

## Cloud Solutions and Product Integration Consulting Firm for ERP, CRM and Marketing Automation Software



**Gabriel Tupula**  
Co-CEO +  
Chief Operating Officer  
Big Bang ERP Inc.

**CEOCFO: Mr. Tupula, would you tell us about Big Bang ERP?**

**Mr. Tupula:** Big Bang ERP is a boutique consulting firm around cloud solutions especially ERP, CRM and MAS (Marketing Automation Software). We are a one-stop-shop for all the needs for any business whether the industry is manufacturing, service or distribution. We are specializing in cloud solutions that can encapsulate all the management and operations aspect of any enterprise.

**CEOCFO: Would you be creating a CRM for a client, or helping them with the CRM they actually have?**

**Mr. Tupula:** We are product integrators so we promote and push off-the-shelf solutions. We consider that in the cloud offering right now there are plenty of good products to address all the business requirements. We are focused on some key products so we do Salesforce, Net Suite, Financial Force, Brightpearl and Plex. Maybe we will add one or two products but at the end the key word is cloud, so we want to bring our clients in the cloud. Some of our clients already have a CRM or ERP in place and we jump into action to help them to optimize their current setup. Some customers do not have any system and they contact us for us to assess their business and do the right recommendation of which platform they should acquire and we will help them set it up.

**CEOCFO: How do you assess what a company really needs?**

**Mr. Tupula:** We will look at the current situation but what we like to focus on is where did they see themselves in three or five years; if they double their business volume or when we look at their growth strategy, how the system will react and how it should react. We want to make sure that when we recommend a platform, they will not need to change it thereafter. We want to be there for the long run. We are mainly a service company so we do not consider ourselves as a software reseller; we are really a consulting firm. We will not push one product more than another, we will make sure to make the right recommendation. That is why we focus on the big process and not necessarily on the current situation of the business. What we will do is a full assessment of the company before making any recommendation for a product.

**CEOCFO: Are potential clients coming to you because they understand the depth and consultative approach, or are they sometimes surprised to find out the real value of what you offer?**

**Mr. Tupula:** When a customer comes to us, I would say recently they are more educated in the cloud so usually they are looking for cloud integrator, they are not fixed on which product to buy. Sometimes they will hesitate between some classical or on premise solutions and they will say they want to see what we have in the cloud and they will call us to review the options and this is where we jump in. Companies already have a system in place but they struggle to get to the next phase or they have some difficulties to use the system in an efficient way and they will call us to push them to the next step in making sure their business is streamlined.

**CEOCFO: How do you help ease the customary horrors of implementation?**

**Mr. Tupula:** We have a collaborative approach with customers. We are flexible so when you look at our delivery methodology, it is very close to what we call in software development, which is agile, so it is like if we transitioned agile methodology into software implementation. When you deploy cloud solutions, many times you are one click away from activating a feature or changing your mind so we do not circumvent our customers to their initial mindset. When they come to us and tell us what we want, we assess the situation and make a recommendation but we are not tied to this. A typical project is six months but during the project we can always adapt the project plan and the deliverables to match the new company, especially with dynamic companies, what was true in January is not true in June. We already did an implementation when the company was acquired during implementation. With our methodology the key strength is

flexibility and collaboration. The other aspect is that we do not work in a black box so we share as much knowledge as we can with the customers. If they have time or if they have the resources, we always look for them to train an insight admin or train some resources internally so they can add their first line of user support internally and we will focus on more complex projects. The customer remains in control of the cost and priorities of his own limitations.

**CEOCFO: *What is your ongoing relationship with your clients?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We have a retention rate of more than 90% of our customers. Deploying an ERP is like doing a website. It is not like you do your website and you are done for the next few years. There are always upcoming changes. Imagine an ERP or CRM, that is key to all the company operations especially dynamic or successful companies, they will have changes and new requirements. The typical product duration is three to six months but we remain in the picture afterwards for new additional training or help. It is a long-term relationship and we are a service company. We are able to address all the management aspects of a client. At the end, a customer will also involve us in some strategic decisions on their planning because the relationship becomes more intimate.

**CEOCFO: *What is your geographic reach today?***

**Mr. Tupula:** Right now it looks like 20% Canada as well as 60% in the US and 20% in the rest of the world. We have customers as far as Hong Kong, Israel, New Zealand, Australia. The way we work in our delivering our expertise is we have a good reputation so we have customers coming from very far for our expertise.

**CEOCFO: *How do potential clients find you in an internet search?***

**Mr. Tupula:** They would Google the product itself. In this business, I would say many customers look for success stories or referrals. They do not want to be alone to be the first one to adapt the system so they will look for other businesses in the same industry. The referral accounts for a lot.

**“We are not seen as one side of the fence and our customers are the other side, we work alongside them so closely that we are the same team.” - Gabriel Tupula**

**CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about recognition in the Cloud Awards program?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We were recognized as one of the leading consulting firms in the cloud industry. I think what made us stand out amongst our contemporaries was the fact that we really act as true partners with our customers. We are not seen as one side of the fence and our customers are the other side, we work alongside them so closely that we are the same team. We have such a good reputation in the industry and I think it comes from the point of view that we really are part of the same team.

**CEOCFO: *What has changed in your approach over time?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We have learned that it is a booming market. The cloud offering allows many businesses to access technology that was not available to them ten years ago. I would say our service focus approach and not being product biased and really being neutral about the products that we refer to our customers pays off because at the end our positioning is to become a trusted advisor not necessarily a software reseller as many of our competitors. So far, investing and sharing the knowledge, being transparent and delivering the service is one of the bigger learning from the past year.

**CEOCFO: *Are there particular sizes and types of industries that turn to Big Bang?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We address consumers in both manufacturing, distribution, retail and ecommerce, or any kind of service. In terms of size, we have something for small customers as well as big. We have customers that are 2 users and we have customers that are 20 thousand users. Our approach, expertise and knowledge allows us to serve either very small companies to very large enterprises in many countries. It is the same skill sets and approach.

**CEOCFO: *The Big Bang experience is a seven-step proven methodology. What are some of the steps?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We initiate the mandate and then we analyze. After that, we will design, configure, deploy, reassess and continue to assess through the process. It is a proven methodology that works either for new customers who did not have a system before or existing customers because when we jump in an account it is very key for us to understand the business before doing any recommendation or any customization or deploying any other additional software. The methodology is applied in both cases for any industry.

**CEOCFO: *What do you need to know about a business to come up with the best system?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We need to dive deep into the process. We do not want to fall in the trap of being too much of a processor. We need to tie all of this with the growth strategy because if we just look at the process without looking to the people or the business growth strategy, we will miss some key components that will help to get our decision. We need to

understand the product, the service, how they did with their suppliers, how they did with customers, but also what they look to achieve in the near future and the long-term future. We need to understand their pain points. This is more delicate because some companies are not proud to share their pain points or challenges but we need to gain their trust.

**CEOCFO: *Do you find many companies where you help define their strategy?***

**Mr. Tupula:** I would say the fact that we appear in the picture will ease the strategy operation process because we will bring topics that people will have the time to discuss before. When we kick off a project, we force certain discussions or we force certain stakeholders to talk together. At the end, the goal is to give them the right input and information that will help to support their strategy or maybe adapt it or change it regarding the new system. This is because sometimes they have a strategy but they do not have the data or the analytics to support it and the system that is deployed will give them this data.

**CEOCFO: *What surprised you as Big Bang ERP has grown and prospered as a company?***

**Mr. Tupula:** I would say the ecosystem of products. We are an integrator and we avoided developing custom solutions because we strongly believed that there are some products that will address all off their needs. When we compare it to five or ten years ago some products were not existing. Ecosystems of products and other possibilities offered in the markets, our goal is to pick and choose the right and best one and recommend them to our customers.

**CEOCFO: *What might be different if we speak a year from now?***

**Mr. Tupula:** Right now we have 50 employees and in the next few years, we are looking to be 150 employees. Right now, we have two offices, one in Canada and one in Mauritius. Maybe in two years we will have four or five offices. Our goal is to grow in terms of delivery capacity and presence around the world.

**CEOCFO: *Why choose Big Bang ERP?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We are a trusted advisor, which means we are there for the long-run and for the service. We are not a product pusher so if people just want to have an assessment of their business or recommendations, we are very friendly and transparent. This is the key difference from our competitors.

**CEOCFO: *Final thoughts?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We are always in recruiting mode. Right now, we focus on recruiting the right individuals to join the firm so this is one of the key challenges we will have to face in the upcoming months.

**CEOCFO: *What do you look for in your people above technical skill?***

**Mr. Tupula:** We are looking for people that have both business acumen and strong technical skills. We will take our time to choose the right person. When we bring them onboard, we make sure that they are knowledgeable enough to discuss any business needs with our customers. We are a lean organization so it means the same people understanding the product technically and be able to configure it and customize it, are the same ones doing business recommendation and involved in the business strategy of our customers.

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



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