

Benefits of a Fractional Chief Information Officer

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Executive Summary

Decision makers in small to mid-sized companies are increasingly moving into contracts with Software as a Service (SaaS) products for Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Business Intelligence (BI) solutions. The requirements of key internal Tier 1 teams such as Business Owners, Human Resources, Finance and Compliance typically drive the decision to invest in software solutions like Salesforce, HubSpot, Oracle, SAP, or NetSuite. Most of these systems do not embrace a company's culture or the way they do business.

These solutions also often require customization and business intelligence specific to the type of business these teams support. The rollout of these systems for Tier 1 teams is costly both in dollars and time. Meanwhile, Tier 2 stakeholder teams (Marketing, Sales, Account Management, Real Estate, etc.) are left to adapt to an environment forced on them without any support. This results in a manual process of gathering information from various sources such as multiple systems, stand-alone databases, and spreadsheets with siloed information. This situation calls for increased optimization between Tier 1 and Tier 2 teams to ensure all operating units "speak" the same business language.

Outsourced individuals are increasingly stepping in at this key stage in a Fractional Chief Information Officer (CIO) role to build short-term and long-term technology strategies while managing the infrastructure as a business grows.

Definition of the Challenge

It is key to a company's success to address the needs of all internal stakeholders, including Tier 2 teams, in a timely and cost-effective manner. Without a clear strategy for technology, SaaS and BI products will likely meet most of the needs for Tier 1 teams, but often fail to serve other teams without costly add-ons or customization.

This type of disparity creates additional challenges.

Instead of operating under a shared and comprehensive set of tools and data management practices, the disparate stakeholders create their own silos to manage their day-to-day business. Companies lose the benefits of managing data and optimizing for Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) when teams are connected to some divisions but not others.

"Do you know how long it takes your team(s) to compile KPI's for you to make critical business decisions?"

Risk increases when a company has multiple systems that either cannot connect for Business Intelligence. This commonly occurs when one team purchases a solution to meet its specific needs, but that system does not easily integrate with a different system serving another team.

While Tier 1 teams may not feel the impact of these stresses at first, Tier 2 teams have more of a challenge weathering the storm, as they are too small to absorb the disparity between

platforms and cannot afford to pay a SaaS provider or a developer to bridge the gap. They typically cope by exporting data from multiple systems and managing their KPI's through spreadsheets and/or gap filling off-the-shelf products like Microsoft Excel/Access or quasi-BI SaaS products such as Smartsheet or Google Sheets.

When leadership requires information from the entire organization to make business decisions, the dissonance between the individual solutions and the fragmented stopgap solutions is time-consuming and costly.

Benefits to Business

Data collection and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) analysis are critical for any business. When a company captures data and analyzes KPI's, it becomes more competitive and efficient to better position itself in the marketplace.

“Does your company spend too much time sorting data and managing technology?”

The best practice is to implement technology and business intelligence solutions with short-term strategies to address business-critical issues having the greatest impact to the overall business. Following the long-term strategies can address lower priority issues as part of the overall strategy of growing the business.

The Solution

The solution is to have an experienced Fractional CIO implementing short-term and long-term strategies for technology

and business intelligence to impact all stakeholders within a business. A seasoned Fractional CIO will allow teams to leverage specific technology to collaborate and share information in a meaningful way. Teams can more easily compile information in a leaner, more organized environment, especially when business intelligence is factored in as a key component.

An experienced Fractional CIO will provide a more cost-effective choice for growing a business that may not be ready to hire someone into such a full-time role. An implementor with such a level of experience has the unique ability to hit the ground running to accelerate growth, increase revenue, optimize business processes and facilitate a sustainable outcome.

A Broader Vision

With a broader vision for the entire company, Keith excels at providing a full technology assessment around optimizing a business. The process begins by interviewing key users, including management teams, to assess the issues at hand. Areas of focus are:

- Opportunities for business optimization
- Data requirements
- Business intelligence
- User needs

Keith converts the assessment into a short-term strategy with a long-term vision for the overall business.

With both strategies in hand, only the necessary tools are implemented to reduce unnecessary silos and optimize the business.

Keith Dragon | Fractional CIO



Keith is a Senior Executive with over 22 years of experience as a CEO for a small niche software business. He has had annual success with building a company from the ground-up while achieving revenue growth, profit, alongside of recruiting and staff development with talented individuals.

Keith is ready to leverage his extensive background into a fractional CIO role to build teams, technology, process and organizational effectiveness into a business. Keith focuses on building energetic and stellar teams to springboard the growth and optimization of a business through a clear vision of technology.

Keith's role is to identify key issues that need to be partnered with strategic planning to deploy to an overall organization. Keith's approach doesn't happen in a silo, he uses over 25 years of knowledge, skills and experience to ensure an inclusive process with a sustainable outcome.

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