

A middle-aged man with short, graying hair and glasses is shown from the chest up. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored, checkered shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a blurred office environment with large windows and a blue wall.

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DAVID KIDD

Q&A

NVTC sat down with Deltek CEO Mike Corkery to discuss his transition to CEO, his leadership philosophy, the economy's effect on government contractors, innovation, energy and the environment, and the company's future plans.

By Sarah Jones

nvtc You transitioned from CFO to CEO of Deltek in February 2013. What has been the biggest change over the past two years?

I would say the primary change, and one of the best parts of my job, is working with Deltek's incredible base of customers. Since becoming CEO, I do a lot more of that than I used to. Our customers do some amazing things, and it's really a privilege for us to collaborate and partner with them, and hopefully play a role in their success. I try to devote as much of my time to our customers as I can.

nvtc You have held executive positions at large organizations, as well as startups and small companies. What is your leadership philosophy and how do you adapt to the different environments?

I think everyone wants to be part of a cohesive, winning team. We have created an environment that is very open and collaborative, where all members of the team, regardless of their role, are approachable and engaged. That's what creates a winning team. Deltek has always had that type of environment at the center of its

“ We are committed to serving businesses in all industries that are project-focused. ”



culture, which has allowed us to build high performing teams that work really well together. Our team isn't afraid to tackle an issue through constructive debate and collaboration in order to effectively solve it, and maintaining an atmosphere that encourages this type of approach is something I focus on every day.

An example of how we have invested in establishing an open, collaborative culture is our headquarters location in Herndon, Va. which we moved into roughly 3 years ago. We purposefully designed the space to be as open and collaborative as possible. We have whiteboards on almost every wall—some are

100 feet long. We have collaboration rooms throughout the space where teams can meet to share ideas and work on issues together. We have game rooms where people can play ping pong and foosball to blow off some steam while having friendly competition with coworkers. Everyone—including the executive team—has a cubicle instead of an office. This really accelerates the communication and collaboration across the entire team. I don't think I would ever go back to having an office.

nvtc Government contractors are currently facing a changing economic landscape. What is Deltek's analysis of the situation?

The government contracting landscape has certainly been fluid over the past couple of years and it continues to evolve. Obviously, spending has been a little tighter recently than in years past. However, the current environment does offer opportunities, albeit in some different areas. While spending is contracting in some areas, categories like renewable energy, infrastructure, IT transformation, cybersecurity and healthcare are segments that continue to grow.

Having the right tools to find areas of growth and execute against these opportunities is more important than ever. And there is increased attention on compliance requirements, including audits, to make sure contractors stay true to

their commitments. We have watched task order contracts become more prominent and we see that trend continuing. This creates more work for contractors with likely no increase in business development budgets. So, it is a challenging and diverse environment for our government contracting customers to navigate effectively. Contractors that can focus on the areas where spending will increase and those that invest in automation will be at a significant competitive advantage in the marketplace. Our focus is on delivering the solutions that can help our government contracting customers succeed in this environment.

nvtc How are the recent cutbacks impacting innovation or research and development in government contracting?

As revenue gets tougher to deliver, funding for R&D has no doubt been impacted for companies. However, there are some contractors that are using this time to differentiate themselves from their peers by anticipating and finding opportunities in the market and then proactively investing in acquisitions, in their people, in their products and in their business systems so they can scale while being smarter, more efficient and more productive. We think these companies will emerge as the leaders of today and tomorrow, and will thrive in any market environment.

nvtc Deltek provides solutions for firms serving the energy and environment industries. How is technology shaping these industries?

Clearly, the Internet of Things that so many technologists are talking about today impacts these specific sectors and the rest of the world in general. On the energy front, just think of the information that sensing technology on the electrical grid can provide, for example. Real-time data capture can alert people to things out of tolerance that can help detect and prevent service outages.

The rise of the smart grid could be a game-changer in how energy is consumed and distributed.

We are also seeing the rise of environmental engineering and consulting firms—many of which are Deltek customers—that are helping to deliver smart technology solutions for today’s companies. Some of these firms are leading thinkers on how technology can improve resource management, energy infrastructure, and more—and they help their customers implement these technologies which can be an incredibly complex undertaking.

We help customers in this part of the market manage the entire lifecycle when they take on these projects. Customers use our market intelligence tools to know such an opportunity is available, and they use our capture management and CRM solutions to manage the sales cycle and win the business. They then use our project portfolio management tools to develop the achievable schedule for the project, and manage the execution of the project using the optimal schedule so the project is on time and on budget. Our ERP solutions then enable delivery against the imperatives of the project—paying vendors and employees, billing customers and meeting compliance requirements. We then help customers measure their results across all of their projects, so they can understand their performance and use that information to make smart decisions such as which opportunities to pursue and win in the future.

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“ We pursue our stated goal in two important ways—by developing new products and by acquiring new capabilities. ””

Our ability to deliver solutions across the entire project lifecycle for energy and environmental consulting firms—helping customers win, manage, deliver and measure their projects—is what sets us apart from the rest of the software world.

nvtc What other industries does Deltek serve?

We are committed to serving businesses in all industries that are project-focused, meaning that these businesses succeed by delivering projects to their customers on time and on budget. Our 19,000+ customers come from a variety of industries.

We are best known in the DC area for our government contracting customer base, and we have over 4,000 customers of all sizes in this sector doing fascinating projects—from 10 person startups to companies with over 50,000 people. Our customers in government contracting do everything from make robots that explode bombs to protect our troops to top secret cybersecurity work. Government contractors are classic project-based businesses.

Architecture and engineering (“A&E”) firms are classic project-based businesses too. More than 10,000 A&E firms use Deltek around the world.

We also have a large presence among PR and Marketing Agencies and have become the standard enterprise resource planning and traffic management system inside several of the top global “Marcom” networks.

And consulting firms of all types use our solutions, as do a number of Top 100 Accounting firms. So do firms that are more geared to the research and legal side of things. There are hundreds of thousands of project-based organizations around the world that are potential Deltek customers. That is why we are so excited about the future—our market remains largely untapped.

nvtc What are the biggest challenges and opportunities for Deltek?

On the challenges front, we need to make sure that we assess the potential product investments and market choices that are in front of us, prioritize them effectively, and attack those that will have the biggest impact on our progress. We can’t do everything—so managing this portfolio to focus on the most important, most valuable priorities and do them well is critical for us.

We are also fortunate to be growing very quickly. We have basically doubled our revenue in just around 7 years. Our growth has come from a variety of different product innovations, as well as expansion into new vertical markets and geographies. We need to continue to think differently, act differently, and challenge ourselves to make sure we are adapting to what it means to be a company of our size and breadth. The old ways of doing things might not work so well anymore. So adapting is critical, and recognizing that some things that got us here might not be what gets us to the next level.

A large part of our growth has come from acquisitions—we have acquired 16 companies over the past 10 years—so integrating and accelerating the companies we acquire is incredibly important. Making the customer experience as seamless as possible around the companies and solutions we acquire is essential in making an acquisition successful, and we need to do so quickly.

The challenges I mention above also represent the primary opportunities we have to continue our success. We are fortunate to partner with a tremendous group of customers and we have a great set of product solutions focused on a growing set of markets. Deepening our relationship with our customers and expanding our market footprint both have tremendous potential for us. So, we feel like it is up to us to take advantage of the opportunities that our position presents.

nvtc What are your future plans for the company?

We have a stated goal of becoming the global industry standard that project-based businesses of all sizes turn to for software and solutions to run their businesses better. This defining goal shapes our activities each day — what products we invest in, which acquisitions we make, how we support our customers and much more. It's a unique goal that really drives our thought process.

We pursue our stated goal in two important ways — by developing new products and by acquiring new capabilities. We will focus our product development resources to build solutions for the unique needs our customers have across the lifecycle of their business — the project lifecycle I mentioned earlier. At the same time, we will acquire capabilities that we can seamlessly add to our portfolio that quickly drives value for our customers.

We will also continue to guide our new solution investments in ways that leverage the major technology forces at work today — mobile, social, cloud, and big data. We have very consciously developed and acquired new solutions around these four areas to give our users access to the right information, in the context they need, at any time, wherever they are. We have done this in a variety of ways, such as marrying big data and mobile with our Deltek Touch platform. We now deliver virtually all Deltek solutions through the cloud, giving our customers choices in how they want

to deploy our products. Since all projects are inherently social, we have embedded social capabilities into our applications in places where smart collaboration needs to occur. These four forces define how our customers want to consume technology, and our products, and we will continue to use them as a guide to allow us to partner with our customers in the way that they need us to.

nvtc Is there anything else you'd like to share with our readership in the technology sector here in Northern Virginia?

Well, it really is an honor to lead a company like Deltek, and we are thrilled to be part of the Northern Virginia economy. Many of our customers are based in this area, and we take great pride in playing a role in their success.

Our success also wouldn't be possible without our incredibly talented Deltek team, and it is wonderful working closely with everyone around the world each day. They are the best at what they do, and each day they step up to move our company forward in the marketplace. Deltek wouldn't be where it is today without our extremely talented and motivated team, and I feel very fortunate to be a part of such a great group of people.

Sarah Jones is NVTC's Communications Manager.

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Destination Innovation is the premier event highlighting the vibrant technology community in our region! Presented by NVTC's Technology Innovations Committee, in partnership with *Capital Business*, the event features an innovation competition, exhibition, networking and industry speakers.

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