



**CONVERSATIONS
WITH THE CCO:**

Influencing to Action

Hosted by Curtis N. Bingham

Featuring Peter Quinn

Chief Customer Officer

Infor

**CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER
COUNCIL**



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Hosted by Curtis N. Bingham
Founder and Executive Director
Chief Customer Officer Council
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Conversations with the CCO is a web-based, live Q&A series hosted by the Chief Customer Officer Council that features some of the most forward-thinking and successful CCOs in the world speaking candidly about best practices and challenges in driving customer centricity. To learn more and to view past Conversations, visit www.ccocouncil.org

What gives the CCO the ability to excel with peers? The feedback I receive is that besides experience, the real key is the ability to speak the same language. This *Conversation* features Peter Quinn, CCO for Lawson, a global enterprise software developer that was recently acquired by Infor. Peter's path to the CCO role diverged in multiple directions, but ultimately that diversity of experience is what he says gave him the ability to influence others to action.

Curtis Bingham: Peter, what in your background has enabled you to be successful in the role?

Peter Quinn: I have over twenty years in the enterprise software industry, but my highly diverse background is what gave me entry into the position. I started out as an accountant in the UK and eventually entered the software industry as a financial consultant. From there I got

into financial application marketing and product management before becoming vice president of marketing operations worldwide for Lawson. My experience doing business throughout Europe, the major centers of Asia Pacific and for the last twelve years in North and South America gave me a broad view of the world from an enterprise software perspective. For five years I was

PORTRAIT OF A CCO

Company Profile: When it merged with Lawson in 2011, Infor became the third largest provider of enterprise applications and services in the world (behind SAP and Oracle) with 4,500 customers across 68 countries.

Title: Chief Customer Officer

Accountabilities: This role is corporate, not operational; it functions right in the center of the company with no direct ownership over any customers or processes that touch the customer. Focus is on measuring and monitoring customer feedback, loyalty, and satisfaction and then making them visible to the



a general manager with a business unit with over \$100M in revenue. With this experience I am able to have peer level conversations with our general managers and speak the same language. That geographic diversity and

things happen is just a natural outcome of the types of conversations that you have. You are immediately empathetic to what your peers are saying, and they very clearly understand that you know the issues.

unproven idea from the outside that they need to implement on top of everything else they are doing.

On implementing Net Promoter Score: "I am not sure if it was the way that we rolled it out or my communication skills that were failing, but it took a long time to get our companies to understand that to be successful you have to identify methodologies and processes and stick to them."

CB: We've talked previously about this notion of earned authority. A CCO is appointed with some level of positional authority, and early in a customer-centric initiative everyone is curious as to what the role means. The CEO lends authority by banging the drum and everyone pays attention, but as new or different priorities divert the CEO's attention, that borrowed authority tends to wane. You brought a fair amount of earned authority that increased even after you entered the CCO role. How did that happen?

business-lead experience has allowed me to walk the walk and talk the talk. We are not trying to deal just with sales or support issues; it is the whole experience of the customer in dealing with our global organization. The broader the background, the easier it can be to navigate through the internal organization to make behavioral changes happen.

For example: at the end of a quarter, the sales team is focused on making their numbers and thinking about what tradeoffs they are willing to make to achieve their numbers, even though they know it will cause pain down the road. Anyone who has run a sales team, business or division knows what those difficult decisions are like. As a result, you are able to sit across the table and propose a new process to improve customer experience with a deep understanding of what they are already facing. They know you are not proposing a fancy,

PQ: I actually think that borrowed authority by and large makes people listen to you in that you get on agendas and into meetings, but it very rarely gets them to do anything. The chief customer officer's big challenge is how to get action. To be honest, the CCO needs to manage by influence; command and control strategy for

CB: What does your ability to speak the same language help you accomplish?

PQ: It's not one of those things you broadcast or put on your resume; being able to make



customer experience doesn't work too well.

I did not set out with a plan for building the authority level of the chief customer officer. I leveraged those in the organization who were most open to developing a customer-centric culture and who were following the types of guidance, processes and procedures that we were proposing. I instituted a set of metrics or KPI across the company and started to make winners and losers very, very visible. No one wants to be put on any list as a loser. Appealing to the competitive nature of people in our industry works very well.

CB: In an earlier conversation you spoke about the challenge of overcoming the GM's desire to drive and be accountable for their business units and their industry. You, as well as

others, point to the need for quality data to prove your value. Relative to data, when

provided the financial information, he said, "This is important. I get it." It's similar

On implementing company-wide metrics and business unit stack ranking: "The first thing I published infuriated the general managers near the bottom end of that stack ranking."

did everybody realize that appointing a CCO was the right thing to do?

PQ: We use Net Promoter Score. We had a business division that was doing just okay, not great. In one survey period they dipped dramatically. Then they dipped again in another period. That PNL suffered tremendously about six months after we started to see their decline in the Net Promoter Score.

At that point, once our CEO saw we had delivered the NPS picture *before* our accountants

to moving people's mentality from lagging indicators of business to leading indicators of business. When people stop thinking purely on the lag factors and think about leading indicators instead, they start to come around. It takes two years to really make an impact or get the message out. You just have to let the time pass, and once you see the correlation between trustworthy data and financial impact I think you are beginning to get your job done.



About CURTIS N. BINGHAM

As Executive Director of the Chief Customer Officer Council™, Curtis Bingham is the recognized authority on chief customer officers and the first to promote this role as a catalyst for competitive advantage. He is the creator of the CCO Roadmap, a groundbreaking work containing 100+ critical strategies essential for customer centricity. As an international speaker, author, and consultant, Curtis is passionate about creating customer strategy to sustainably grow revenue, profit, and loyalty.



About PETER QUINN

Peter Quinn is the CCO for Infor, which merged with Lawson in 2011. Infor develops, services, and supports Enterprise Resource Planning software for customers around the world. Quinn joined Lawson in 2006 and served as vice president of marketing operations since 2007. As CCO, he leads a customer advocate team responsible for keeping customer concerns at the forefront of all levels and all departments.

About THE CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER COUNCIL

The Chief Customer Officer Council is the first of its kind; a member-led peer-advisory network offering unparalleled insight into the critical issues facing CCOs. It was created to provide a safe environment where CCOs can share ideas, concerns, and build best practices that will help them, their companies, and especially their customers succeed. The Council includes CCOs from diverse industries, purposefully cross-pollinated with the most forward-thinking companies, large and small. For more information, visit www.ccocouncil.org, email info@ccocouncil.org or call 978-226-8675.



Conversations with the CCO: Overcoming Resistance in the First Year with Peter Quinn – In this article by Curtis N. Bingham, featuring Peter Quinn, Chief Customer Officer of Infor, you'll learn Peter's strategies for successfully overcoming resistance to embedding customer centricity in his organization.

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