that implementation lifecycle and deployment plan for that solution. We also have offerings where we assist in post implementation such as “managed services” programs to support and maintain the solution ongoing.

**CEOCFO:** *Is that an area you would like to see growing or is managed services something more ancillary for you?*

**Mr. Fucarino:** It is actually a growth area for us. We developed the concept about seven or eight years ago and packaged it as an offering and the past two to three years it has been growing tremendously. The Managed Services program is also aligned with the rest of the IT industry where organizations are really looking to outsource or augment their internal technical competencies with a specialized firm such as ourselves to help maintain and proactively/reactively manage their systems. It is an area of growth and we are seeing it grow more solidly each year and looking to expand the capabilities within that space for us.

**CEOCFO: *What is the competitive landscape?***

**Mr. Fucarino:** I think that has been one of our questions as well. I personally have been working with some of these products - especially OpenText Content Server suite of products since 1998. It is sixteen years dedicated just to that product space and even before that, I worked in the nineties with some of these content management or document management as we called them back in the day. I think the competitive landscape for us is reduced by our deep technical expertise, which is very uncommon. I do not think there are many organizations that possess that type of deep technical expertise embodied in our organization. It is a specialized area; we do IT services overall but we are very specialized in enterprise content management. I think between the specialty and the deep technical expertise, our competitors are very small. There is a handful and they range from Big Four consulting firms to similar boutiques like us but ultimately if you blend the life sciences dedication, our business acumen and industry dedication along with our technical expertise, the pool of competitors is extremely small.

**CEOCFO: *Are you surprised that people are still attracted to the Big Four?***

**Mr. Fucarino:** Personally, I started my career in consulting with the Big Four. I worked for Andersen in Chicago to even Cap Gemini (formerly CGEY); so I definitely take many of those Big Four disciplines and that is what I view as our foundation for our boutique firm. I also concur that there is a place for the large organizations -- but if you are looking for value or if you are looking for deep technical expertise, the large organizations may not be the optimal fit. I think there are large organizations that have global deployments that warrant a large team. There is a place for the Big Four for that. I think our target client for AppTier is differentiated from the Big Four where we do have some large organizations in our client portfolio but our typical is more of a cost conscious IT organization that is embodied in everything from a startup to a biotech to a midsized organization. We still have a variety of Fortune 500 organizations in our client portfolio. I think there is a place or a fit for Big Four consulting organizations and I think our focus is perhaps a different demographic.

**“In a simple summary, we are trusted advisors. We are there to blend our technical and business acumen and provide that value to our clients and help them achieve the best return on investment for ECM platforms and help them navigate the space overall. As such, we are an essential implementation partner for an ECM Initiative.” - Peter Fucarino**

**CEOCFO: *Are clients coming to you because they understand the value you provide or are they surprised at what you bring to the table?***

**Mr. Fucarino:** I like to say a little of both. I think our clients come to us knowing that we have deep expertise. Much of it is through referrals. We do not do a lot of advertising so I think it is more of our clients finding us. I think those clients that do look for us also understand that our philosophy is more of a partnership that we are trying to provide value and a long-term relationship and that we can be that resource for them as they mature with the product. I think that they are surprised to find out that we can provide a broader array of services and can complement their IT organization and their business stakeholders that are looking to capitalize on this product. It is a little of both.

**CEOCFO: *Are there a few services that stand out?***

**Mr. Fucarino:** Business process engineering is one. I think a lot of them come to us for our specific technical expertise. When it comes to an example like OpenText Content Server, which is one of our main products that we partner with, they come to us for that specific technical expertise. In solving technical challenges and performing an upgrade or solving an immediate task, they will discover that we can actually help with business process engineering and business process optimization. Some examples are contract lifecycle optimization or human resources self-service portals. It becomes known that the product or space that we work in is different from other IT systems. It is versatile so it can help you with everything from email management to records management. There are different uses of that system. Ultimately, our clients discover that what they really need is an advisor and they need an organization like ours that really understands their business. Ultimately, I think our business analysis capabilities are the surprise to the customers.

**CEOCFO: *Are there services that you provide where people do not take advantage?***

**Mr. Fucarino:** Some of this is subjective and a little bit of my personal perspective on the market. One service is a hosted platform or turnkey software as a service solution. The typical type of enterprise content management approach for most of our clients to this day is still a traditional on-premise implementation. They acquire the software, a customer owns it and they engage a firm like ourselves to help them integrate and implement. That is a bit of an antiquated notion for us. What we are seeing is tremendous opportunity in coming up with more of a hosted platform where we can offer a more efficient and ideal turnkey solution to customers and that is an offering that we have but we are not seeing organizations take full advantage of it. Some of it is culture and the confidence level. I think the industry is going that direction but I still think

there are many apprehensions for a variety of reasons and that is a key area that I see is going to grow once the confidence and model is proven.

**CEOCFO: *How are you able to help your clients with security concerns?***

**Mr. Fucarino:** Security is a big part of what we do. Enterprise Content Management is synonymous with security. If you are going to centralize your content in a single repository which is essentially the cornerstone of the products we work in, then you have to know and feel comfortable with the security that is around that. That is precisely why I think working with an ECM product is very advantageous for clients versus doing a combination of cloud or a combination of different platforms working with a variety of segmented platforms. Having all this centralized into a common repository that has security, audit trail and all of these checks and balances around the permission model of the content, is the best way we can help our customers. Ultimately, and by default, adopting these types of platforms or solutions is going to increase their security tri-fold. If organizations do not have an ECM platform, they are storing all this content in email and file shares and in many consumer type repositories like Box or Drop Box. Not having a traditional on-premise implementation and actually taking advantage of a hosted tier four data center is definitely a lot more advantageous from a security perspective. We have implemented the software on premise in a variety of companies that just do not have the datacenter checks and balances and tight security controls that they should have. However, as there is a misconception that an on premise implementation is more efficient or cost-effective, they rather accept that level of security. Just by use of that, ECM solution is a much more secure approach because you have a lot more visibility into who is accessing your content and it is much more tightly controlled than a traditional file share or antiquated file storage. Secondly, taking advantage of a more best of breed implementation that would be hosted for a tighter controlled datacenter. Those are the two primary ways.

**CEOCFO: *What is ahead for the company?***

**Mr. Fucarino:** What is ahead for us is expanding our footprint from an organizational perspective. We are mostly a regional company based in Denver, Colorado. We operate out of a Los Angeles office and Phoenix as well. We primarily serve the Western Region but we have a strong draw to work more on a national level and eventually international. I think from an offering perspective what is ahead for us is more of packaging our solution into this hosted model and offering organizations either a SaaS or a turnkey expedited implementation of such products. Finally, I would like to see us apply our successful techniques and methodologies to other content and structured information applications such as ERP.

**CEOCFO: *Why choose AppTier?***

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

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