



ceocfointerviews.com  
All rights reserved!  
Issue: June 22, 2015

**The Most Powerful Name in Corporate News**



## Hosted Business Phone and Internet Service Provider

Interview with: *Jay Swayze - President & CEO*

**CEOCFO: Mr. Swayze, your website tagline is “Connect Everyone Everywhere.” Would you tell us about bluArc?**

**Mr. Swayze:** bluArc is a Hosted Business Phone and Internet Service Provider. Our slogan—“Connect Everyone Everywhere”—speaks to the challenge of connecting disparate workforces, as many businesses do not have just the one phone and one desk. We provide a technology and a solution that enables businesses to not only connect with their employees internally, but also to connect to their customers and business partners across a wide variety of services whether home phones, cell phones, or remote phones. Simply put, the business landscape has changed drastically—we enable businesses to easily connect with their people anywhere, at any time.

**CEOCFO: How are you able to provide a “Connected Experience” more easily than other systems?**

**Mr. Swayze:** It’s really a matter of providing customers with a choice of technologies. Traditional phone systems, though having their merits, no longer support the concept of a mobile workforce.

With so many people living a “mobile” work life, including everything from travel to commute times, off-site meetings to home office environments, bluArc looks directly at a customer’s business requirements to understand how that customer communicates with its workforce, its clients, and its shareholders. By taking this approach, we can help determine the best technology and options for their respective business needs.

For example, if a client has a traditional office environment with 20 employees in one location, and they have another office in another city on the other side of the country with only 5 employees, we might suggest a teleworker’s solution whereby we are using a different type of technology to connect that office. For instance, they might have a salesperson in another country—in this case, we could also supply that person with our mobile app enabling them to seamlessly connect to the office through the convenience of their mobile device.

**CEOCFO: Do your customers care about the technology—as long as you get it to work well?**

**Mr. Swayze:** It can vary, but for the most part our approach is simple: we always tell our clients to focus on their business and allow us to make the system work. After all, we are the specialists in this technology. In fact, unlike many of our competitors our team of engineers are all former telecomm engineers—they understand the true technology of telephony. So many times we see companies that sell phone systems as an “add-on” with no true experience in telecom—it’s those companies that unfortunately give our industry a bad name.

Then, on the other side of the coin, we see so many companies that have tried to be their own phone company, implementing some VoIP box in a closet and hoping for the best—something that never turns out well. The technology is out there, and unfortunately it gives people the ability to build their own phone systems. They can use Free Source, Open Source PBX software, etc.

It takes a lot of time, skill, and resources to figure out how to make it work. Like anything else, it’s always best to let the professionals handle it, after all to this day the mechanic who works on my car has yet to operate on my eyes (laughing).

**CEOCFO: What types of businesses, size, geography and industry tend to come to you?**

**Mr. Swayze:** It is a large, fragmented demographic and market, without a doubt. To date, we have clients from every possible industry; for example, construction, nonprofit, retail, legal and professional services firms. It is a wide and fragmented market. As our focus is on the SMB market, many of our clients have between five to a hundred employees, with some larger than that. Many have multiple or distributed offices or employees. A client could have offices in Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver, with some employees working in New Brunswick and Quebec, and the client wants to integrate its people to look as if they are one entity.

**CEOCFO:** *In the last few months, you have released some new features and maybe some new products or services. What is different today than it was six months ago?*

**Mr. Swayze:** The technology is certainly changing as well as the industry. You are looking at changes in speed and broadband, and more and more people demanding faster applications. There is hype around the cloud, so more customers are looking to host their services in the cloud as opposed to on-premise. Because of these factors, we are trying to keep customers informed on how they can adapt to the changes in technology. Recently, we got the idea of allowing people to seamlessly connect to their office from their mobile phone. We added this product and service, naming it mobileConnect. This new solution allows customers to use their soft phones on their smart phones; thus, using a Wi-Fi internet connection to connect back to us, they become an extension of the office regardless of where they are in the world.

**CEOCFO:** *With security always being an issue, how does that come into play for you?*

**Mr. Swayze:** For our clients, security is crucial and it is our foremost priority. One security feature is that we have all our facilities in a central office so it is not only just a data center, but it is also the main telecom bunker for many of our clients. We also operate on a private network—we do not route voice over the internet. By operating a private network we avoid the internet altogether. At the same time, we have some applications or services where clients are looking for convenience. For example, they can connect into the office, where you cannot run a private network, to a single home or business. We provide the convenience of connecting in from the internet, but then we have these security gateways that basically authenticate into our network first.

“We are different in the sense that we focus on our clients’ business processes first, and take their goals into consideration before we adopt a solution. We focus on delivering a service and solution that is carrier grade, reliable, scalable, secure and easy to use.”- Jay Swayze

**CEOCFO:** *When you are working with a company, what do you look at to assess the best plan?*

**Mr. Swayze:** This is one bluArc’s differentiators. We do not go in and just sell them a technology or a service. What we first do is go in and sit down with our prospective client and find out the company’s requirements. We try to understand everything about the business, how they communicate internally and externally with staff and shareholders, customers, partners and vendors. We also try to look at their business processes whether sales, marketing, support, or operations. We try to figure out the most efficient way they can communicate amongst themselves, as well as with external clients. We try to understand their business processes and requirements first, and then we make recommendations on the best solution for their specific needs.

**CEOCFO:** *How do you keep up with the technology?*

**Mr. Swayze:** Many of us have been in this industry for a long time. As much as things change, much stays the same. Fundamentally, at the end of the day, clients are still going to want to communicate or exchange emails internally and externally to clients. The idea is to make it as easy as possible for customers to self-serve. Clients can go in and make their own changes to their system, the way they talk, the way they route calls, and the way they route messages. We see technology changes, but much of it is the same as people still want to have phones in their office, and the convenience of being reached on their cell phone. The fundamentals are not changing in terms of how people communicate, but it is changing in how to make it easier for them.

**CEOCFO:** *What do you offer that you feel your customers do not take enough advantage?*

**Mr. Swayze:** We have features that people haven’t adopted, which is surprising. For example, Mobile Twinning. It’s a great feature as you can have your desk phone and your cell phone ring concurrently. If you answered on your cell phone, you can then walk over to your desk and pick up your desk phone and it automatically hangs up your cell phone. The advantage of our Mobile Twinning feature is that it is not call forwarding. The inbound calling is not necessarily your office; it is the actual, original calling line IT. You can determine if you need to pick up the call even if you are on the golf course. I am surprised we do not have more clients using that application because I think it is tremendously valuable.

**CEOCFO:** *What is your geographic range?*

**Mr. Swayze:** We sell throughout Canada although most of our clients are headquartered either in Quebec or Ontario. Obviously, we do have clients in western Canada as well. Our focus is on those territories where there is a large presence such as Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, or the GTA, as well as in western Canada with Calgary, Vancouver and Edmonton.

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

**Mr. Swayze:** I do not think there will be anything necessarily different. One of the things we are trying to do is offer the best technology and the best services. We want to stay ahead of our competition and deliver the best services possible for our clients. At the same time, we have a long way to go. We are competing with the big boys on the block such as the large cable operators. They have a huge market share and we are trying to make inroads into that. We will adapt even though technologies might change or change slightly and things might get better and faster. Because we are a hosted solution, we conduct upgrades once a year for our clients as part of our evergreen solution, so they get those services included and any other improvements for free.

***CEOCFO: What should people remember about bluArc?***

**Mr. Swayze:** I think people should understand that one of the things that makes us different is that we have been doing this consistently for close to ten years. We are different in the sense that we focus on our clients' business processes first, and take their goals into consideration before we adopt a solution. We focus on delivering a service and solution that is carrier grade, reliable, scalable, secure and easy to use. That is what makes us unique. It has allowed us to become the #1 Hosted Business Phone and Internet Service Provider because we have established a reputation and a brand that delivers a service that really does meet the needs of our clients.

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

---



**[www.bluarc.ca](http://www.bluarc.ca)**