

Technology Solutions for Small and Midsized Businesses



Scott Anderson
President & CEO

About Core Business Services, LLC

Since 2006 Core Business Services has been providing tailor-made technology solutions to businesses of all sizes. Today, we are the region's largest managed service provider with offices in Medford, Portland, Eugene, Oregon as well as in Denver, CO. We specialize in offering best-in-class technical support, data back up and disaster recovery, cloud services, network management, VOIP phone systems, business continuity plans and managed print services.

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

CEOCFO: Mr. Anderson, what is the concept and philosophy at Core Business Services?

Mr. Anderson: We essentially become a company's IT department and work with small and midsized businesses to simplify their technology.

CEOCFO: What is it about your approach that sets Core apart?

Mr. Anderson: We try to bring it back to the business rather than the technology, so my background is not in technology. I am by no means the most technical person on our staff. We can relate to business owners or executives pretty well in regards to not necessarily directly about the technology but about how business technology can make your business more efficient and makes your business more money and your employees happier. It is really about the business side of IT, which I think many times gets overlooked because of all the flashy bells and whistles.

CEOCFO: Would you give us an example of where that comes into play?

Mr. Anderson: Day to day as we act as the company's IT department or work with internal IT departments, there is much of what we call 'business as usual', so if somebody cannot print or has an issue with Email or on a bigger scale we are working with an internal IT department on migration of a server, all that is IT and there is not much difference about that. Where we really try to differentiate ourselves is in regards to more of the strategic planning and budgeting, so working with our clients on a regular basis at least monthly in regards to a rolling 36-month roadmap. We are road-mapping out the future and then revising that as we meet with them regularly based on their business objectives. Business objectives are really the key – aligning IT to a company's business objectives.

CEOCFO: When they are speaking with a potential client, do they understand the difference in your approach and is there a typical aha moment?

Mr. Anderson: We hope there is that aha moment. It is a longer sales time depending upon who we are selling against. Typically it is a long sales cycle and sometimes the aha moment comes down the road when finally something in their current relationship where their internal and external has gone awry.

CEOCFO: What is your geographic reach today?

Mr. Anderson: We are focused in southern Oregon. A couple of our largest clients are in northern Oregon and we are up and down that I-5 corridor in Oregon. We have a relationship with a datacenter in Denver, so we have a presence that direction as well.

CEOCFO: Do you see an expansion in the geography?

Mr. Anderson: We do yes. We are very growth oriented and have grown about sixty percent a year for the past four years. Our operations are handled at our headquarters in Medford but we are able to reach out to some of these other locations with an account manager and a senior engineer in the local market and then growing that engineering staff as needed, but a pretty low-cost entry base, as we land some anchor clients in those regions.

CEOCFO: What is the key to growing successfully?

Mr. Anderson: I think the first thing is to be strategic about growth, so we have made it clear to ourselves and our staff that we want to grow and why we have wanted to growth; it is not necessarily to be the biggest or most top line revenue. We have really felt like we could support our clients best with a larger engineering staff so that we have redundancy and

rollover. You have to make sure that as you grow there is that point, and we are at that point, where processes and procedures become so real so that you are not always reinventing the wheel every time or spinning your wheels. Being able to develop those processes and procedures as you are continually growing is definitely worthwhile and challenging.

CEOCFO: Are there other services that you would like to offer?

Mr. Anderson: Anything that plugs into the Ethernet jack is kind of on the radar. In 2014 we are trying to focus on what we do currently. There are different things on the horizon that we will be exploring like IP surveillance, mobile device management and some heavier managed print.

CEOCFO: Do you clients tend to follow your advice when they take Core on as their IT department?

Mr. Anderson: Our goal is to become almost an extension of their staff that they trust. Typically we are able to steer our clients in the direction we would have them go. The easiest way we are able to do that is to let them know the more we standardize their network in terms of how we can support it, the better we can support it, which means it is going to be the lowest cost.

CEOCFO: What is the key for you in evaluating new technologies and new areas of focus?

Mr. Anderson: It really comes down to whether the technology is simple or not at least from the user perspective, so our mantra is 'simplifying business technology' and we really believe in simplifying the technology for the user; it seems like so much is so complicated these days. Our first question is how simple is the product or solution from a user perspective and even from a management perspective in terms of what we are doing with it. The second part is what is the partner relationship like with the vendor, is it somebody who just wants to sell goods or is it somebody that does everything more solution oriented?

"It is not about the technology because that is just what we do but it is about the business and how we can use technology to better the business." - Scott Anderson

CEOCFO: When you are developing products or working with a customer, how do you look at it from the customer perspective and know it is simple to use?

Mr. Anderson: "Tech" people communicate differently. I am not a tech person and our account management team is not made up of technical people per se, but made up of business people and they understand that a client does not necessarily care about all the cool stuff but they just care if it works.

CEOCFO: What surprised you as the business has grown and developed?

Mr. Anderson: Just the different stages in our growth in terms of a company and stages of relationships with our clients and the maturity process our company has gone through - and there is a long way to go.

CEOCFO: What is next for Core Business Services?

Mr. Anderson: We have been growing rapidly at 60% a year and we do not see that slowing down any but at the same time our strategic focus is less on growth right now and more on dialing things in to be more and more scalable. As we have grown, repeatable processes and procedures and such is going to be more important, so we are focusing on that in 2014 and more and more in 2015 and on that geographic extension piece of the puzzle. Continually, cloud is a big place for us, so we have been bringing cloud into the discussion with the majority of our clients for years now and it continues to be a better and better place. The more ways we can help our customers work into the cloud, the better.

CEOCFO: Why pay attention to Core Business Services?

Mr. Anderson: I think the biggest piece there is just the alignment of interest. We are going to work on our clients' behalf, our interests are going to align and we are going to bring it back to the business. It is not about the technology because that is just what we do but it is about the business and how we can use technology to better the business.

BIO: Scott Anderson is Core Business Services founder, President and CEO. Core Business Services provides all-inclusive technology services for small to mid-sized businesses. With solutions including cloud computing, business continuity, proactive monitoring and management, unified communications, 24x7 help desk, and more; the company stays true to its mantra of "Simplifying Business Technology" while working with a wide variety of clients in industries such as medical, manufacturing, professional services, retail, and construction.

Under Scott's leadership, Core has grown profitably since inception with significant year over year top line revenue growth; while engaging with clients in a fixed-fee model. Additionally, Scott has been recognized as a member of the MSPMentor 250, a prestigious industry award, for three years running.

Scott is a graduate of Southern Oregon University with a BS in Business. And received his Master of Arts in Teaching from Western Oregon University.

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