

Strategic Technology Consulting and Solution Design and Delivery



Ryan Neal
President
Blueprint Consulting Services

CEOCFO: *Mr. Neal, would you tell us about Blueprint Consulting Services?*

Mr. Neal: Blueprint Consulting Services is a strategic technology consulting firm in the Seattle area. We specialize in end-to-end strategic solutions for any company that is looking for positive transformational change in their organization. Typically, our solutions have some kind of a technology focus but it is not always the case. We have a deep expertise in many different areas of technology solutions but we also work with many companies that are high-growth companies in need of strategic planning and growth strategies.

CEOCFO: *Strategic as opposed to what type of planning?*

Mr. Neal: We started Blueprint to fill a significant gap in the consulting world. There are many firms out there that do pure strategic planning; strategic consulting where they come in and do advising but they but they do not do actually any of the solution delivery. Then there are many companies out there that only do the tactical delivery and they do not do any of the strategic work. They do not design solutions with the client, they rely on the client to design the solution then manage the actual delivery team. We fill that gap. We work with our clients to make sure they have the right strategy in place and design the solution that solves the right problem. We also build a team that works to deliver on the solution and we hold ourselves accountable to make sure the strategic direction is correct.

CEOCFO: *Are clients coming to you because they understand the difference at Blueprint?*

Mr. Neal: We get the majority of our business from referrals. Most of the time they are pleasantly surprised that we can have such a breadth of services within our firm. Most of them are refreshed to see that we stand by the solutions that we design for them.

CEOCFO: *Would you give us an example of a typical project?*

Mr. Neal: One of our latest projects that I was in this week was working with a local technology firm here in the Seattle area where they have a major supply chain management initiative to significantly increase the sales projections for their devices. Their core business is software development but they are increasingly moving into devices and services. What we are working with them on is developing a business intelligence solution to monitor their entire supply chain. Our engagement will be to help them actually design the solution and figure out the platforms that need implementation as well as design the different teams needed to build the monitoring system. Once the strategic plan is completed, we will bring in the resources, the high talent business intelligence and data strategists to come in and build the solution for them in a rapid fashion. We then transfer the solution into a managed service to put it into run mode to be able to help the client manage the solution but do it in a low-cost way so that they can get tangible return on their investment.

CEOCFO: *Is it more like oversight rather than day-to-day management?*

Mr. Neal: Somewhat. Many consulting companies use their high-end consulting resources to build a client's solution and continue into run state, which means the client does not receive any cost savings on the solution. We firmly believe that the role of consulting is to come in with some high-level expertise but then also move out of the organization and have a defined end date.

CEOCFO: *Are there specific technologies that you like?*

Mr. Neal: We are deep in Microsoft technologies, Open Source, Java technologies, all across the board and platform agnostic. We also work to stay on the front edge of developing technology to partner with many companies who are building solutions that are rolling out into the market. It is a big benefit being up in the Seattle area because we have many

companies that have grown up in this area and there is so much innovation happening. There are many companies from San Francisco Bay area, Los Angeles and all around the nation, which are coming up to set up substantial offices here, so it is a great time to be in Seattle. We love to develop custom tools for clients as well as internal tools for ourselves.

CEOCFO: *How do you stay ahead of the changing landscape in technology?*

Mr. Neal: We do it in a few different ways. One of our core values is geared around positive development for our clients as well as for ourselves. We have many different initiatives inside the company that push all of our employees to improve and to be on the forefront of the solutions that are coming out into the market. Typically, a consulting company will let their clients drive the types of solutions that they want to implement in their company. We try to stay out in front so we can bring these new ideas to our clients and help push them to be leaders in their industry. At each of our company meetings, we usually have one of our clients speak on what they think is the next big thing. This year we developed a technology incubator within the company. Typically, a consultant will provide services for a client and the client will get the benefit of their work product and gets to own the intellectual property. We started Blueprint to flip the consulting model so that our employees have the ability to develop technology for themselves and have the ability to potentially spin out into subsidiary and become entrepreneurs themselves. That dialogue and that cadence around developing new technologies in a big way that everybody stays on the forefront of technology in the industry.

“We started Blueprint to flip the consulting model so that our employees have the ability to develop technology for themselves and have the ability to potentially spin out into subsidiary and become entrepreneurs themselves.” - Ryan Neal

CEOCFO: *Blueprint was recognized as a Top 100 company for a couple of years, so, clearly business is good. Would you tell us about your corporate culture as that is likely a contributing factor in your success?*

Mr. Neal: One of the things we pride ourselves on is that we do not have a corporate culture. We try to have an anti-corporate culture within our consultancy so that it is very fluid and has a clear mission vision and core values. We are passionate about building entrepreneurs and having all of our employees work with an entrepreneurial spirit. We think that is a huge reason why we have been able to grow so fast and why we have built such a great place to work. Our employees have many opportunities and enjoy their work. It requires us to hire the right type of people. There are many people who do not feel comfortable in an environment where they can own and create their own destiny and where they have the opportunity to achieve things that they thought they never could before. That comes with a lack of structure and a lot of fluidity within their day-to-day work structure. We feel like we have hit a real nerve in the market and we have been able to acquire talent in the midst of companies like Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft, and Expedia. All of these companies offer amazing benefits packages and the culture around work life balance. We feel like we have been able to acquire a lot of talent that is not really looking for that but they are looking for the opportunity to be part of and help create and shape the next big thing that is going to impact the market.

CEOCFO: *Was that your concept on the first day or did you realize over time that that was the best for Blueprint?*

Mr. Neal: Very much so. My partner, Kyle Wagner, and I were out on a trip trudging around the Irish coast and talking about what our frustrations were with the market on the consultancy side where I came from and on the client side where he came from. We essentially came to three or four major core tenants that we thought really hit a gap in the market. That was our business theory for starting the company. That just provided platform and everything else was developed over time and there were many twists and turns of growing a startup consultancy this fast. There are many different ways to get there and a huge part of it was based on the individuals that we brought on board and what they brought to the table - everybody added onto it. One of the reasons we are so successful at this point is the company has many leaders and each of those leaders feels like they have helped build and shape the company. Our employees do not look to me, Kyle or any of the people that work here individually to take their direction; they look to each other which is an amazing thing.

CEOCFO: *Along with being recognized as the best company to work for you have also been recognized in the Inc. 5000 and several other places. How do you continue the trajectory?*

Mr. Neal: We continue to stay true to our core values and focus on building our culture. That to me is one of the most important thing. We do not do any marketing. We get almost all of our business from referrals and repeat customers and people that have really appreciated the impact we have made on their business. They end up either referring us over to somebody else who has a similar need or use us for their new projects. Many different technology and consulting companies out there are very much focused making sure their company comes out ahead in their engagements. For us it is very important to make sure our customer is successful and not only get a good product or solution but they also receive accountability around the actual positive impact in their business and ROI. Our ideal scenario is when we complete an engagement that pays for itself within the first six to twelve months. That is a win/win for everyone.

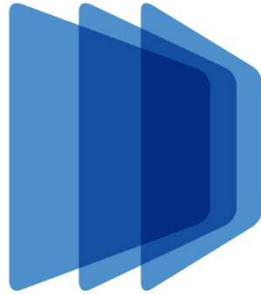
CEOCFO: *Your website indicates clients that most people would know. Clearly, you are doing something right. What has been the biggest surprise along the way for you?*

Mr. Neal: One of our core tenants of our business theory was to try to stay out in front of the market and be out in front of our customers. One of the biggest surprises that we found so far is that our customers have actually been pushing us as well, and many people have been challenging us to accelerate even faster. It is has been incredibly refreshing and something we did not anticipate.

CEOCFO: *Why choose **Blueprint Consulting Services?***

Mr. Neal: We offer something different than anybody else does in the market. We give a complete solution and we bring not just a set of highly talented individuals who can design a solution but who have actually done it and usually in the capacity of our client usually a similar or higher level. We bring a lot of real world practical expertise to each one of our solutions. We also carry a different view of success in an engagement. To Blueprint, it is very much to make sure that the client not only gets positively impacted but also sees a real ideal monetary value from the solution that we bring. We pride ourselves and hold ourselves accountable to the results of the solution, which very different in the market. We feel that is the reason why any potential client out there should choose us.

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



Blueprint[™]
CONSULTING SERVICES

Blueprint Consulting Services
For more information visit:
www.bpcs.com

Contact:
Ryan Neal
206.455.8326
ryan@bpcs.com