

Consulting Services for Small and Midsized Businesses



Tim Lally
President

CEOCFO: *Mr. Lally, what is the focus at KTL today?*

Mr. Lally: The focus is to provide consulting services to small to midsized businesses geared towards Microsoft technologies, business applications, business intelligence, and software development services.

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

Mr. Lally: What we have had most recently is a fairly large organization that had a series of different systems in their business that required them to do many manual processes. One of them was an older financial management system that they would take data and produce statements to their customers manually. It is a unique business on what they had to provide for their customers. The desire of the organization was to automate that process and reduce that cycle every month of reporting to the customers from a two week cycle to a day or two a month. We are charged with coming up with a solution that would take that away, upgrade their financial system to a Microsoft platform, and also be able to take the data from their disparate systems into a data warehouse so they can produce these client statements in a more efficient manner. We had to bring together a variety of different technologies and combine them to provide a single solution for this organization. Their solutions were BI360, Document Management, and the financial management system, Microsoft Dynamics GP.

CEOCFO: *Why should Microsoft be the technology of choice?*

Mr. Lally: The advantage of the Microsoft technologies are the synergies with all the different technologies that they have, because they talk nicely to each other. It does not mean that other companies cannot have technologies that integrate with Microsoft, Windows, Exchange, the database and other solutions; but the value of working with a Microsoft stack and combining all the technologies is that you are working with one organization that understands how all of their technologies work together. It is widely accepted. There are a billion and a half users out there with Windows technology, so there are many resources out there for organizations to reach out to, to help them succeed in these new technologies.

CEOCFO: *Are there particular industries of focus? Is there a common thread among your clients?*

Mr. Lally: Service based industries are probably our number one client base as well distributors of non perishable goods and items of that source. KTL spends most of our time in those two industries. We are in a decent area, so we have a fair share of non profits that we support as well. As far as healthcare and other industries, those are sort of outside the box on where our company bases our attention.

CEOCFO: *How do you reach prospective customers and how do they find you?*

Mr. Lally: Our Marketing department focuses on locating leads from people who hit our website, social media tracking from blogs and webinars, and also through many email blasts. In some ways, we are sort of old school with continued cold calling and follow up calls. Many of our clients and prospects like this though because it engages a relationship with them. We also attend events for networking and word of mouth referrals from our existing clients. We try and push as much content out from our Marketing Department so that our sales team can follow up on potential clients.

CEOCFO: *When you are speaking with a prospective client, how do you identify what they really need as opposed to what they think or say they need?*

Mr. Lally: That is always a tough thing to try to get out of a client. They are always focused on certain things that they think would bring a lot of value to their organization and in their first meeting, you are dealing with the higher level people in the organization. They really do not spend the day to day activities like your midline employees, your staff accounts, or your managers. In order for us to understand what the real issues are in the organization, we like to spend time with those

staff accountants and the mid line managers to find out what their challenges are day in and day out. Yes they need a new system, maybe their reporting is slow, they want to get more efficient numbers out and things like that, but the other aspects of the systems as well like what the struggles are of the users, are they doing many processes that the upper management does not even know that we can save them time there? It has allowed us to get down to those lower level employees where we can really understand what the true needs are of the organization. You also need to understand the long-term plans of the organization, if they are going to venture on to different industries and things like that to make sure that you recommend the right solution to lay down a platform for them to grow with.

CEOCFO: *Are you still surprised at the disconnect between the different levels or are you just so used to it now that you take it for granted?*

Mr. Lally: We're sometimes a little surprised because it seems like today, organizations are becoming more and more flat internally with their employees, but there are still organizations out there that have an older management structure and that is just the way they operate. They make the decisions and sometimes they do not include the other people to make sure it meets their needs.

CEOCFO: *How are you able to make your solutions really user friendly?*

Mr. Lally: We have a team of developers here and that gives us maybe a little more advantage over other Microsoft dynamics partners. There are always questions where people say there are too many clicks in one or more of their processes; there are too many fields on the screen; or they ask how to do something better, etc. We have all the tools that are available to us that Microsoft provides as well as the source code to Microsoft dynamics. We also have the development staff that has been doing this for an average of about ten years, that can customize or configure the system to make it more user friendly and adapt it to their business needs as opposed to their business needs being adapted to the software.

"KTL was built on customer service first, with sales second. It is very important to us that the customer is happy and that we provide service to them and respond quickly."- Tim Lally

CEOCFO: *How do you stay on top of potential changes? How do you know what is going to stay around?*

Mr. Lally: Can you? The best you can do is constantly go to webinars; pick a few organizations that report on different technologies. We go to conferences throughout the year to try to identify what the latest technology is and what is hot. I guess the exciting thing about the computer world is that things change constantly, but the downside is that thing that changed quickly may also die very quickly. You will see technologies pop up and then a competing technology will pop up and you thought that first one was the hot thing; then all of a sudden it is dead, and then the next one comes along. Look at Microsoft; everyone thought Silverlight was going to be it, then HTML5 comes out. Those are some struggles you have. The best you can do is constantly read or go to seminars or conferences to keep up with those technologies.

CEOCFO: *When you are devising a plan for a company, how could you effectively plan a long-term platform when things can change so quickly?*

Mr. Lally: Over the past fifteen years, the technology has not changed. You still have the framework, you have Windows, you still have the databases that are the same. It is just that there are more features and functions and things you can do with it. You need to learn those features and functionalities for software. You have the development tools that Microsoft has. Visual Studio has evolved over the years but it is still Visual Studio, so as it evolves, you keep up with it. Then you have all the little peripheral things, all the mobile applications. When it all comes down to it, it all has a core technology. The struggle is in all the little development tools that can utilize that core technology. That is where you go back and forth but we lay down the foundation that we are going to be a Windows Microsoft organization and focus on these technologies which is Windows, the web, which is .net, the database technology, which is SQL Server. That is our foundation. We will pick different technologies that enhance those three as time goes on because things do change and things die off and pick up. That has happened a number of times through the years, you pick a technology and three years later, it is gone.

CEOCFO: *Do you work with companies on an ongoing basis or is it project by project?*

Mr. Lally: I would say about 50% of our business is ongoing, you could call it project by project but it is known that we provide so many hours a year to those companies and the other ones are project by project. They will call us up and say they have an upcoming project. They will provide the scope and we will provide a work order for them for whatever number of hours that is and perform their project. We also have a great support portal, so we talk to our on-going clients and our project to project clients through there as well.

CEOCFO: *How do you help ease implementation?*

Mr. Lally: The only you can do is just be calm. I have been in some implementations where I have worked with other consultants and they are freaking out. If they are freaking out, the customer is freaking out. When I am involved with implementation, for instance a recent one that was fairly big and had lots of ups and downs with different technologies integrating into one, you just have to have a sense of calmness to you like you have done this before. It is ok and it will be fixed. As long as you say that and when you say something is going to be fixed on a certain day and it is, then the customer believes it and they are calm. Then every time we tell them something is going to be resolved on a certain day, they believe you. It is when you act like you have not been there before is when things start to fall apart.

CEOCFO: *How is business?*

Mr. Lally: Business is surprisingly good. You can sense the economy growing. DC is the greatest city in the world, I think. The economy does not really die around here. It slows down but not like other parts of the country, so it is always good in the DC area. The past couple years have been very good.

CEOCFO: *Is it very competitive as well?*

Mr. Lally: Yes it is, but this is a weird market. We talk amongst guys that own businesses that do the same thing that we do and you are seeing this type of business has less and less players in the dynamics channel. We do not run into as many people as we used to. They are starting to see competitors of different packages pop-up. As far as dynamics, you are seeing less of those partners. It is kind of odd that it is happening, but it is still competitive.

CEOCFO: *Why choose KTL Solutions?*

Mr. Lally: I think with KTL Solutions, what you will get is a company that is dedicated to their customer. We are a very technically savvy organization. KTL was built on customer service first, with sales second. It is very important to us that the customer is happy and that we provide service to them and respond quickly. The sale part comes second and I think that is what makes us different from all of the other organizations.

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