

Content Management System Solutions for Associations, Government and Higher Education Clients



Andy Kucharski- CEO

Founded in 2003, Promet Source is a leading interactive development firm that implements open source tools (specifically Drupal) to deliver high-value web and mobile application development & support. Promet offers a turn-key solution delivered by experts in the field: sprint 0 planning (Agile concept development), design, architecture, development and deployment. After deployment, Promet provides ongoing support & maintenance. Our consultants have deep technical expertise and are recognized as leaders within the Drupal community. Promet serves clients globally across multiple industries - specializing in government, higher education, non-profits, start-ups, healthcare and professional services.

In 2010, Promet Source - an industry leader in complex web and mobile app development - developed a dispatch solution for Green Cab of Madison (based in Madison, WI): a custom-developed iPad app to schedule rides; handle credit card payments through Square and ROAMPay; communicate with drivers through Skype; and use Google Maps for real-time location data. Green Cab needed a mobile solution that would replace the noisy and inefficient back-and-forth communications typically handled by two-way radios.

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

CEOCFO: Mr. Kucharski, what is the concept at Promet?

Mr. Kucharski: Promet provides content management system solutions to association, government and higher education clients and we incorporate e-commerce into what we do. We have been around for 10 years and I started Promet coming off of a start-up experience in NY where we needed high tech expertise from firms but we could not get it. That firm was acquired and I left eventually and started this agency with the idea that we would provide those types of services, technical expertise to folks who needed it.

CEOCFO: Was it a deliberate decision to work in these areas or was that more opportunistic?

Mr. Kucharski: It was more opportunistic. We initially wanted to focus on e-commerce and provide custom built solutions. We also had a drive to work in open source. It just so happened that the folks like associations had the complex requirements that we were looking forward to satisfying and they were open to using open source.

CEOCFO: What do you see as complex requirements that Promet could handle that perhaps others could not?

Mr. Kucharski: What I see happening is how web agencies used to tackle building sites that were singular function or maybe presented information. As that technology matures, it rarely stands alone. You are almost always integrating with something. You are not just building websites that provide information; you are building websites that engage application. We really enjoy tackling those problems as an application. How do we engage users? Simplify the workflow to accomplish something? And how do we take information that is required to be presented to the users or the information the users are giving us or that we are collecting on them and pushing out or pulling from other systems, integrating it. Rarely does an application stand alone these days. Your thermostat is now being connected to the web and your mobile devices. Google paid three billion dollars for a thermostat company that connects that thermostat in your house to the cloud and your mobile devices. Just like those common things that we take for granted, web applications can now generally connect to external systems whether it is marketing or e-commerce. It is marketing automation tools. WE strive to be able to satisfy all of those requirements for sophisticated buyers.

CEOCFO: How do you reach potential clients?

Mr. Kucharski: We do a ton of R&D internally. We allow our developers and teams to take about 20% of their time to look at best development practices in the open source community and tools that we work with. We try to contribute back to those open source communities. We contribute a code and speak at events. We present ourselves as thought leaders because we share what we learn and we are recognized for that knowledge and we attend industry events. We publish

some of the cool things that we do with our tools and hopefully some of our clients take notice. We also receive many word of mouth referrals.

CEOCFO: *What is a typical engagement?*

Mr. Kucharski: An example of typical engagement is a liberal arts college that asked us to help us engage their alumni community in better ways. We came in and looked at what they were doing, replaced a box system with a custom open source community where their members are able to interact with each other. The alumni community folks that are managing community are able to post events, the alumni are able to self organize, and within that, we disperse the ability for them to donate back to the institution. We build a nice online community where folks can interact and a click away is the ability for them to donate and self organize events. That information is fed back to their CRM systems. Another application that we build would be for NIH who needed to market some of the intellectual property license that they have. They want to be able to spread the word and provide a catalogue of that information then spread the word of how that used and how your tax dollars that go to NIH are helping the world become a better place. We build them a website that shares some of that information with the users.

CEOCFO: *Do you typically have an ongoing relationship or do you build it, show them how to run it and then leave?*

Mr. Kucharski: I do not know how anyone survives these days without building an ongoing relationship. We do not think of our clients as partners. We like them to think of us as a partner. Sometimes it is a little give and take and that means that we do not always look at the contract, we just try to help them meet their ultimate business objectives. We like to build long relationships with them. After the application is done and we achieved a launch and had a celebration, we work with them on following up to make sure their business goals are being met and they are looking at the next thing, that technology evolves and changes, and that they are being supported. Sometimes if it is a new technology instead of having to rely on internal folks, we are an extension to their marketing, technology or communications.

“We really have an eye in solving complex application problems. We come from a system integration and management consulting perspective, so we keep the entire view of your business and how the applications interact with different parts of the business in mind.”

- Andy Kucharski

CEOCFO: *When you are speaking with a new client, what is the key to understanding what they really want as opposed to what they say or think they want?*

Mr. Kucharski: First of all, it is understanding different stakeholders' needs and wants, being able to ask the question several times in several different ways to really get at what is being articulated. We do application implementations every day. We build mobile applications every day. We may have a client whose job is to communicate, market, or direct over technology responsibilities for many different things. In that case, they may have a business need but they do not know how to clearly articulate the solution. At the beginning during a sales project process, at the kick-off and during a project, it is key to ask the questions, ask the business objectives, repeat, and confirm. We need to have a good communication process and loop back the answers and use many visual tools in providing plans for what we are building. From wire frames to visual designs to prototypes, we make sure our solutions are what they imagined continually ensure we are still achieving their business objectives.

CEOCFO: *What are the intangibles that you want in your people? Technical skill is important but interacting with clients is important as well.*

Mr. Kucharski: Yes it is. Problem solving skills are very important, solving a problem faster, building a better mousetrap. The desire to satisfy the client and being able to back that up with not just the desire but actually doing things when you say you are going to do them. There should also be a desire to share in the success of the client, not just celebrating technical achievement, but taking the satisfaction of helping a client succeed.

CEOCFO: *How is business these days?*

Mr. Kucharski: It is very good. It's one of the hardest parts; aside from engaging and unwrapping up new folks, it is actually recruiting and finding the folks who are in the technology area that understand what we are trying to do but have the qualities of those folks. Hiring is really a big challenge for us.

CEOCFO: *What is your geographic reach?*

Mr. Kucharski: We're centered in the mid-west. We have many clients in the mid-west and Washington DC. We complete projects anywhere in the US and Canada. We have clients throughout the US.

CEOCFO: *What might be different at Promet a year from now?*

Mr. Kucharski: We think that we're going to provide much more support options, so we see a lot of demand for providing more application levels support whether is mobile support applications and other sites. We think we are going to unveil

some pretty cutting edge frameworks or products that allow for better mobile development. We can find the right people to bring it on, so you will see more new faces.

CEO/COO: *What makes Promet Source exceptional?*

Mr. Kucharski: We really have an eye in solving complex application problems. We come from a system integration and management consulting perspective, so we keep the entire view of your business and how the applications interact with different parts of the business in mind. We are here for the long term, so once the application is complete, we want to support you in continuing to achieve your goals. Our work is built with integrity. With open source projects, we stand by our code and we stand for many years to come so that can achieve your ROI open source project for a long time to come.

CEO/COO: *What should people remember most when they read about Promet?*

Mr. Kucharski: We like to bring new technology solutions to the mortals just like Prometheus brought fire to mortals and we keep on doing that. We engage with our clients for many years and you come back to us for new technology developing applications. We started off with folks just building websites and we built mobile applications for them. Now we integrate with many different systems and we pull from the open source community to provide them with some amazing solutions.

BIO: Our fearless leader, Andy has more than 15 years of technical and project management experience from startups to Fortune 50 firms with industry experience in banking, telecommunications, government, and association technology management. Andy's ecommerce experience dates to 1998 with the implementation of highly scalable enterprise solutions for telecommunications providers. Representative clients include Yahoo, MSN, Best Buy, Sony Ericson, Sprint, and Bank of America.



Promet Source
1802 West Berteau Avenue
Chicago, IL 60613
773-525-8255
www.prometsource.com