The Most Powerful Name in Corporate News

Enterprise Class Application Development and Modernization

About Mariner Innovations
Mariner is the largest independently owned Information Technology company headquartered in Atlantic Canada. Mariner Innovations is the professional services arm of Mariner Group. With a reputation for leadership in IT solutions, the firm specializes in strategic IT consulting, application modernization and application development services.

Mariner Innovations headquarters are located in Saint John, NB, with regional offices in Regina, Toronto, Fredericton, and Halifax.

More information about Mariner's IT solutions can be found at www.marinerinnovations.com

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

CEOCFO: *Mr. Storey, what is Mariner?*
Mr. Storey: Mariner is an IT services company, specializing in resource augmentation and application modernization. We build and modernize applications that are enterprise class.

Craig Storey - President

CEOCFO: *What do you understand about doing those things that perhaps other companies do not? What is your approach?*
Mr. Storey: Particularly on the application modernization side, we have a solution agnostic approach. Unlike many other companies, we do not subscribe to a "one size fits all" approach to modernization. There are many different approaches, but there are also many different constraints and goals within each organization. Every organization has its own unique strategies and starting points. What might be the right approach for one company may not be the right approach for another. Our approach is to determine the optimal solution for the client when it comes to modernization.

CEOCFO: *When you are talking with a client, how do you decipher what they really need from what they think they need and what they say they need?*
Mr. Storey: It is a discovery process. In part, it comes through dialogue regarding what the client is trying to accomplish as an organization. It also comes from some assessments and diagnostics of their current environment. We have tools that help analyze what they currently have. Weave that with their corporate strategy and constraints, and that is how we develop the road map.

CEOCFO: *Would you walk us through a typical project for you and maybe something a little outside the box?*
Mr. Storey: A typical engagement starts with a client having a stack of applications and looking for a road map for modernization. They do not really know what they ought to do, and in many cases, they do not really know what they have. We come in and offer an assessment, which would be the first stage, where we take a look at all of their applications. Starting from the source code level, we begin assessing what they have and provide several artifacts in terms of what these applications do, including business rules. We also meet with subject matter experts and leaders within their organization to understand what their business strategies are, as well as the gaps between what they are trying to accomplish and where their tools or applications are today. We then put together a strategy for them to modernize their environment, ultimately meeting their business goals. From that point, we launch into some transformation work. It could be a "like for like" migration, a reengineer, a rebuild, or even an off the shelf package. The transformation option chosen is the one that is most appropriate for a particular application, or set of applications. There are many different approaches that we utilize, most of which leverage technologies that help automate the process. Usually we transform one application at a time, starting with those that would derive the most business value at a manageable risk level for the client.

CEOCFO: *Are your customers more savvy today or more in need of help with so much noise in tech?*
Mr. Storey: It is really a mixed bag. Some organizations are quite mature in terms of their software engineering capabilities - and are much more informed - but this is probably the minority. Most organizations have a very good team

that supports the application, but software engineering practice is not their core strength, nor is building software. However, maintaining it is. Where we can really add value to these organizations is with helping them get over those humps and assisting them with managing the new technology stack on a go-forward basis.

CEOCFO: *How does Mariner Innovations keep up with the new technologies?*
Mr. Storey: We do this in multiple ways. One is we continuously invest in our tools, so that is step one. Every day we are adding more value to our capabilities. Two is staying connected with the industry, where some other innovations are coming from and how we can partner and collaborate with those to make a better solution for the client. Those are really the two main things. Innovation is in our DNA; identifying what can we do better today than we did yesterday.

CEOCFO: *What is your geographic range today?*
Mr. Storey: Mariner Innovations is predominately in domestic Canada. We are based in the eastern part of Canada and are covering clients right across the country. We also have aspirations of servicing clients in the US and Europe. Our sister company already has more clients internationally than they do domestically. There is a natural synergy there that can help us reach that more global market.

CEOCFO: *Is there a strategy yet in place to do so or is it still more in the thought process?*
Mr. Storey: We are certainly talking to some organizations internationally, so it has begun. We have not ramped up sales resources in Europe or anything like that, but it is certainly something that is underway today.

> **"We do not subscribe to a 'one size fits all' approach to modernization. There are many different approaches, but there are also many different constraints and goals within each organization. Every organization has its own unique strategies and starting points. What might be the right approach for one company may not be the right approach for another. Our approach is to determine the optimal solution for the client when it comes to modernization."**
> **- Craig Storey**

CEOCFO: *What is the typical type and size of a client company?*
Mr. Storey: From a modernization standpoint, organizations that are heavy IT users are typical clients. These are often service-based businesses, like financial services, banks, insurance companies, telcos, and government services. These organizations all have a significant dependence and reliance on IT to conduct their business, inclusive of their core business processes. Also, many of these companies have had their applications in place for several decades, making them a little more ready to consider modernization.

CEOCFO: *How do you ease the transition for your clients?*
Mr. Storey: Depending on the approach, some can be very intrusive approaches, requiring a ton of change management, and some are not. Others are changing everything under the hood, but from the user experience, it is all the same. It really varies. There are strategies and techniques to make it seamless, where users do not require any new training because you keep the user interface the same. Others require a material change, with change management being much more significant – this is made possible through knowledge transfer, distance learning and so forth. We have specializations in all of the soft business skills that can help ease the transition when needed.

CEOCFO: *How important is that?*
Mr. Storey: It is a huge part. It is of major importance to ensure that the users have a good experience. At the end of the day, we are trying to satisfy the client. If they are not well prepared and effective in using the solution, then that is a big risk spot that needs to be mitigated. We spend a great deal of time and effort making sure that the users are well prepared to adopt the change. There is a continuum here of how much change is required from the user, based on the strategy deployed.

CEOCFO: *Did you recently open an office in Toronto?*
Mr. Storey: Yes we did, in February. The financial services sector is concentrated in Toronto, and we wanted to be much closer to service that marketplace.

CEOCFO: *How do you reach potential clients?*
Mr. Storey: It is largely our direct sales force and word of mouth.

CEOCFO: *When you are speaking with a potential client, is there an aha moment? How can they understand the depth and difference of what you do when they are comparing companies?*
Mr. Storey: I think our big differentiators are our experience and track record, coupled with our proprietary technology to help facilitate the process. We leverage automation-enabled technology, while many of the typical alternatives are

manual. The manual process has a very expensive time and money proposition. If you can use technology to automate the process, you can materially lower the cycle time and cost associated, thereby decreasing the risks. Also, by doing so, you derive the benefits much earlier. That is a big factor for our clients.

CEOCFO: *How is business?*
Mr. Storey: Excellent - business is booming! I think the maturity of the target client base and the demographic challenges in the North American economy are causing business to be quite strong.

CEOCFO: *How do you find the appropriate personnel?*
Mr. Storey: In Atlantic Canada, you have the luxury of a larger available workforce than many of the other centers. We have that advantage, plus we also have excellent people who are finding us other excellent people.

CEOCFO: *What are the intangibles that you look for besides technical skills?*
Mr. Storey: I think from a values perspective, it is customer focused, including being customer driven, understanding what the customers' needs are and having the philosophy of a privilege to serve. That is very big for us. I think teamwork and integrity are the other two major values and cornerstones of our business. A person with these three attributes would generally have the kind of likeminded nature that we look for.

CEOCFO: *Why does Mariner Innovation standout from the crowd?*
Mr. Storey: I think we stand out because we have a very experienced team of resources. Our average experience in the industry is about 23 years. We are not a junior team. We have the experience to draw on that de-risks projects of this nature, and that is hard to replicate. We also care about our clients' success. At the end of the day, our clients' success is our success.

CEOCFO: *Final thoughts?*
Mr. Storey: We are an organization that is relatively small on a global scale, but we are effective at what we do. Clients come back to us repeatedly. I think in terms of the IT industry, having those reference-able accounts is something we are very proud of.

BIO: Craig Storey is the President of Mariner Innovations, the software engineering division of Mariner Group. Storey comes with over 20 years of experience within the IT industry, and is responsible for all activities leading to the success of the line of business.

Storey's work career has seen him play a number of Executive roles. In his last position as Vice President, National Sales and Business Development for FCT, Storey was responsible for sales and business development across all lines of business. Vice President of Advanced Solutions for FCT, National Sales Executive with a Global IT solutions provider, and Vice President and General Manager for Innovatia are a few of the other roles Storey has filled.

Storey maintains active involvement in several community service organizations, including coaching several youth basketball teams. Additional community roles have included Chair of Community and Economic Development Commission (Miramichi), Vice President of the Rotary Club, United Way Campaign Chair (Business & Industry Committee), MBA Advisor for the University of New Brunswick, volunteer with the New Brunswick Youth Apprenticeship Program, and a member of the Saint John Board of Trade's Business Mentorship Committee.

Storey obtained his Diploma in Engineering from Dalhousie University and a Bachelor Engineering (Industrial) from the Technical University of Nova Scotia.

Mariner Innovations

**12 Smythe Street, 3rd floor
Saint John, New Brunswick
E2L 5G5
506.642.9000 or 888.240.9333
www.marinerinnovations.com**