CEO CFO-M
ceocfointerviews.com
All rights reserved!
Issue: December 22, 2014
The Most Powerful Name in Corporate News

Manufacturing Solutions for Supply Chain Performance

John Oskin
Founder & CEO

"Companies seek Sage Clarity for our domain expertise in supply chain and manufacturing and knowledge of advanced analytics. We work with solutions that vary from plant floor information systems to enterprise supply chain analytics. Our unique ability to bring together metrics and KPIs into a framework that makes the information actionable and relevant for manufacturing professionals is what makes us unique."- John Oskin

CEOCFO: ***Mr. Oskin, would you tell us about Sage Clarity?***
Mr. Oskin: At Sage Clarity, we are enabling the next generation manufacturing enterprise. We do this by combining best of breed software applications with unique advisory services to enhance supply chain performance.

CEOCFO: ***Manufacturing traditionally has been slow to adopt new technology. Do you find the industry is catching up now?***
Mr. Oskin: Manufacturing is definitely on an uptick. We offer a number of business intelligence solutions that utilize big data in supply chain and manufacturing. There was a time when justification of those technologies was recognized primarily by leading edge companies. That still exists today, however, people have made the leap of faith that real-time information is valuable and important to the business with inherent benefits. That has enabled a much broader set of clients.

CEOCFO: ***Why might a company turn to you and what would a typical engagement be?***
Mr. Oskin: Companies seek Sage Clarity for our domain expertise in supply chain and manufacturing and knowledge of advanced analytics. We work with solutions that vary from plant floor information systems to enterprise supply chain analytics. Our unique ability to bring together metrics and KPIs into a framework that makes the information actionable and relevant for manufacturing professionals is what makes us unique.

CEOCFO: ***You have a history in manufacturing. What might be one or two things that you understand when you are working with a company and developing a plan for them that perhaps others do not realize is important?***
Mr. Oskin: We have a methodology for migrating customers from static to real-time KPIs, which is built around a platform called One View. Our

Sage Clarity

For more information visit:
www.sageclarity.com

Contact:
John Oskin
773-910-0217
john.oskin@sageclarity.com

framework guides customers through this process; reviewing the analytics and KPIs that they have in place today, then organizing information in a new way so a broader range of stakeholders have visibility into this information.

For example, KPIs typically limited to the executive suite, are now being propagated lower into the organization. Similarly, metrics often confined to the plant floor are now being bubbling upwards into the organization with new visibility to the executive ranks. Both stakeholders are very interested in each other's information. Middle managers often find it very surprising that senior executives are interested in detailed information. In the past, executives never had access to lower levels of information and thus never knew the right questions to ask. Now they have access. Similarly, lower levels in the organization never had visibility into key business measures privy to senior management. Bringing these two views together yields better alignment.

CEOCFO: ***What is the key to user friendliness?***
Mr. Oskin: The key to user friendliness is understanding the customer perspective. We collaborate with our clients on the user experience. In addition, we have deep knowledge and understanding of supply chain analytics. We lend that expertise to help define analytics that are meaningful and actionable. Also, keep it simple. It is easy to over engineer a business intelligence solution. We focus on the audience and what is needed to be impactful.

CEOCFO: ***Would you give us an example of something a client was able to change using your tools?***
Mr. Oskin: One client is accelerating day-to-day decision making and immersing themselves in more collaborative problem solving with a suite of Sage Clarity solutions. They believe in monitoring operational KPIs to drive improvements in the business. When they implemented One View they saw that it delivers more than actionable data. It's having a transformative effect on managing their business.

They also implemented a manufacturing intelligence solution seeing 25 – 40% improvement in capacity and production efficiency. This is hard enough in one facility but to achieve those types of results across a supply chain network is impressive.

CEOCFO: ***Sage Clarity was recognized by CIO Magazine recently; what do they like about your offerings?***
Mr. Oskin: They recognized our cutting-edge approach to technology and how it can affects the behavior of an organization. We were acknowledged for our One View solution. One View brings together data from disparate sources to give managers and executives immediate visibility into operational metrics such as week-to-date, month-to-date and year-to-date views for a range of metrics. A key feature is the inclusion of in-context social collaboration, in which users may engage each other in live messaging while reviewing the same screens. One View lets users choose from among several "dashboard" and "scorecard" views; for example, order fulfillment, adherence to plan, and inventory. Executives at any level of the company can use the application to view real-time performance data and collaborate with managers responsible for those metrics. A senior executive can ask a production manager "why aren't today's targets aren't being met". "That kind of transparency can have an immediate positive impact on operations. Senior management

has wanted this kind of information to keep managers alert to problems and address them while they're still manageable at the local level."

CEOCFO: ***Where does mobile fit in with your strategy?***
Mr. Oskin: Everyone today is mobile; they are not tied to desktops. Our platform is agnostic to the technology. It runs on a desktop, it runs on a tablet and it runs on a smart phone. This is important because no one wants to always run to their PC to pull up data. It is an "anytime and anywhere" mindset around information today and you need solutions to meet that need.

We are also leading the charge around a new concept called Mini Apps. The Mini Apps way of thinking is a method for organizations to frame up how supply chain management functionality can be effectively deployed and successfully utilized by organizations. Sage Clarity has applied this concept for Supply Chain Business Intelligence. From Sage Clarity's perspective, each KPI group is a Mini app. These apps interact together and become part of a broader Business Intelligence solution. While each Mini App can be a key performance indicator, connecting different Mini Apps in a manner that yields an application that improves business performance is a way to adapt a mobile device to the business processes of an organization.

The "last mile" to support a real time business intelligence strategy needs to be a mobile capability to provide organizations at all levels the right information at the right time, followed by the ability for individuals who view the information to react.

CEOCFO: ***What have you learned over time that makes it a better solution today?***
Mr. Oskin: Internet access in manufacturing environments has improved dramatically over the past 5 years. This enables mobile solutions that were not previously possible. We have seen the impact from this. When the people inputting data realized management was using this information almost in real time to support day-to-day decision making, they were energized and excited about it. Now they want to do even more, because their work is helping run the business in ways that were previously not possible. This is bringing speed, visibility and accountability to production KPIs.

CEOCFO: ***What is your geographic reach?***
Mr. Oskin: Sage Clarity is a global firm. We work with large multinational companies and have clients in North and South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. These companies have multiple manufacturing operations abroad. Our ability to bring an enterprise view of their supply chain performance makes us different.

CEOCFO: ***Are there many companies that specialize in manufacturing the way you do?***
Mr. Oskin: There are a number of business intelligence solutions in the market. There was a time when general purpose BI applications were the preferred corporate solution. Today, people realize that successful BI applications are focused applications that require domain expertise. Unlike many 'big data' approaches that take a narrow *deep dive* into massive sets of numbers, One View does a broad *shallow dive* on the data. It skims along the surface, looking for opportunities where a

company can more efficiently run production, and then displays the results on an iPad or any mobile device, using animations and graphics that anyone in the whole organization can understand. And since it's a shallow dive, you get actionable results immediately. In particular, our One View product is not designed to replace other BI applications, it is designed to augment them to a point where it is enhances their value.

CEOCFO: ***How do you reach out to potential clients and how do they find you if they are looking?***
Mr. Oskin: References are the best sources. We are fortunate to have clients that speak highly of us and typically refer us to peers and colleagues in the industry. We also leverage our thought leadership and have a strong blog around supply chain and business intelligence topics. We continually publish articles that advance peoples thinking.

CEOCFO: ***With all the new technology, how do you evaluate what to keep on your radar screen?***
Mr. Oskin: We look for solutions that can be launched in 1-3 years. We are not trying to incubate products that take ten years. Last year, we launched the Idea lab, which is an area on our website to explore new technologies and cutting-edge concepts. Idea Lab solutions advance the user experience beyond traditional enterprise software solutions for manufacturing. The solutions employ cutting edge advanced technology used in creative ways to engage the workforce. Some of the solutions we have introduced include intelligent data mining big data applications, mobile business intelligence solutions and highly interactive factory floor advanced visualization applications.

CEOCFO: ***How is business these days?***
Mr. Oskin: Business has been very good. The company was launched in 2011; however, I have been in this industry for over 20 years. We started Sage Clarity with established client relationships and we have seen significant growth every year. Manufacturing is certainly on a rebound and there is a real appetite for technology. We think 2015 will be another good year for technology and mobile solutions.

CEOCFO: ***What might be different a year from now for the company?***
Mr. Oskin: We have terrific solutions and will be pushing our technologies to further levels of integration. You will see tighter integration with other business systems and enhanced value for logistics and inventory. Look for cutting edge work around goal attainment, collaboration and what-if scenario analysis. I would encourage your readers to check out our blog.

CEOCFO: ***Are you able to help your clients interpret data?***
Mr. Oskin: Data interpretation is an important part of our offering. It is called Clarity Advisory Services. We have a practice area dedicated to this work. We have a staff of Lean and six sigma professionals that work with clients and their data. These are manufacturing professionals that understand the clients business with strong analytics backgrounds. Very often companies implement Manufacturing Intelligence solutions and the engagement ends when the system is live. With Sage Clarity, it is different. The Clarity offering gets started after go live and continues for 3-6 months with data coaching. We conduct “swimming in the data sessions” to lend insight. We apply this methodology to our entire

solution suite, whether it's an Epicor Informance application, InfinityQS for Quality or applications like One View.

CEOCFO: ***Why choose Sage Clarity?***
Mr. Oskin: Companies Choose Sage Clarity for our best of breed capabilities around supply chain and manufacturing intelligence solutions. We have a best of breed suite of solutions that include Manufacturing Intelligence data with Epicor Informance, Quality management data with InfinityQS and Supply Chain information with One View. In addition to enabling business efficiencies, these applications are consistent with our vision of staying focused and keeping things simple by getting timely information to all levels of the business in a useful, collaborative format.

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

---