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Issue: December 3, 2018

CEOCFO Magazine

With an Emphasis on Hiring Veterans, E-9 Enterprises, Inc. is setting the standard in Defense and Commercial Contracting

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CEOCFO: *Mr. Martinez, would you tell us the concept behind E-9 Enterprises?*

Mr. Martinez: E-9 is a privately-owned S-Corporation, 8(a) firm, SBA Certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB), and a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) providing Federal Government, Department of Defense and military services world-class contracting and support services globally, with an emphasis on hiring veterans.

CEOCFO: *What type of services are you providing for the government?*

Mr. Martinez: Our services include Crisis Management, Human Capital Management, Force Protection and Event Support, Linguistics and Interpreter Support, Construction, Custodial and Janitorial Support, Logistics and Acquisition, IT and Engineering Services, and Drone Support.

CEOCFO: *That is a pretty wide range, are there particular areas that you focus on more than others?*

Mr. Martinez: The heart and soul of E-9 is emergency management and force protection/security services.

CEOCFO: *What do you understand about both of those areas that perhaps others do not know as well?*

Mr. Martinez: E-9 is the industry leader in emergency management and security services. Our staff has over a hundred years combined experience in responding to and leading the response effort for national and international emergencies, to include the Las Vegas Shooting, Hurricanes Harvey and Katrina, and the California Wildfires. These men and women have served as Fire Chiefs of major metropolitan areas, such as Las Vegas, and in the military at the tactical, operational, and strategic level. In fact, our subject matter experts are requested by name to train National Guard units countrywide in disaster response and relief. Additionally, we retain a team of technical rescue operators from various major New England metropolitan fire departments that provide hands-on search and rescue instruction to civilian and military organizations across the nation. From a force protection/security services standpoint, our company has provided force protection and security officers, both armed and unarmed, to such organizations and persons as the United States Air Force Academy, front-lining musicians such as Tim McGraw, and the President of the United States. Our team provided security consulting to the United States Air Force (USAF) Initial Flight Training (IFT) airport, runway, and barracks, implemented force protection measures on site, and our force protection officers continue to provide cutting edge, top-notch tactical services daily. E-9 sets the standard.

CEOCFO: *How are you able to attract top-level people?*

Mr. Martinez: E-9's reputation attracts the best and brightest professionals in their respective fields. The word is out: E-9 does not settle for second best. With a corporate team of combat-proven military leaders who believe in a service-before-

self ethos, E-9 is able to recruit and rapidly deploy the best men and women in the business. Our clients understand that E-9 provides them with experts that will provide them with tough, realistic training, along with first-rate operators on the ground, to ensure that they are ready for any worst-case scenario.

CEOCFO: *Would you give us an example of one or two engagements that are somewhat typical?*

Mr. Martinez: Our team routinely deploys across the nation in support of National Guard training exercises that simulate chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) disasters. Currently, we have training teams deployed in Utah, Indiana, and Florida providing hands-on instruction to units conducting training in response to a 15-kiloton nuclear blast. The type of training to which we provide support varies depending on the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and we make sure our team sustains their capabilities to be able to support any emergency scenario. Our CBRNE team, deployable at a moment's notice, provides 24-hour site support at military and civilian training sites all over the country. We employ professional moulage makeup artists to simulate realistic, traumatic injuries on role-players, who then act out their injuries as first-responders arrive on the training site. Concurrently, our subject matter experts are on site to provide hands-on instruction on area and incident command and control, structural collapse and victim extraction, and nuclear/biological/chemical decontamination procedures. Additionally, we have the largest CBRNE and tactical training suite in the business, to include dynamic training mannequins, real and mock firearms, cutting saws, and environmentally-safe chemicals that register as radiation when viewed through detection devices. We operate with a train-as-you fight mentality, and our goal at E-9 is to ensure our nation is ready for whatever disaster may come its way, be it manmade or the result of a terrorist attack.

CEOCFO: *Do you find you enjoy working with local or federal government more than the other?*

Mr. Martinez: Every agency with whom we work presents its own unique challenges, and the great thing about what we do at E-9 is that we are able to seamlessly transition from working with agencies at the federal level to those at the state and local levels. Because of the dynamic, in-depth experience of our staff, we are able to deploy the right personnel to cater to the needs of the specific organization.

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CEOCFO: *Do you find much change in what people are looking for you to do?*

Mr. Martinez: The training requirements are constantly changing and evolving depending on the threats our uniformed service members and first responders are experiencing all over the world. One training evolution might be structured around the explosion of a 15-kiloton nuclear blast, while another might be structured around the aftermath of a large-scale earthquake in a major metropolitan area. To that end, it is critical that our staff maintains proficiency in all areas of disaster relief, and we are constantly seeking opportunities to expand our stable of experts to include individuals that have real-world experience in new and evolving threats that could be in our nation's path.

CEOCFO: *How do you know what approach to take for a newer situation and how do you decide what might be the best training to provide?*

Mr. Martinez: Our subject matter experts work together with our Research and Development (R&D) team to anticipate the future of disaster response and relief. For example, our R&D team has begun developing non-lethal weapons that can be safely and ethically used in response to civil unrest. With an eye on the future and the best staff available, E-9 is able to provide our clients with leading-edge training and technology to keep our nation's foes at bay.

CEOCFO: *Are agencies coming to you or do you have to bid on most of your projects?*

Mr. Martinez: We are constantly expanding our capabilities to pursue opportunities in new fields; with that in mind, clients requiring services that fall under the umbrella of our core capabilities, such as emergency management and force protection/security services, request E-9 by name because of our proven track record in these industries. Additionally, as an 8(a) Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE), our clients are able to award us new contracts without submitting them to a federal bid. We are not the lowest price, and we do not advertise as the lowest price—we advertise ourselves as the best. When new bidding opportunities present themselves, we maintain our reputation as the best-value contractor in operation, and our prices reflect a product that is peerless in quality at an affordable rate to the government.

CEOCFO: *Do you do projects outside of government as well?*

Mr. Martinez: In addition to servicing our federal clients, E-9 provides force protection/security to high schools, concert venues featuring front-lining musicians such as Tim McGraw and Toby Keith, and private clients.

CEOCFO: *What are you seeing with drones today?*

Mr. Martinez: There is no doubt that the drone industry is booming. Primarily, we use drones to provide real-time, three-dimensional, 360 degree panoramic photography to capture all aspects of the training or real-world environment. Utilizing cameras with night-vision and thermal capabilities, our expert team of former military combat pilots operate our drones to provide for the commander with a birds-eye view of the environment throughout the entire operation. With the ability to provide perspective to ground operations—without putting pilots in harm's way—drones are a critical asset to being able to see through the fog of war. We are constantly developing new methods and seeking new opportunities that make drone support a critical part of the commander's operational suite.

CEOCFO: *E-9 was recognized on the Inc. 5000, clearly indicating that business is good. What is the plan to continue the trajectory?*

Mr. Martinez: All of us at E-9 are very passionate about what we do, and we have separated ourselves from our competitors with our work-ethic, our industry-leading subject matter experts, and our all-encompassing training-aid suite. Regardless of how far we have come, our eye is always on the future, and providing our clients with the best, most up-to-date products available. Our end-state is that America is safe, and all those who protect it are ready to do whatever it takes to that end.

CEOCFO: *Can you give us an idea of what you are working on now?*

Mr. Martinez: Currently, E-9 is expanding on private military security contracts at high-threat, international locations. We have the personnel and expertise already on hand, so it is simply a matter of seeking out these opportunities as they come our way.

CEOCFO: *What about some of the other areas, like human capital management non security related services?*

Mr. Martinez: At E-9, we are very passionate about veterans. I am a retired Marine with twenty-two years of dedicated service. My Vice President, Paul Ghiozzi, earned his graduate and undergraduate degrees at the Norwich University Corps of Cadets, and is a former Marine field grade officer, with combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. My Director of Operations, David Smestuen, is an Annapolis graduate and former Marine Infantry Officer, with a combat tour in Afghanistan and a tour as an operations officer at the regimental level during the evacuation of the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, Libya in 2014. We are very passionate about preparing service members who are leaving the service to be successful in the civilian work-environment. We believe that America's veterans are the very best and brightest of its human capital, and with our staff of advisors who are hungry to put our veterans to work, these heroes are finding more and more opportunities in the civilian sector.

CEOCFO: *What surprised you as E-9 has grown and evolved?*

Mr. Martinez: The biggest surprise to me is how much we have grown so quickly. I contribute that to having an incredible staff that understands the critical need for an eye on the future. It seems like, in only the blink of an eye, we grew from a one-million-dollar company to a five-million-dollar company and beyond. Initially, it was difficult for me to transition from my temperament as a Marine to being President and CEO of a civilian corporation, but as we have grown, I've been able to calm down because I've surrounded myself with great talent. Additionally, it's been truly surprising to see the number of veterans whose lives have been positively influenced by being a part of E-9—since our beginning, we've hired hundreds of veterans, and to see them and their families move forward in their lives to a better future is truly humbling.

CEOCFO: *Was it hard to give up control as you started to grow and needed to let other people take charge of things at E-9 Enterprises?*

Mr. Martinez: Yes, it was challenging. Part of the reason that we have been so successful is that we maintain a very small overhead. Our business isn't about fancy corporate offices or unwieldy executive staffs—our business is about results. With that, I demand a high level of performance from my employees, and as they have shown results, it has become easier for me to relinquish control and place more trust in my subordinates. This hasn't been easy, but when you happen to be dating a doctor, you begin to understand that getting lost in the weeds in the day-to-day turmoil of running a business isn't worth dangerously high blood pressure. I've learned to step back and focus on the big picture, and I spend more time these days focusing on my family. And as I've had more time to think toward the future, the company has grown astronomically: currently, we are the second largest defense contractor in Colorado Springs, behind only Lockheed Martin. With 400+ dedicated employees, we are able to continue expanding our capability set without ever forgetting where we came from: taking care of service members, first-responders, veterans, and their families. All of us at E-9 take great pride in that, and being a part of this team has been rewarding beyond measure.