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MSP Andromeda Technology Solutions is Providing the Expertise Needed by Manufacturers in Today's Complex and Ever Changing Technology World

Andromeda Technology Solutions – Helping Companies Escape a Bad IT Relationship



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Interview conducted by:
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CEOCFO: *Mr. Borello, we last spoke about 18 months ago and you mentioned doubling down in the manufacturing arena; how has that developed for Andromeda?*

Mr. Borello: It has been going very well. Our team is getting more educated in the space. We are having more conversations with both manufacturing prospects and clients. We just put an offer out and had it accepted by a manufacturing industry consultant, a gentleman retiring from the manufacturing world, to get him out there to be our brand ambassador and do some market research for us. It has been going well. We have created some marketing content. We have been doing a lot of good stuff in the space. It has been a fun 18 months, being able to focus on everything and get smart in the industry.

CEOCFO: *Do you see the manufacturing industry becoming more up-to-date and recognizing the need for good technology?*

Mr. Borello: I think that is a big need in the industry. We tend to see that it is a little bit binary where those who have already recognized the need for the technology are heading down that path, and some of them are very cutting-edge,

with a lot of automation and a lot of data analytics happening. Some just haven't started at all. We came across one a couple of weeks ago that is still using pencil and paper, they have no technology.

Those behind in the technology curve, I think are in real danger of getting left behind and will be in for a struggle. The industry has changed, the world has changed and it is time to put technology front and center as an investment and stop thinking of it as an expense.

CEOCFO: *Where does AI come into play for you and your clients, and how do you stay ahead of technology seems to change every three minutes?*

Mr. Borello: Myself personally, and I think my company, I feel like the AI hype has gotten ahead of the AI reality. We tend not to make it a front-and-center conversation. What we are finding with almost every company is they don't have the foundation and the framework. For example, they don't have their data properly structured and secured. You start turning AI loose in your organization, then data is out there that maybe you don't want others seeing, that you can't find and they can't find, maybe the AI can find it. We talk about a bookkeeper having AI access, you know, "Give me the salary averages," and then suddenly, it is popping up salaries of the C-levels and owners. It is a very different technology. There is a lot to understand about it.

"We have a very good system and a process of moving a company from their current MSP over to us. We do 95% of the work and the customer has to do very little, so don't settle for being in a bad IT relationship." Jeffrey Borello

It all starts with making sure you have a good technology foundation. You can't just jump in with both feet. That is a dangerous road to go down. The conversation every company should be having is where this tool will work for them and how they can take advantage of it. I think there has to be a plan and it needs to be the thing they are thinking about, how they are going to use it in a year or two, and then what they need to do to prepare for that.

CEOCFO: *Do you find more companies turning to MSPs today?*

Mr. Borello: One of the things we are noticing more and more and this is particularly true probably more in the manufacturing space than the other industries we've dealt with, is most manufacturers have some level of internal IT team. A lot of times it is maybe an ERP software specialist or somebody proficient with the manufacturing technology that is on the floor. However, what is happening is the technology stuff overall is not getting simpler, it is getting more complex. Generally, the people who have been doing it over the years, and it is one of two things but usually both, and that is that they probably don't have the time to devote to IT infrastructure or the future things like AI, and all that they should. The second thing is they just don't have the expertise. Just the interactions of moving things to the cloud, getting data out of machines, and having a properly secured network and infrastructure, have gotten wildly complex and you need some specialist to help you with that. I think that is where you see the managed service providers like us coming into play.

We never want to have discussions about replacing the internal team; it is always about helping them. We want them to be able to do their job. If their job is to make the ERP system shine, then that is what we want them to focus on. We want to be able to augment that. That is where our expertise comes in. We have a service desk that takes care of the day-to-day stuff but we also have a professional services team for doing projects or for doing that cloud migration and just looking at things from a security standpoint where it is no longer possible to do that with one or two people that don't have the specialization to do it. For example, a manufacturing client signed with us. They were going to leave their current MSP and they were going to come over to us. Before that engagement got going, they had a major security incident. The whole organization got ransomware so they brought us in to help do some of that remediation. They also had some internal IT staff. Over time, we were able to get them cleaned up and running again, and then just figure out ways to help their internal IT.

In that case, they did eventually let their internal IT person go and came on with us as a fully managed client and that is a bit unusual. Just being able to see the results for them of just driving problems out of the system, they have way fewer issues than they had. We've upgraded some of the technology, we've upgraded some of their network infrastructure, and the result for them is a much more productive environment and team.

CEOCFO: *Your website shows,, "Andromeda knows how to get things done." You show "average ticket response time," "average hold time" and "average ticket resolution time." I don't think I have ever noticed that on a site. Why is it important to put your stats there for everybody to see how well you do?*

Mr. Borello: I think it gets to be more relevant when you use an outsourced firm like us. Internally, if you have an IT person down the hall, you can walk down and tap them on the shoulder, and if you need someone you can yell and scream enough to get somebody to do it right now. We have hundreds of clients, not just one. Certain problems don't need to be looked at right now, but they may need to be looked at today. One of the things we do is ask people to submit tickets in different ways. If it is a low-priority ticket, you can send us an email. People can schedule their own consultation time, something convenient for them in the next couple of days. Then there are those issues that are urgent, "Hey I need to run payroll and I can't, or we think we have a security incident." Whatever those urgent things may be, we want somebody to pick up the phone and call us. We now have triage technicians standing by waiting to pick up the phone. That is where that response time comes from.

Technology is supposed to help people do their job and when someone gets stuck and can't do their job, we want them to talk to someone as soon as possible, but then the second thing is if you talk to someone and you can't fix the problem, so that is where those two things, the response and the resolution come in. Some problems are more complex than others and it sometimes takes hours or days depending upon what type of problem it is, but for us, those are the two things we want to focus on. We want to be able to respond to you as quickly as we can or as quickly as you need us to, and then we want to fix the problem as quickly as we can and get you back to work. Those are the two main drivers that we have set up and we spent a lot of time talking about our service desk and how to maximize that experience for the clients.

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about your team; I know you have been recognized as Best Place to Work, for a number of years, and that your team is important to you. Did you recognize day one that it was important how you treat your people?*

Mr. Borello: No, we have been doing this for over thirty years now. Probably, not quite twenty of those, or at least the first fifteen, we still thought of ourselves as a start-up. We hired a bunch of scrappy smart people and if it meant we had to work all night, we worked all night. You just did what you had to do to get things done. As we matured as an organization and the team got bigger, you started finding that there were different needs that people had. We made a concerted effort over many years to focus on the culture, the benefits, and all those things so that we could build a world-class organization for the team. That was a lot of work. It probably had a negative impact short-term on our bottom line profit because we put a lot of time, effort, and money into that but now we see it down the road reaping a lot of benefits.

Our average tenure of our employees across the whole organization is seven years, which in a managed service provider is unheard of. The normal average is two or three years, so we are extremely proud of that. That translates to happy customers because when they call, they get the same person they talked to last week, last month, and last year. You get some nice continuity. We view our customers as a partnership, so it all starts with the people they are talking to every day. It has been a long journey, it was an important journey, and we find it to be a very beneficial journey.

CEOCFO: *Are there new products or services you need to incorporate into the mix?*

Mr. Borello: There are two sides to that. There are tools and products we use internally that are there to service the customers. Then there are those products that we deliver to the customers either as a package or a lot of times as security tools that run on their systems as part of their monthly services with us. Certainly, on the internal side, the same conversation that we talked about earlier, how we can automate and how we can use AI to better understand our customers' problems. The big driver for us over the next couple of years will be that we want to continue to take problems and issues that our clients are having and eliminate them. A lot of times you see the same problems coming up over and over again. We want to be able to identify those, find the root cause, and then solve them. That is where you will see a lot of AI come into play and an AI agent can go look at tickets across the last month and say "Well look, I noticed with customers x, y, and z, the same thing has happened there," or there may be an issue that has happened across all the clients. We can then get it over to our engineering team to uncover the solution, fix it, and make that problem go away hopefully forever.

The latest client facing offering that we just rolled out is a compliance package. For those clients of ours that have some sort of compliance need where they need to be compliant with SOC 2, CMMC (Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification) or whatever it may be, we put a package together where we can help them with the IT side of that. Generally, they will probably have a compliance consultant helping them with the overall compliance journey, but then there is an IT piece where we need to jump in and be able to get their IT into the right place and get everything secured and set up so they can be compliant on the IT side.

Everyone is going to see a lot more compliance requirements as the cyber insurance industry is getting a lot more serious on this. Before they issue an insurance policy to someone, they are going to start requiring them to follow some sort of security compliance framework and that is where we will come in.

CEOCFO: *Can you address some of the challenges evaluating, for example, what cyber companies you might want to partner with, to offer to your clients? How do you stay on top of the groups you partner with to ensure they continue the quality they had in the beginning?*

Mr. Borello: We have a new products committee that meets once a month, to look at any new products we come across that look interesting or something we want to take a look at, but also you have to evaluate the tools we have. We are pretty long-term in nature in everything we do and that includes partnerships with our vendors and tools. Generally, if we have a tool that is working and doing its job, we will leave it in place, but we are always keeping our eye out because there are better tools out there and there are always new things to keep an eye on. Unless there is a compelling reason to change, we will stick with it. But we keep our eye on it.

We have probably over fifty tools that we run for various things internally, so it is a big job. One of my co-founder's primary roles is to understand all these tools, make sure we have a relationship with the vendor, and make sure we understand what new things are coming out. A fallout of all of that is to find out where there is overlap across tools because in some cases, tools come out with new features and it turns out it can replace one of the other ones. It is a very big job to keep up with but it is something we do a lot. We watch things and if it looks like it doesn't work as well as it used to, it is time to start talking about replacing it.

CEOCFO: *What have you learned from your manufacturing clients that is helpful with clients in other industries?*

Mr. Borello: There is some aspect to all the clients that is the same. There is no math behind it, but we always say that 70% of the stuff is the same for everybody. Everybody needs a good solid network; everybody needs a secure network. It amazes me every time I talk to somebody in the manufacturing space, just the amount of things that get produced in this world. You look at some of these lines that are running and the things that are coming off of them and it is just mind-boggling to me.

A lot of people think of manufacturing as a very manual process but there is a lot of automation to manufacturing now and I think that is something we can take to other clients where being able to understand how to automate and where automation can work, and then try to figure out how to increase their bottom line is what companies are trying to do. Their job is to make a bigger bottom line and to figure out how to do that. I think that is one of the areas, to be able to take on the process that manufacturers go through to understand what systems they can automate; I think that is something we can take to clients.

CEOCFO: *Are you excited about the idea of manufacturing coming back and expanding in the US?*

Mr. Borello: I almost can't explain how excited I am. That is how we got here, deciding which industry we were going to focus on. My two co-founders and I came out of the previous place we worked, they serviced manufacturers, so we were familiar with manufacturers and how important they are, especially in the United States. Even with that, you think how much of that has gone overseas, but how much of it is still done here. If you drive down the street, there is way more manufacturing than anybody even realizes. To get back to being that manufacturing powerhouse in this country is just; the pride that wells up in me is almost hard to explain.

CEOCFO: *What should our readers remember most about Andromeda Technology Solutions; what might they not recognize about the company that they should understand?*

Mr. Borello: Here's the story we have been telling lately, if you are in an unhappy IT relationship, and generally that probably means with a Managed Services Provider, if you are not getting that response time, if you are seeing the same problems over and over again, companies need to know if they are not happy with IT service, there are better answers out there. Switching is not as hard as you think it is.

We've been doing this for 30 years now. We have a very good system and a process of moving a company from their current MSP over to us. We do 95% of the work and the customer has to do very little, so don't settle for being in a bad IT relationship. If you think you are, and you just want to talk about it, give me a call and reach out. I would be more than happy to have a conversation with someone and give them a fair assessment. Sometimes people have unrealistic expectations of what IT should be but sometimes you are just getting bad service. Don't settle for bad IT service, there are better MSPs out there.

