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Issue: August 10, 2020

## NTS Credits Security for their Recent Growth

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**CEOCFO: *Mr. Robinson, what was the vision when you founded Networking Technologies + Support? Where is NTS today?***

**Mr. Robinson:** My dream was to have a full service one-stop systems integration firm. That was the premise. The question was how to get from where I was, just one person, to where my dream was actually going to become reality. To answer your second question, we are always evolving as a multi-faceted systems integration firm. We have developed many unique marketplace offerings or series of offerings over the years.

**CEOCFO: *What are some of the unique experiences a client will have at NTS?***

**Mr. Robinson:** That depends on the environment. We are a managed services provider. We do cyber security work across the nation. We have a cabling division that is involved with smart technologies. We also have a health services division that accommodates both small and enterprise level offerings. And a pretty darn good footprint in field services with managed print across the state. It's all customized, so the list goes on.

We also have a consulting division spun up by a man who had created a quite good-sized consulting company. He did not like the direction his Board was taking his former company, so he came to NTS. That was just a year ago and it is going very well.

**CEOCFO: *How did you come upon the mix; cyber security separately and nationwide, the structure cabling statewide?***

**Mr. Robinson:** Something that is interesting about the Richmond marketplace. If you do a great job, you can expand on your services with your clients. They will allow you to grow in different directions if you are doing a great job with what you're contracted to do. That's how we grew. We started reselling equipment. It's interesting given that I had no money to buy and resell. Then we started doing services related to the hardware that we were selling. I invested in an engineer who provided service certifications. This allowed us to offer not only hardware, but also the warranty and remedial services that went along with it. To do that, we discovered something. We had a unique selling advantage. The hardware manufacturers had a warranty service and it was free to purchasers; it was a four-hour response. This means the manufacturers would contact the client within four hours and let them know when they were going to be there to service them. All the while, the client was down. We developed a process where they would call us instead of the manufacturer.

We put equipment under a hardware agreement. The parts were free for warranty suppliers. We got on site, within four hours, part in hand! This allowed us to grow a good hardware maintenance space.

In that first year, we had made a great reputation with doing hardware maintenance and a RSP came out from a large manufacturer. It was a very large RSP; it covered everything that they were doing in the IT environment. We collaborated with one of their service providers because they could not do the maintenance piece. And we were good at maintenance. Now, we had won an opportunity to provide hardware maintenance to the manufacturer in four states, twenty-two facilities, with twenty-nine people.

**CEOCFO: *And I expect you did it well!***

**Mr. Robinson:** Now, let us talk about that for a second. Twenty-nine people are going to want to be paid in two weeks! Did I mention I did not have any money?

**CEOCFO: *You mentioned that, yes!***

**Mr. Robinson:** You hire someone, so there is a first payroll. Then there is a second payroll and you have not billed yet, because you bill at the end of the month. Then it is forty-five days until you get your money. That is three more payrolls. That's five payrolls that you have to cover before you are paid. With twenty-nine people, it wasn't going to happen.

I was able to negotiate with the prime saying, "here is my situation. What I want to be able to do is take my payroll records and send them to you on a Monday, and have your department put the money in my account by Wednesday." At that point, the federal government was actually subtracting the taxes before your payroll hit. Therefore, it had to be there by Wednesday, because they took it out Thursday. They agreed to it, and it worked!

**"One of our specialties is security. We do security at a level that has attracted very large clients across the country. Currently, we have projects in seven states." Bernard Robinson**

**CEOCFO: *Did you always know you had this in you, the creativity, the getting it done?***

**Mr. Robinson:** I know this is going to sound crazy and I almost apologize for saying it; when I was five years old and people asked me what I wanted to be, my response was always the same. I wanted to be a millionaire." I could not really say the word! I had trouble saying the word correctly, but I knew what I wanted to be! They would say, "Well, how?" I would look up with a blank stare and say, "I do not know; I am five!"

**CEOCFO: *Would you tell me a little bit about the healthcare? That is a somewhat specialty service and there are so many companies that provide tech services in that arena. What have you figured out that is a bit different, better, more affordable, easier; any or all of those things?***

**Mr. Robinson:** We have a platform of support that has worked out phenomenally well. We have something called a Network Operations Center (NOC), where we proactively monitor networks and we mediate networks based on alerts that we see. Therefore, we know if there is a problem with a network before the end user knows they have a problem and we can start working on the remediation. We also have a service desk that is connected to the NOC, and it is staffed 24x7x365.

A 24/7 support offering has been invaluable, particularly for the healthcare industry. One of our specialties is security. We do security at a level that has attracted very large clients across the country. Currently, we have projects in seven states.

**CEOCFO: *What are you doing that is different in the security arena?***

**Mr. Robinson:** The way the industry works is, if you're a holder of a contract and you're providing IT services for an entity – a state government or commercial entity – you have to hire a third-party firm to perform penetration testing. At NTS, we perform this service using our own Certified Ethical Hackers to look for security exploits within a network. We then tell the customer how we exploited them and how to re-mediate the attack."

**CEOCFO: *What, if anything, has changed for you in the COVID environment?***

**Mr. Robinson:** Like most, we adopted to a "work at home" environment. It was a little bit easier for us, because we do technology. Therefore, allowing our employees to go home was relatively easy. Of course, our clients wanted the same thing, so we were a little busy setting up the remote clients in a secure environment at home.

**CEOCFO: *Are you surprised at how many people were willing to give up that security level to get work done at home?***

**Mr. Robinson:** I am surprised at some of the stories that we read about other environments. We would not allow our clients to do that. That was never an option.

**CEOCFO: *That makes sense!***

**Mr. Robinson:** It made sense to them, too.

**CEOCFO: *What is next for NTS? You have a lot on your plate already.***

**Mr. Robinson:** We have never been afraid of growing. We are investigating some acquisitions at this time. I know there will be some IT firms that will find it difficult to survive post COVID-19.

**CEOCFO: *What have you learned about working with the government?***

**Mr. Robinson:** My lessons have been different. We had an eleven-year segment, where we were working heavily within the federal government. We opted to grow in some other areas and diversify, so we are not doing much business in the Federal space. However, what I found was there was no such thing as a bad debt. We were paid in thirty-five days, because if we were not, the interest would accrue. That was something that really surprised me. There were always the stories about how your accounts receivable would hang on longer than you would, and it is just not true. I found it to be a darn good work environment.

Unfortunately, I took my head of federal systems out to run our commercial market, and he has been very successful in that area! Therefore, we are beginning to work again with the federal government, using different resources. I am sorry I did not focus as much, but other environments were clamoring for attention.

**CEOCFO: *Why choose NTS?***

**Mr. Robinson:** We have a reputation of being successful in engaging with our clients to eliminate the problems that they have with technology. We have a great reputation for that. We're known as a predominant security advisor, so our solutions have an umbrella of security around them.