



TAKING AN OPTIMAL PATH TO SUCCESS

SAP PARTNER MAINTAINED STRONG GROWTH DURING DOWNTURN

QUICK FACTS

Company

- Name: Optimal Solutions Integration Inc.
- Location: Irving, Texas
- Web site: www.optimalsol.com
- Year founded: 1995
- SAP partner since: 2008
- Employees: 600

Business Model Summary

Consulting firm and SAP partner dedicated to driving business transformation for companies and public sector organizations of all sizes

Industries

- Communications and high tech
- Consumer products
- Discrete manufacturing
- Energy
- Fabricated metals
- Field service
- Industrial machinery and components
- Media and entertainment
- Metals and mining
- Oil and gas
- Process manufacturing
- Professional services
- Public sector – state and local government
- Utilities
- Wholesale distribution

Many superlatives describe Optimal Solutions Integration Inc. But the company's own name probably sums it up best.

Optimal lives up to its name through a strong, unifying vision and rigorous methodology that showcases diverse industry knowledge, business process expertise, and steadfast commitment to customer value. The company has worked with more than 300 SAP® customers over the past 15 years helping them implement SAP.

Today, the practice focuses exclusively on its qualified SAP® Business All-in-One partner solutions, including the Optimal FlexChoice Advantage program, targeted to the midmarket. This program offers a new, highly flexible subscription-based pricing and delivery model in conjunction with the SAP Business All-in-One fast-start program. Optimal concentrates on making it easy and affordable for midsize companies to implement and quickly realize the benefits of running their businesses on SAP solutions. That premise has led to more than US\$75 million in annual revenue.

"We don't do 'monster implementations,'" says Optimal SVP Elliott Garofalo. "We come in at a compelling price point with a strategic approach that establishes the foundation for growth. We're also centered on delivering quick wins along the way. Ultimately, we're enabling customers to achieve their objectives, scale as their needs grow, and maintain very reasonable total cost of ownership."

Clear-Cut Vision and Adaptable Business Model

Garofalo, who has 14 years of experience in the SAP partner ecosystem, says some IT solution providers make the mistake of not having a clear-cut vision or adaptable business model to achieve it. "We're determined to be the number one SAP partner in the Americas and all other markets we eventually serve. Our organizational structure, training, and business processes ensure that we are on the right path."

Optimal offers 15 industry-specific qualified SAP Business All-in-One partner solutions and expects to add another five in the near future upon completing

corresponding certification requirements. In each area, Optimal strives to provide the industry's top vertical solution. Dedicated directors, each with more than 10 years of experience with SAP software implementations, maintain continued development of respective Optimal solutions. This effort encompasses stringent training regimens that continually educate all teams about specific challenges at the C level that are addressed by software functions.

Experience – and an Entrepreneurial Approach

A headquarters team of five inside-sales associates cultivates and qualifies leads for Optimal's 10 field account executives across all U.S. and Canadian

“We come in at a compelling price point with a strategic approach that establishes the foundation for growth. We're also centered on delivering quick wins along the way. Ultimately, we're enabling customers to achieve their objectives, scale as their needs grow, and maintain very reasonable total cost of ownership.”

Elliott Garofalo, SVP, Optimal Solutions Integration Inc.

regions. Approximately 500 SAP-certified consultants support the selling process, assigned to regional territories by industry expertise. These specialists

work closely with SAP field personnel in driving and managing opportunities.

“We're all encouraged and empowered to run our business areas in a highly autonomous, entrepreneurial manner,” Garofalo explains. “Again, it goes back to our philosophy. If we can't be the best in a particular area, we don't want to settle for second best. As managers at Optimal, we make all decisions with this end purpose in mind. If the decision doesn't support that objective, then we need to rethink the decision.”

The company also believes in self-sufficiency to a great extent in its partnership with SAP. “We leverage the tools and resources SAP provides – and we have an excellent relationship in all the ways we need to put our partnership to work for us,” Garofalo says. “Yet we believe very strongly in not leaning too hard on them, as we view selling and supporting our solutions as essentially *our* responsibility.”

A broad range of other partners further support and engage in Optimal's success, including the Hewlett-Packard Company, credit card processing service providers, Web hosting partners, and more. Optimal also knows the SAP Business All-in-One solution inside and out from a customer standpoint – because it uses the software to run its own operations.

One Size Does Not Fit All

“The bottom line is that one size definitely does *not* fit all, and we go to great lengths to tailor each implementation to specific customer requirements,”

Garofalo points out. “And we believe that the customer deserves the same high level of service whether it's a \$100,000 warehouse management system or \$2 million enterprise-wide upgrade.”

“Preconfigured industry best practices built into Optimal's SAP solution factored strongly into our decision to implement SAP software. This technology is proven and comprehensive. It will help us control costs and drive efficiency through all facets of our business – materials management, quality control, production, regulatory compliance, sales and distribution, logistics, and accounting.”

Guy Paproski, President, Nuestro Queso LLC

Optimal's high-caliber service approach is now spreading across new and current markets more rapidly with the SAP Business All-in-One fast-start program. For example, when Illinois-based Nuestro Queso LLC, a start-up producer of cheese products, wanted an implementation of a reliable and scalable on-demand consumer products solution in nine weeks, with a three-year fixed monthly payment financing arrangement, Optimal had the answer and more. It delivered on deadline and once again proved that SAP Business All-in-One is the most versatile – and complete – solution on the market.



“We identify each customer’s short-, medium-, and long-range plans and priorities from a business standpoint, and we devise the implementation strategy accordingly. We avoid doing too much at one time, knowing that most companies will struggle immensely when they face lots of change in a compressed time period.”

Elliott Garofalo, SVP, Optimal Solutions Integration Inc.

“Preconfigured industry best practices built into Optimal’s SAP solution factored strongly into our decision to implement SAP software,” comments Guy Paproski, president of Nuestro Queso, who underscored the importance of a “predictable cost that fits perfectly with our business model.”

Paproski adds, “This technology is proven and comprehensive. It will help us control costs and drive efficiency through all facets of our business – materials management, quality control, production, regulatory compliance, sales and distribution, logistics, and accounting.”

Garofalo nonetheless still spends considerable time “debunking the myth,” as he puts it, in regard to other perceptions of much longer implementation time frames and more complex pricing structures. “Nuestro Queso doesn’t even have IT personnel,” he says in regard to SAP’s growing presence in the market of small and midsize enterprises. “We provided a completely hosted solution that will grow with them. After three years, they can decide whether they want to take it in-house or continue to rely on a hosted service without adding IT staff.”

Economic Downturn “the Best Possible Thing”

Such innovation and dependable business practices earned Optimal the reputation as a go-to partner in multiple markets, with an expanding international presence. These distinctions also led to an infusion of \$100 million in financ-

ing just as the economy began to sour in 2008. Ironically, Garofalo refers to the challenging market environment as “the best possible thing that could have happened to our business.”

“Instead of cutting costs and just trying to hold on, we were funding growth and expansion into new markets, including through acquisitions,” Garofalo explains. “We hired 200 people in 2009 while others were flatlining. The timing was ideal for us to invest in taking our SAP business to the next level – and it paid off big time. If you do it right, there’s great opportunity out there.”

In addition to supporting growth in personnel, the company also accelerated branding, marketing, event participa-

“Business never stops evolving. If you don’t evolve, then you’re in trouble. SAP enables companies to always do their best – under any market conditions. Partnering with SAP makes good business sense.”

Elliott Garofalo, SVP, Optimal Solutions Integration Inc.

tion, and other business development activities with SAP support. “As we expanded our infrastructure, we made sure we had a powerful lead-generation engine and effective follow-up process in place,” Garofalo observes. “When you have the best software on the planet, then everything else comes down to execution.”

A Straightforward Approach to the Customer

Garofalo also says that candor goes hand in hand with effective execution. “You tell customers what they should hear, not what they want to hear. Managing expectations and advising them on what it takes to be successful is the best route. It works well for us. We identify each customer’s short-, medium-, and long-range plans and priorities from a business standpoint, and we devise the implementation strategy accordingly. We avoid doing too much at one time, knowing that most companies will struggle immensely when they face lots of change in a compressed time period.”

Optimal positions its partnership with SAP as a journey rather than a destination. “Business never stops evolving. If *you* don’t evolve, then you’re in trouble,” concludes Garofalo. “SAP enables companies to always do their best – under any market conditions. Partnering with SAP makes good business sense.”

o p t i m a l

50 100 302 (10/05)

©2010 SAP AG. All rights reserved.

SAP, R/3, SAP NetWeaver, Duet, PartnerEdge, ByDesign, Clear Enterprise, SAP BusinessObjects Explorer, and other SAP products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of SAP AG in Germany and other countries.

Business Objects and the Business Objects logo, BusinessObjects, Crystal Reports, Crystal Decisions, Web Intelligence, Xcelsius, and other Business Objects products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of SAP France in the United States and in other countries.

All other product and service names mentioned are the trademarks of their respective companies. Data contained in this document serves informational purposes only. National product specifications may vary.

These materials are subject to change without notice. These materials are provided by SAP AG and its affiliated companies ("SAP Group") for informational purposes only, without representation or warranty of any kind, and SAP Group shall not be liable for errors or omissions with respect to the materials. The only warranties for SAP Group products and services are those that are set forth in the express warranty statements accompanying such products and services, if any. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty.