

## Systems Integrator Focused around Communications Enabled Business Processes, Contact Center Technologies and Internet of Things (IoT)



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**CEOCFO:** *Mr. Cognata, would you tell us about SOFTTEL Communications?*

**Mr. Cognata:** SOFTTEL Communications specialize in integrations and services for contact center customer interactions. For over 20 years, we have provided business, application, technical architecture and infrastructure support to many global enterprises. Today, we drive innovation working with major vendors to support their clients in providing OmniChannel Communication solutions, IoT (Internet of Things), Big Data/Business Intelligence analytics and associated services.

**CEOCFO:** *What do you understand fundamentally about interacting with customers that perhaps others do not?*

**Mr. Cognata:** It is clear that every client is different or seeks to differentiate themselves from their competitors within their specific industry. In our view, there is no such thing as a “one size fits all” strategy for most businesses and we fully expect that the underlying mix of IT applications, solutions or services to reflect that. Unfortunately, not all information technology vendors recognize that aspect and many will try to “shoe horn” whatever IT platforms or products they are authorized to resell.

**CEOCFO:** *How do you go about an engagement with a new client so that you can learn and understand what their customers need?*

**Mr. Cognata:** Our engagement model is entirely predicated on understanding our client’s objectives, aligning on expectations, collaborating to build mutual trust while adding value by way of our deliverables. We make no assumptions. Our aim is to get to know the specifics of our clients business, how it operates, what makes it successful and to help them build on that success. This engagement process has proven positive outcomes for all our clients time and time again; it is fundamental to SOFTTEL’s DNA.

**CEOCFO:** *Would you give us an example?*

**Mr. Cognata:** All too often we are called in by prospective clients who have a plethora of solutions built by many different vendors over an extended period of time. Just over a week ago a major vendor introduced us to a large enterprise customer that needed to find a service partner who understood their environment – and their business needs. The information and documentation provided to us was not standardized and lacked details. Our first priority was to get on-site and interview members of management – and staff. We spoke with senior executives, operations managers, staff supervisors and leaders of their Contact Center – sitting with them through a typical workday. Then we conducted a top-down technical audit of their assets, providing an in-depth audit of their current environment. Yesterday, we presented them with a replacement technical architecture document containing all of their basic structures, in one place. Now that the client has a clearer understanding of what they actually have, it will make the job of providing benefits through enhancements and innovations much simpler for them – and us.

**CEOCFO:** *How do you incorporate the human element?*

**Mr. Cognata:** As I mentioned earlier, our standard approach is to walk with the client. It is not enough to review a series of documents and then to drill-down into their technologies. Those are only the *tools* with which an enterprise runs its business. To really understand how a client works you simply *have* to engage on a personal level. SOFTTEL firmly believes that an engagement with a client is exactly that – a meeting of *people*, not just processes. We also understand that, in some instances, it may not be possible for a client to disclose certain levels of information – and we respect that. Overall, it takes a special blend of listening, understanding – and knowing what a client needs, to be able to fully comprehend their situation. We excel in each of those interpersonal areas and form the essence of SOFTTEL’s identity as a trusted advisor.

**CEOCFO: *How do potential clients find SOFTEL?***

**Mr. Cognata:** As most businesses, we obviously maintain a web ([www.softel.com](http://www.softel.com)) along with some very informative brochures to our services, social media presence through LinkedIn as well as Twitter and the occasional blog update on our website. However, for many years we have been functioning as a “White Label” service provider to service vendors such as AT&T, Bell Canada, BT, IBM, General Dynamics IT, HP, Verizon just to name a few and several others. Our clients recognize the value-add that we bring. Invariably, we gain recognition through our work in that way and our clients become our best sales people. Also, bearing in mind that SOFTEL has been in business for over 20 years, we preserve a sterling reputation with our service partners and their customers.

**CEOCFO: *How have you been able to maintain the edge where you have the expertise but are not encumbered by an older technology structure?***

**Mr. Cognata:** The transition of older enterprise communications technologies into “cutting edge” requires a process of evolution as well as a culture change to adopt new ways. Having a good understanding of the principals and risks associated in getting from a legacy platform, to a modern architecture which is “future ready” is where SOFTEL excel. Our experience and expertise in new and emerging technologies – and keeping ahead of the game – means we know which path to take. Being forward thinking and working in unison with major technology providers such as Microsoft, Cisco, Genesys Telecommunications and Avaya we look to combine the finest of each element, providing the best to our clients while reducing overall risk for our clients.

“For over 20 years, we have provided business, application, technical architecture and infrastructure support to many global enterprises. Today, we drive innovation working with major vendors to support their clients in providing OmniChannel Communication solutions, IoT (Internet of Things), Big Data/Business Intelligence analytics and associated services.... SOFTEL is a noteworthy company because our unique ability to analyze and identify complex enterprise communications inefficiencies and provide optimal resolutions specifically for our customers.” - John Cognata

**CEOCFO: *What is your geographic reach today?***

**Mr. Cognata:** A great deal of our services can be provided remotely enabling a global reach. However, for services that require local in country support we extend our reach globally through various established partnerships across the globe. Currently, our customers are principally within North America and Europe. We only have few customers scattered across Central and Latin America, Asia and the Middle East but experiencing growth in these regions. Over the next few years we expect further growth outside of North America and Europe.

**CEOCFO: *What do you look for in your people over and above the technical skills?***

**Mr. Cognata:** Our people are naturally inquisitive and love to solve problems. They have a sense of accountability towards our clients and will look to use existing infrastructure in innovative ways, before recommending new technologies. They also have to be able to engage with our clients on many different levels – not just the technical, but operations, business, commercial and within the client’s cultural environment. SOFTEL’s technical representatives aim to provide the best mix of overall integration and innovation.

**CEOCFO: *How do you know?***

**Mr. Cognata:** We know by their ability to identify and solve problems. We like to look at individuals that are forward thinkers as well as lateral thinkers - and those who think outside the box or simply not afraid to think differently while acknowledging risk. SOFTEL incites a culture of creativity, innovation and collaboration.

**CEOCFO: *What are some of the services or areas that are most popular and what can you offer companies that are not always utilized?***

**Mr. Cognata:** Not sure if I understand your question correctly but essentially we are experts at providing services and developing UCWA applications with Microsoft’s Skype for Business (formerly known as Microsoft Lync), Cisco Contact Center, Genesys Omnichannel Solutions, and Avaya Contact Center solutions. Building on our 20 plus years expertise of voice solution implementations SOFTEL has progressed to provide machine to machine communications solutions (Internet of Things). While all these services are very popular we have yet seen a substantive utilization of applications that leverage integration IoT technology with contact center solutions.

**CEOCFO: *What has changed in your approach over time?***

**Mr. Cognata:** We firmly believe that that as machines and devices communicate more and more with each other, as wearable technology becomes ubiquitous and as business intelligence or Big Data analytics are inherently imbedded in

business systems, the contact centers as we know them today will quickly evolve into vital knowledge centers. SOFTEL will continue to anticipate change and invest in our ability to provide value to our clients in our approach over time for we believe change will be the only constant in our clients businesses...

**CEOCFO: *What is the competitive landscape?***

**Mr. Cognata:** It's changing!

**CEOCFO: *Why is SOFTEL Communications noteworthy?***

**Mr. Cognata:** SOFTEL is a noteworthy company because our unique ability to analyze and identify complex enterprise communication inefficiencies and provide optimal resolutions specifically for our customers. We are multi-platform capable and not platform vendors. We are unique because we are able to help our customers with their contact centers and fully support them to evolve into new areas. We are not a service or solutions organization that simply consults and then leaves it to another to implement. We are fully able to deliver on the expectations we establish with our clients at the onset of our engagement and support them with ongoing value as envisioned.

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

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