

ADVICE

FROM TOP

AGENTS

SECRETS FROM HIGH PERFORMING
TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANTS & TELECOM
AGENTS THAT WILL CATAPULT YOUR SUCCESS

CURATED BY ASHLEY ROWLAND

FOREWARD WRITTEN BY JAMES ANDERSON

**COPYRIGHT © 2022
RECURRING RAISE, LLC**

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Published by: Recurring Raise, LLC, Boise, ID recurringraise.com

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system without written permission, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

Disclaimer: The material in this publication is of the nature of general comment only, and does not represent professional advice. It is not intended to provide specific guidance for particular circumstances and it should not be relied on as the basis for any decision to take action or not take action on any matter which it covers. Readers should obtain professional advice where appropriate, before making any such decision. To the maximum extent permitted by law, the author and publisher disclaim all responsibility and liability to any person, arising directly or indirectly from any person taking or not taking action based on the information in this publication.

LinkedIn, the LinkedIn logo, the IN logo and Inmail are registered trademarks or trademarks of LinkedIn Corporation and its affiliates in the United States and/or other countries.

THANK YOU to the industry leaders who have supported this mission and graciously contributed to this book.

In no particular order:

Juanita Coley

Michael Agri

Lucas Salvage

Devon Harris

Joe Dix

Aaron Bock

Jay Morris

Adam McKee Miller

DeLaine Clifford

Craig Bullock

Dave Dyson

Robert Devita

Cynthia Ferrell

Mark Morrell

Dave Philbrook

Stan Durst III

Tony Ruggieri

Jim Eckes



*"AS I RAINED BLOWS UPON HIM, I
REALIZED THERE HAD TO BE ANOTHER
WAY." - FRANK COSTANZA*

FOREWARD

The technology advisory channel exists because customers – and the people who sell to them – deserve better.

That's the shared thread that runs through every origin story agents tell me. These professionals chose to leave the corporate world and its many constraints because independence would allow them to better serve their clients.

In the stereotypical story, which you will read in this book, the person cut their teeth working as a sales rep at a carrier. Although agents speak of their past jobs with nostalgia, their tales also evoke drudgery. Layoffs resulted from constant consolidation as well as an often cut-throat environment. Pressure from corporate overloads to make quotas forced them to focus more on sales than actual solutions. Limited to only their employer's technology portfolio, they often found themselves trying to fit a square peg into the round hole that was their customers' procurement needs. Eventually – whether it came through a layoff or a sudden fit of defiance – they realized there had to be another way.

Forming an agency made them their own boss. No longer were they chasing quotas or bumping up against a ceiling. They could now pursue growth on their own terms. And growth was easier, considering the instant expansion of their solution set. Selling from whichever carrier they wanted (well, within reason) meant no more square pegs in round holes. And, of course, none of them complained about the residual commissions.

Partners love to regale me with such origin stories when I call them up for interviews, and I enjoy hearing the stories. I started writing about the traditional telecom broker channel two years ago, and at the time, the business model mystified me. You all work in a very niche line of work, but every time I hear an agent's story, I'm reminded of why this work matters.


The agent (or broker or advisor or whatever you want to call yourself) channel seen immense growth and success because customers want to buy technology in this manner. The partners have proven to these businesses that the model works. They've proven it with a long-suffering commitment to customer service. People in this industry throw around the phrase "It's a relationship business" maddeningly often, but they've got a point.

If you're looking to build an advisory firm, you've entered the space at a fascinating time. Private equity firms have descended on the space and are offering the established players an exit. Marketplaces are rising as an option for B2B purchasing and challenging the financial viability of a pure broker model. An entire generation of IT purchasers are retiring and passing the torch to a younger, more diverse demographic. In the meantime, agents have moved well beyond their circuit-slinging days to sell cloud-based communications, cybersecurity and customer experience offerings. In fact, many of the newer partners don't even play in wireline offerings, which are seeing increased commodification and price compression. Firms need to evolve, and evolution requires a willingness to learn and change.


Starting an agency provides an incredible opportunity for independence, but you shouldn't be going at this alone. Let the stories of countless entrepreneurs who came before you – and their many learning experiences – accompany you. Agents once had a reputation for playing it close to the hip when it came to talking about their businesses. However, a new group of partners wants to exchange best practices and contribute to a rising tide.

Ashley Rowland is one of those people. She has gathered a group of business leaders to share the lessons they wished people had shared with them years ago. Listen closely to their advice and take heed of their pitfalls. It's up to you to write your business' origin story, but these stories serve as an invaluable guide.

James Anderson
Senior News Editor, Channel Futures

 [Elmhurst, Illinois](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-anderson-74894a5a/>

 <https://www.channelfutures.com>



"Seeking advice doesn't reveal incompetence. It reflects respect for another person's insight. Requesting feedback doesn't signal insecurity. It demonstrates that you care more about your learning than your ego. Asking for help doesn't display weakness. It builds strength. The most successful do one thing differently — Ask for help."

-Adam Grant (NYT best-selling author, Organizational Psychologist at Wharton)

INTRODUCTION

When I tell people that I am a telecom agent and explain what I do, they usually reply "I didn't know that was a thing." I might say, "You wouldn't go to the JIF store for your peanut butter and the Kellogg's store for your cereal and the dairy store for your triple play of milk, yogurt, and cheese... you would go to the grocery store, right?" Purchasing via channels is no new concept yet most business that could buy from us, don't even know we exist. Let's change that.

Is it possible, that by sharing best practices and rooting for each others' success, we actually bring awareness to the practice and grow the channel making it even easier to reach more customers? I believe so!

My goal is for the advice in this book to contribute in some way to your success. I want all agents to succeed and be a pleasure to work with. I want "the agent" to be the top-of-mind, go-to choice for every customer out there... not the direct sales force at providers. When our peers succeed, the channel grows and we all win. I am here to be a part of that.

This book will show you how successful agents achieve results on a daily basis. If you are an agent today, it will help you make better decisions and keep more of your money.


The pros featured here have generously shared some of their best secrets including how they prospect for customers, what mistakes they have made, and what advice they have for becoming successful in this industry.


One of the fastest ways to achieve results is to understand what works for other people who are doing the role today and try some of those methods. I believe in learning from a variety of people who are in different stages of their journey and who are all achieving success.

If you find something particularly impactful or meaningful to you, please share it on LinkedIn with your own insight and tag me and the person who shared the advice. That will certainly provide value to your own network and show us your support. I want to listen to your feedback and I appreciate that you are here.

-Ashley Rowland
Partner, Adaptiv Advisors
Founder, Recurring Raise

 Boise, ID

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ashley-rowland-telecom-mom/>

 <https://www.adaptiv2u.com/>





MICHAEL AGRI

PRESIDENT, NORTH ATLANTIC CONSULTANTS

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

I had been a top sales rep and wanted the agent lifestyle: being your own boss, working from home, no quota, residual income, no caps, independence to choose the provider and technology, etc.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?

I had always wanted to own my business ever since I was a child, I just never knew what. I had been in Telecom and Managed Services sales for almost 10 years and I was burnt out and looking for an escape from the hamster wheel. It wasn't until around 2009 that I started to formulate a plan and on October 1, 2009 I had started my own agency. 4 months later, I received my first commission check for \$5.35. I never cashed it, instead I framed it and posted it prominently in my office for motivation. I still have it hung up today. It's a daily reminder of how long it takes and how far that I have come. There is an old saying in the Channel that "everyone is one deal away from becoming an agent". This is true if you have a large Enterprise client ready to commit when you start your agency. I obviously did not have that luxury.



Port Orange, FL

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michaeljagri/>

<https://northatlanticconsultants.com/>

3. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SERVICE TO SELL? WHY?

UCaaS. It is massive headache for clients and it's also in high demand.

4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

Obsession with Customer Satisfaction and Experience.

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?


- 1) Networking with other local businesses through BNI and the Chamber of Commerce
- 2) Local SEO: I learned how to build a website and SEO through YouTube whenever I had free time late at night or weekends. I started to see immediate results from both strategies and they now account for more than half of my sales.


6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

I get to spend a lot of time with my family. Below is a photo of my wife Ashley and two sons: Luke (almost 4) and Cole (almost 2).



 Port Orange, FL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michaeljagri/>

 <https://northatlanticconsultants.com/>

MICHAEL AGRI

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

1. The first 36 months are brutal. Be prepared to go to war every day and never quit. No matter how bad it gets, just keep pushing forward. You will get there if you believe, work hard, and stay positive.
2. Use other agents like myself for advice. You can save yourself a lot of time and money by learning from another agent's mistakes.
3. Attend a [Channel Partners event](#) annually to stay on top of technology, make connections, and learn best practices. The most successful Agents on the planet are all at this event and the advice that they share alone is worth the cost of the trip.

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?


In the very beginning I made a few direct contracts with Providers instead of using a Master Agency. This came back to bite me 2 years ago when one of those Providers cut me off for no other reason other than "you haven't sold anything lately". That was over \$3k in monthly commission that was taken away from me. If I had that same business under a Master Agency that would have never happened. My advice to all new agents is to use a Master Agency, they are a safe harbor for your residual commissions.


9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

Steve Gerhardt, Founder of D&M Enterprises and one of the most successful agents in the country gave me this piece of advice: After helping a client, ask this simple question: "do you know anyone else that could benefit from my service?" Steve pointed out that when you make this a habit, it equates to: 1 Referral a day = 250 Referrals per year.

10. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

Once you get to a point where you are spending too much time on support calls (Usually around \$100k in monthly billing) you will need to invest in a Support person to continue to scale your business, otherwise you will remain flat. You will also be stuck on the phone doing \$15/hour work all day instead of selling and enjoying life.

 Port Orange, FL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michaeljagri/>

 <https://northatlanticconsultants.com/>

MICHAEL AGRI



LUCAS SALVAGE

CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER,
PARTNER, KAIROS DATA
COMMUNICATIONS

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

I've been in the technology consulting business for the past 20 years. Some of this was in IT, some in telecommunications. I have always known that I would own a business at some point, and when the opportunity came along for me to open my own along with the help of some partners, I jumped at the opportunity. Over the past 20 years I've seen areas of each business that I was a part of that I wanted to change/modify. The frustration of not being able to make the company the way I wanted was always a driving factor. We're highly focused on the operational side of our business. Meaning, that is what's most important to Kairos is our clients and how well (or not well) our supplier base takes care of them.


2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?

3-6 months. I wasn't sold on the idea of leaving a company I had built over the past 15+ years, but after some self-reflection and my good friends council, I was eager to make the move.

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?

By far, CCaaS. 😊 Contact Center is now a focal point for companies post-pandemic. In many cases, this is the only interface to an organization for a "customer" and ensuring that the customer experience (CX) is fully available for all demographics and ages has become a driver for me. We feel like contact center and AI-based technology are the future for not only contact center but for significantly more automation as we continue to refine those solutions.

 [Virginia Beach, VA](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lucassalvage/>

 <https://www.kairosdatacom.com/>

4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

Am I successful? 😊 I've made an effort to become not only skilled at understanding a client problem, but technical enough to be able to help them design the solution to their challenge. Far too often I see agencies that have great sales talent need to leverage sales engineers from suppliers, and for me, that's a non-starter. I would rather own the entire client experience end to end. That's why we're so operationally focused as well. I would rather have my partner (Mary Hofer) and her side of the company be deeply involved in the deployment of any technology solutions we source. This gives Kairos (and specifically me) the ability to design, source, and implement a solution without needing interaction with a supplier, and unfortunately, that's a necessary. I also have developed a style and process that seems to have clients come back time and time again for more and more technology questions and answers.


5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

We leverage all the tools that are available out there. LinkedIn (Yes), Referral relationships (sub-agents), sales reps, and Zoom Info. All these provide a unique and different avenue to prospect and try to create relationships. But let's take that word and dissect it for a moment. The real way this business (and any agency) becomes a success is via establishing long-term relationships. Those relationships provide "the gift that keeps giving" -- Essentially, if you have a good relationship with a CIO, and that CIO moves to a new company, BOOM! You have a new client. 😊

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

The flexibility & lifestyle it provides. Listen, we all need to ensure that our clients are getting the best service and experience from the suppliers that we're recommending, however, we can work anywhere...and to some degree, if you can find suppliers you're comfortable with, (and again, establish a good relationship with the supplier) you can also leverage them in an effort to support your client. That provides flexibility for YOU as a business owner.



 [Virginia Beach, VA](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lucassalvage/>

 <https://www.kairosdatacom.com/>

LUCAS SALVAGE

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?


This is possibly the most important question in the deck. 😊 Build your business based on your skill, and CHARGE FOR IT. Agencies have historically given away a lot of time and talent at no charge to get the MRC/MRR. These solutions are so big and technical in nature now, it's important to ensure your clients VALUE your time, and if that means putting a price tag on certain things (audits, large-scale solution design) then you need to. While our competition used to be direct reps for the telco companies, it's now Arthur Anderson, Deloit, KPMG, etc. Agents are more savvy than those large firms because we have EXPERIENCE deploying these solutions, and that expertise, and time, and effort needs to be compensated for. In addition, that can be the "sand between the boulders" meaning as you continue to build your MRR base you can take \$10K-50K for a consulting project that will ultimately lead to MRR. Almost double dipping, but in many cases very important as you start your business, because MRR takes a long time to pay!

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

Every single one possible. 😊 Biggest mistake was waiting so long to go out on my own. (I'm not on my own, but to become an owner). I've always led the companies I've been associated with, and was the Sr. VP at my last company, however I waiting until 1 year ago to branch out and become the true owner/leader which should have happened sooner than it did. My biggest mistake. Not my only one, I could fill up a book with the mistakes I've made...

9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

Again, I believe the two best things are ensure you're not under valuing yourself by not charging for your time for larger projects, and two, LEVERAGE your relationships on both the client and supplier side.

 [Virginia Beach, VA](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lucassalvage/>

 <https://www.kairosdatacom.com/>

LUCAS SALVAGE



DAVE DYSON

CEO, ECLIPSE TELECOM, LLC

1. WHY DID YOU CREATE YOUR TELECOM CONSULTING BUSINESS?

Eclipse was born out of what I saw as a developing gap in the marketplace. Telecom had become a very competitive space in the early 2000's and as a result, the large carriers were cutting service and expertise to manage declining margins. In 2009, I saw the gap in the enterprise space where big carrier service was in decline and the channel hadn't yet begun to elevate into the mid-market and above space. We believed that there was a space to work with larger enterprises who were feeling frustrated with declining service while their internal IT staffs were shrinking. We can take time consuming and complicated tasks off the client plate and do them better than the client can do it on their own. The added benefit of working with a company like ours is we are able to keep up with the rapid pace of change of technology and share that expertise and experience with the customers.

2. HOW LONG DID YOU THINK ABOUT MAKING THIS CHANGE BEFORE YOU PULLED THE TRIGGER?

In between a seven-year stint at AT&T and starting Eclipse in September of 2009, I worked for a traditional telecom agency in Chicago for about a year. The owner of that agency and I had differing visions of what a consulting company in this space could look like and what it could do. I gave it about a day of thought before I resigned from his company to start my own. The economy was in the midst of a recession from the housing crisis of '08 so the timing was perfect.

3. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SERVICE TO SELL? WHY?

I don't really have one. Over 20 years in the space and 13 running Eclipse, the technology and solutions have changed, the constancy of that change is one of the best parts of working in this business. What I really enjoy is listening to customers, identifying their challenges and needs and then connecting technology and partners into solving for those needs. In the larger enterprise accounts, it is often a complex web of problems and puzzling together solutions that remove friction is so much fun. The constant change keeps me on my toes and keeps everything interesting.

 [Chicago, IL](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/davedyson/>

 <https://eclipse-telecom.com/>

4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

I try to be generous in all things, especially my time and sharing my knowledge with my team, my customers, and my industry. I have a unique ability to synthesize complicated concepts into easy-to-understand ideas. I hold my values steadfastly but not my ideas, I am always willing to change when new facts are presented.

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

We are a terrible sales organization, but in spite of that, we have managed to grow a lot over 13 years. Because we have focused on staying experts in the space, adjusted when we needed to, and held our core values throughout, we now enjoy lots of referrals from customers and when an executive leaves a job to go to a new one, we are almost guaranteed a new client.

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

The people. I have built so many profound and deep friendships with the people in this industry. I love the entrepreneurial energy and ideas that power the entire sector.

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Focus on what you are able to deliver to the end customer and I don't mean technology. The things we sell as agents are readily available to the customers from many different places, including the providers directly. What is the thing you can provide that makes you unique or stand out? For us it's understanding how large enterprises operate and consume technology services and being able to deliver operational excellence on complex projects. How you wrap your own insights, care, and services around the technology is what will set you apart. The era of getting three quotes to a customer and having them pick one is over. Create and document value, and you can charge the end customer for it. There is no reason to be giving your expertise away for free.

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

All of them. The same ones everyone in the space makes, plus I discovered some exciting new ones as well.

9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

Be your authentic self. Don't try to be like anybody else. Find your voice and use it.

 [Chicago, IL](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/davedyson/>

 <https://eclipse-telecom.com/>

DAVE DYSON



DEVON HARRIS

MANAGING PARTNER
OBERACONNECT, LLC

1. WHY DID YOU CREATE YOUR TELECOM CONSULTING BUSINESS?

This business was started by my father and another gentleman. I was working for another telecom company for about 10 years and decided to come on board last May and take over. It has been the best decision I have made. Only thing I regret is I should have done it sooner. I love being able to find solutions for customers to run and operate their business. They need to focus on growing their business and leave the telecom to us!

2. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?


I am in the relationship business. I have always been very good with relationships. It is my job to make people feel heard. To let them know I am here to handle whatever their needs may be. People are busy, they need someone they know they can trust to handle certain aspects of their business that they aren't too sure about i.e. Telecom. I am a multi-tasker, scheduler, organized, work well with all departments, a connector of people, and bring my clients in on every aspect of the job keeping them informed of the progress until completion.

3. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

We get a lot of referrals here at OC, also word of mouth, marketing, relationships, we have agents on the ground working for us finding those prospects, LinkedIn, other forms of social media.

 Daphne, AL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/devon-harris-5a261010a/>

 <https://www.oberaconnect.com/>

4. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

The best part of being a telecom agent is there is a solution for any need my client has. TCG has been a huge part of our success here at OberaConnect. If we don't sell a solution the client is looking for instead of saying no, we don't do that, I have TCG who has unlimited resources for me to go to find a solution for my client.

5. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Get involved, ask questions, find that person who can teach you the ropes and get you connected. Read, Listen to Podcasts, get out there and hit the ground running. Don't be afraid to fail, not everything is going to be a yes and that's ok, keep moving and the right thing will land. Work hard, be present, stay focused. The technology business is ever changing you must stay on top of your game and up to date with what is going on to be sure to have the right solutions for your clients.

6. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

A ton, in the beginning I was learning as I was going, just know once you make a mistake learn from it and don't do it again. 😊

7. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

Get a mentor, I have several. I call them, meet with them, ask for their advice/suggestions. Surround yourself with people who are moving in the right direction. Stay focused, I can't say that enough. There are a lot of distractions in this world, especially today. Keep your eye on what your purpose is and do that. Everything else will fall into place.


8. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

Have fun! I worked many many years being stressed out all the time, I have learned to let things go and focus on what really matters.



 Daphne, AL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/devon-harris-5a261010a/>

 <https://www.oberaconnect.com/>

DEVON HARRIS



JOE DIX

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
CONSULTANT, CANDID
SOLUTIONS, INC

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

So that I could treat my clients the way I like to be treated – no bias and pure side by side comparison of suppliers. Biggest bang for the money layered with white glove service before and after the ink dries on the contract. You truly can't be unbiased when you are tied to a quota. Additionally, after the sale when working for a supplier directly, you are forced to turn the account over to an AM or PM team and then move on to sell more new customers. How can you create a relationship with a customer when you are forced to move on and no longer support that client. I live for the relationship and ensuring that the client gets what I promised them. It's called integrity and passion!

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?


1 year

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?

UCaaS and cybersecurity. Both go hand in hand with positioning the client to better service their clients more safely. Additionally, I'm all about Future-Proofing my business and I want the same for my clients!

 Chicago, IL

 https://www.linkedin.com/in/candidsolution_sjoedix/

 <https://candid.solutions/>

4. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

Strong desire to deliver what I say I will deliver. I am really stubborn with the suppliers and they all know that I put my clients first. That makes me successful.

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO
YOU PROSPECT?

Word of mouth and my 58 independent agents. CANDID has built an automated solution for our agents that allows us to professionally source projects to ensure the client picks the right solution provider every time! I do some postings on linkedin and it's resulted in one deal being closed in 24 months. To me, LinkedIn is becoming a platform more and more that I want to stay away from. Too much political agendas IMO. Lastly, I have some referral partnerships with 2 separate real estate firms that utilize CANDID for IT Concierge services for their commercial real estate clients.

6. WHAT IS THE BEST
PART ABOUT BEING
A TELECOM AGENT?

Growing my business one client at a time and doing it for myself and my business partner while helping our agents build a dream! OH, and our clients absolutely love us. They know we are genuine!

7. WHAT ADVICE DO
YOU HAVE FOR
PEOPLE LOOKING TO
BECOME TELECOM
AGENTS?

It's a lot of work but building your own dream is amazing. Unless you get lucky, plan on working your butt off for 18 months with a lot of doubt due to not collecting a paycheck or health benefits. I would encourage anyone new coming into the space to utilize CANDID Solutions to help launch their business. We pay really well, provide all the branding for our agents at no charge and provide a lot of process that the largest ones out there are missing.

 Chicago, IL

 https://www.linkedin.com/in/candidsolution_sjoedix/

 <https://candid.solutions/>

JOE DIX

**8. WHAT MISTAKES
HAVE YOU MADE IN
THIS BUSINESS?**

Trying to do too much. We can't be experts in every aspect of IT. Learn to ask for help and find an area to focus on.

**9. WHAT SHOULD
OTHER PEOPLE DO
TO BE SUCCESSFUL?
DO YOU HAVE ANY
BEST PRACTICES
THAT YOU COULD
SHARE?**

Don't reinvent the wheel. Instead, learn as much as you can and improve on other models.

**10. ANYTHING ELSE
YOU WANT TO
SHARE?**

The end result of hard work will pay off. Don't quit. If this were easy, everyone would be doing it. Focus on getting enough business in the door to pay your monthly expenses and then apply your focus on 1 year at a time. Just remember, there aren't many businesses in the world where everything you do carries over from one month to the next. Gone are the days of fulfilling a quota and then starting over from scratch the next month. Everything you do today builds your business for tomorrow.

 Chicago, IL

 https://www.linkedin.com/in/candidsolution_sjoedix/

 <https://candid.solutions/>

JOE DIX



JUANITA COLEY

CEO & FOUNDER, SOLID ROCK CONSULTING

1. WHY DID YOU CREATE YOUR TELECOM CONSULTING BUSINESS?

One of our goals we at Solid Rock Consulting is to introduce 1 million women to the world of Technology and leadership roles. Since we were already consulting on Workforce Management, adding telecom consulting to our existing contact center consulting model only made sense.

2. HOW LONG DID YOU THINK ABOUT MAKING THIS CHANGE BEFORE YOU PULLED THE TRIGGER?

Solid Rock Consulting turns 10 years old in July of 2022. We added Telecom (Tech services) in 2021.

3. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SERVICE TO SELL? WHY?


CCaaS is my personal favorite because I grew up in the contact center space. I understand it intimately and I always feel like I'm actually giving back to the customer when I sell it. Selling CCaaS is more than a sell for me. Each time it feels like I'm giving the customer time back to their operations and equipping an agent with the tools they need to be successful.


4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

My core values: Integrity, Relationship, Innovation, Accountability and Execution. These aren't just words I say they are core to who I am and what I believe.

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

I attend industry events. For example- Insurance conferences. I post on social, I also produce a show where I interview call center leaders.

 [Eagle Lake, FL](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/juanitacoley/>

 <https://www.solidrockco.net/>



CYNTHIA FERRELL

OWNER/VENDOR AGNOSTIC
TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT,
TEAMKC TELECOM

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

Knew I could make more \$ on indirect, didn't want to be stuck just selling 1 vendor – wanted to create custom, best of class solutions for clients. Tired of being pushed around & treated terribly on direct side.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?

1 year


3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?


UCaaS, data, CCaaS, because I am most knowledgeable of them, but I love selling anything honestly.

4. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

Still struggling to see myself as “successful”! LOL. But I have great relationships with customers, I always tell the truth – even if that means I don't get a sale, I admit when I make a mistake, and I make sure the customer is happy – I fight their battles with vendors for them, make sure its installed, and that vendors lives up to what they promised when they signed.

 Overland Park, KS

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/cynthiaferrell/>

 <https://teamkctelecom.com/>

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

Existing core clients, referrals, and have a sub agent.

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

I don't have to answer to anyone, except my clients. The relationships with my vendors. That I get to learn about new technology.

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Go out on your own – don't go work for anyone else!!!!

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

See above, LOL


9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?


Have 3-5 enterprise clients that you can start working with immediately. Get as much low hanging fruit signed & billing as fast as you can. Save up 6-12 months of salary as you wait for commissions to come in.

10. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

Don't be afraid – just do it!!!

 Overland Park, KS

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/cynthiaferrell/>

 <https://teamkctelecom.com/>

CYNTHIA FERRELL



ROBERT DEVITA

FOUNDER & CEO, MEJETICKS

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

We will have our 5 year anniversary this July.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?


It has been in the back of my mind since I was on the vendor side as a channel manager, so probably 5 years before starting my own agency.

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?


Before this year it was probably UCaaS, I would say CCaaS now because we can really help customers improve productivity, we are selling a solution rather than a product.

4. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

I think its my inherent force to win and help my customers win. We help our customers win by providing new technology solutions and also by reducing costs. Being able to make one of our customers successful will make our company successful in the end.

 dallas, TX

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/radevita/>

 <https://mejeticks.com/>

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

This is the \$1m question. We have tried everything, but at the end of the day its based on activity. Either calling, emailing, linkedin messaging, networking. The more at bats you take the more likely you are to get someone to listen to you. So I wouldn't say its one specific way to prospect, its have the diligence to do it repeatedly.

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

I go back to helping people make better more informed decisions on how to procure the correct infrastructure from the correct provider. We take pride in making our customers successful

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Be patient and be in it for the long haul. This is not a get rich quick type of environment. It will take 12-18 months just to get your feet underneath you.

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?


Biggest mistake I almost made was telling a large customer of mine I didn't think we were a good fit to help them on a project. I was speaking to one of our TSD as they told me I was flat out wrong and that they could help me with this deal. The customer is now our largest customer because I asked for help and had great support around me.

9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?


If your main goal is to help the customer you will be successful. Its not always about the biggest SPIFF or which provider pays the most. Its about finding the right solution for your customers.

10. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

This is a great business with awesome people to help support you. Some of the best lessons I have learned have been from my peers. If you have the good fortune to be successful in this space then you owe it to the industry to help the next person trying to make a go at this.

 Dallas, TX

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/radevita/>

 <https://mejeticks.com/>

ROBERT DEVITA



AARON BOCK

MANAGING PARTNER,
OPKALLA

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

First, Opkalla works in telecom, but we also work in the traditional infrastructure and operations of IT as well. We created Opkalla to provide a more agnostic and more convenient place for IT professionals to be able to pick up the phone for any solution and work through to a solution or technology without spending the amount of hours they were before getting to wrong or uneven solutions.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?


On and off for a couple of years.

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?


Right now it is managed security because I think the ROI, TCO and value is so strong for 90%+ companies we are dealing with. It is expensive and complicated to do security right and hard to find the resources right now.

4. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

Hard work always trumps everything else. Dedicated to doing the right thing for our customers, partners and employees.

 Charlotte, NC

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aaronbock/>

 <https://opkalla.com/>

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

From being in the industry for a long time, there is no magic bullet here. You have to just create more output and your input will go up.

6. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Focus on the technology and not the incentives by the OEMs and Providers.

7. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?


Too many to count. However, the biggest one early on is truly understanding our value and what the customers are looking for.

8. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?


Create a clear brand if they want to get in this industry. Ask yourself what is different about you? If you can't answer that question, then your success will be limited.

9. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

Be ready to build over a long period of time and be consistent. It takes time to build the brand and help customers understand the value.

 Charlotte, NC

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aaronbock/>

 <https://opkalla.com/>

AARON BOCK



ADAM MCKEE MILLER

FOUNDER & PRESIDENT,
AMM COMMUNICATION
CONSULTING

1. WHY DID YOU CREATE YOUR TELECOM CONSULTING BUSINESS?

I created my consulting business because I love helping businesses with the complicated nature of telecom. The options to choose from can be overwhelming and I enjoy customizing a solution for each individual business. You are a trusted advisor instead of a salesperson trying to market a specific product with a single company. I knew I wanted to be in the world of telecom for many years to come and the best option forward was to create my own consulting business.

2. HOW LONG DID YOU THINK ABOUT MAKING THIS CHANGE BEFORE YOU PULLED THE TRIGGER?


I carefully planned for the start of my business for 3 years before leaving the comforts of my corporate job.

3. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SERVICE TO SELL? WHY?


Unified Communication is my favorite because you can customize the solution based on how the business plans to use the new service. Each project is different, so the implementation is never boring. I enjoy solving problems and frustrations with a Unified Communication solution.

4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

I take care of each business from beginning to end, and I'm always there to help when needed. This leads to a superior customer experience and yields future referrals. My business is built on the success of my clients and the referrals they send me.

 [Walnut Creek, CA](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mckeemiller/>

 <https://amm.consulting/>

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

Referral relationships are my main source of new opportunities. The warm introduction from these referral partners continues to open new doors. I work best with MSPs because I'm the expert in all things telecom and they are the experts in IT. I help the MSP's clients and provide a superior customer experience, and this reflects well to the MSP that initially referred me to their client.

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?


The freedom to be an independent advisor in telecom. I have over 200 suppliers to choose from when making a recommendation to a business, and I am not beholden to a specific company to sell their service. This allows me to always put the business first and not the supplier.


7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?


The first step is savings in the bank. This business takes time to grow, and if you don't have enough money saved up to pay the bills while you are building your business then you will fail before you even have the chance to get started. The second step is figuring out how you will find new prospective businesses to help. If you don't know how you will find new businesses, then you will quickly run out of businesses to speak with and help.

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

Taking on too many projects all at once. My drive to want to help as many businesses as possible has led to times where there were too many projects on my plate to provide a superior customer experience. You must be willing to say no to certain projects, so you have the necessary time and energy to give 100% to your clients.

 [Walnut Creek, CA](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mckeemiller/>

 <https://amm.consulting/>

ADAM MCKEE MILLER



CRAIG BULLOCK

OWNER, BETTER BUSINESS
TELECOMMUNICATIONS &
TECHNOLOGY LLC

1. WHY DID YOU CREATE YOUR TELECOM CONSULTING BUSINESS?

I was working at Comcast as a Senior Account Executive at Comcast when I started thinking about starting my own business. I was very unhappy with the massive corporate structure where illogical process was king. At a certain point in my career, I realized corporate rules were holding back from my potential. I knew there was much more out there for myself and my customers. At the time I was making a very good living (over 300K per year). I was very unhappy, nevertheless. While I was there, I bucked the system every chance I got and kept putting up big numbers even though they were putting obstacles in front of me every step of the way. One day Comcast decided my way was not their way and they made the decision to let me go. I started my business knowing that this was my shot to make a run at it. 7 ½ years later here I am!

2. HOW LONG DID YOU THINK ABOUT MAKING THIS CHANGE BEFORE YOU PULLED THE TRIGGER?

3 Years from my recollection where I thought about it until I was forced to do it.

3. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SERVICE TO SELL? WHY?


I sincerely enjoy finding Internet and connectivity solutions for customers who have the impression that nothing is available to them. I love to hear customers say "I have looked for a decent Internet connection for my business for years and have never been able to find anything".

4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

I work extremely hard, am willing to take risks and think out of the box every chance I get.

 Jackson, MS

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/bbtelco/>

 www.bbtelco.com

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

We are luckily at the stage where we don't have to prospect anymore because we have a reputation of being experts in the field. We get a lot of referrals from existing customers and work with our existing customer base to find additional solutions to prop up their businesses. Before we got to that stage, most of our prospecting has been good old fashioned cold calling either on the phone or door to door sales.

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

I am literally able to find a technology solution for ANY client for ANY technology need. I am able to see the technology we recommend be a part of growing and successful businesses.

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?


Do not go at it alone! This industry has the rare quality that people in this industry don't look at each other as competitors as much as other industries do. I have found that it is easy to get advice from other successful people who are telecom agents. Most people don't mind giving sound advice on how they run their businesses. There are many ways to become successful. There are also some things many of us would not ever try again. Take all the advice you can get (especially from those who are successful at it).

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

At the beginning I was so enamored by the residual side of the business and what it could do for me 1 year, 2 years, 3 years and so on down the road. I was so obsessed with the long term goal, I sometimes forgot that I needed to concentrate on the things that helped me in the here and now. An example is that for a while, I had to take upfront commissions for some of the sales I made for the first couple of years. My business would not have survived if I hadn't taken that approach during that time.

 Jackson, MS

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/bbtelco/>

 www.bbtelco.com

CRAIG BULLOCK

9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

Pay heavy attention to helping within your network and build a reputation for excellent service with those people. Work relentlessly to build those relationships every chance you can. Don't go after the "whale" at first. Stay within your depth. Work 80 hours a week if you have to until you get on firm footing. Hire someone who is experienced in the telecom industry OR hire someone and spend the time to train that person to help you. Once you get your business running well, figure out what every hour of your day is worth. Figure out how many hours a day, week, month you spend on that task. If you can pay someone to do that for less per hour than the time you spend, DO IT!


10. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

When getting into this business, you need to understand that it is not as easy as some of us make it look. There were years of pain and suffering many of us exhibited when starting their businesses.



At a TSB President's Club in Mallorca, Spain

 Jackson, MS

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/bbtelco/>

 www.bbtelco.com

CRAIG BULLOCK



MARK MORRELL

SENIOR CONSULTANT/PARTNER,
KNOXTEL

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

I wanted to build a residual business model that I could run with low overhead & low risk.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?

10 years.

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?


SIP trunks & Internet. What I know & the lowest maintenance.

4. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

Basics of selling & COI development

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO
YOU PROSPECT?

Door knocks, Emails, COI's, Phone calls, LinkedIn intros.
Building business relationships with key business people the last 20 years.

 Knoxville, TN

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mark-morrell-9332a47/>

 <https://knoxtel.net/>

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

NOT having Monday Sales Mtgs & Funnel reviews!!

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Get a business plan together and hit the ground running. Have access to enough \$ so you have time to ramp. (6 months)

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?


Offering the wrong solution because I wasn't used to having so many options to present.

9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

1) Track your "meaningful conversations per week" (COI's & Prospects) 2) be consistent with prospecting.

10. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

Talk regularly with a Business Mentor or people you can bounce ideas off of maybe from Telecom and also from other industries.

 Knoxville, TN

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mark-morrell-9332a47/>

 <https://knoxtel.net/>

MARK MORRELL



STAN DURST III

IT STRATEGIST,
BRIDGEPOINTE TECHNOLOGIES

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

To create a business of residual income and have the ability to work from wherever I wanted to.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?

10 years.

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?


I love to sell anything where are actually solving a problem.

4. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

Grit.

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO
YOU PROSPECT?

Email, Phone, LinkedIn and a bit of in-person.

 Reno, NV

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/techcaddie/>

 <https://www.bpt3.net/>

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

Freedom and Flexibility.

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Have a plan and have patience.

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

Not really having a plan per se. Trying to sell too many services.

9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

Find a product, niche out in that product, and be the expert.

10. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

This is a grind- be prepared to be rewarded for your grind.

 Reno, NV

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/techcaddie/>

 <https://www.bpt3.net/>

STAN DURST III



TONY RUGGIERI

MANAGING PARTNER,
VELSTAR INTERNATIONAL LLC

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

After many career years (20) invested in a single brand commitment (predominantly with LCI/Qwest/CTL) and the increasing need for end user advocacy; my partners and I decided to build our own brand focused on the delivery of useful technology resources so that our clients can make better decisions about their business and for the customers they serve.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?

Several years, driven largely by having a solid financial foundation in which to develop the business model with little to no initial income, and a family support (a must!).

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?


We do not per se "sell", rather we advocate by fully understanding our client's technology requirements, pain points, business operation success & failures, and then advocate solutions that make sense, are measurable, and affordable.


4. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

30+ years of business experience both as a corporate suit and an as an entrepreneur with the same BURNING DESIRE FROM WITHIN that believes in what I do every day, striving to do my best, better. And the always true adage, FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION!

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO
YOU PROSPECT?

Velstar originally launched in 2008 as a wholesale carrier agency and then in 2010 we pivoted to SMB/Enterprise markets to mitigate financial risk associated with the wholesale carrier transactional market. The SMB/enterprise market was ground zero for us in 2010 with no clients, so we deployed a sniper focus on person-to-person networking, attending business events in NYC, e-mail and phone follow up, business trade journal lead canvassing, newspapers, truck signage/advertisements etc.

 New York, NY

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tonyruggieri/>

 <https://www.velstar.com/>

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

Having the earned ability and opportunity to think and speak freely and the empowerment to provide useful information that others seek and are willing to compensate us for our time, effort, and knowledge.

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Become a franchisee of Velstar (Velstar International LLC and Velstar Professional Services LLC) and immediately benefit from our expertise.

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?


No mistakes, only increased knowledge of what works and what doesn't. The real key is being able to zig and zag and pivot from those negative gravitational forces that seek to separate you from your energy and your wallet.

9. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?


Align yourself with those resources that improve where you are today and where you want to go – need to plan. Yes, of course we have best practices and our year over year results support this confidence.

10. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO SHARE?

We welcome the opportunity to speak with those individuals that endeavor the technology agency model to inquire about a franchise/branchise arrangement with Velstar.

 New York, NY

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tonyruggieri/>

 <https://www.velstar.com/>

TONY RUGGIERI



JIM ECKES

CO-FOUNDER,
TIE TECHNOLOGY

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?


I was and still am so fed up with the absolute incompetence that is unfortunately rampant in our industry. From Managers that have no clue, to VPs and Directors that have even less. I didn't just start my own consulting business. I started my own phone company that does consulting as part of a white glove concierge type service.

2. HOW LONG DID
YOU THINK ABOUT
MAKING THIS
CHANGE BEFORE YOU
PULLED THE
TRIGGER?

OMG-Years. I've worked with some really fantastic people in this industry. We'd always meet up at president's club trips and talk about the same thing.... Who had it the worst.... we'd be there and talk about how to make things better for sales etc...but it would never change because management never cared... the process that is in place is not one that favors the customer. This process NEVER allows the customer to scale on their timeframe-only on the providers. And it makes sense because it almost seems like all of telecom's upper management is all just a retread from another Company.... I had enough.

3. WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE SERVICE
TO SELL? WHY?

This one is two fold. I love selling my own phones and I LOVE helping schools learn about erate and sell them fiber(as I am an erate consultant as well) Why? At TieTechnology, we have the ability to enact real change for people. I truly believe from a customer standpoint that anyone that is coming on board, their business is in more capable hands with us than with any of the large providers- From an organization standpoint, with the phones and the phone service, we control that process and directly handle any needs for the customer and for the Fiber circuits we put in for the erate schools, they are very low maintenance accounts. This in turn allows our organization to run lean and mean as our support needs are very low.

 Sarasota, FL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jim-eckes-8629b94a/>

 <https://tietechnology.com/>

4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

IT doesn't hurt that I have a stockbroker background...LOL... but really...It's a belief that I can create change and that what I do can really help by partnering with customers and their businesses to be more successful- that will never happen with the large ISPs and quota carrier reps.

5. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

All of our business is derived thru referrals. There is not a customer that we have that has NOT passed our name to a friend. We do quite a bit of Integration projects that lend to some of the larger vendors coming to us for specific projects because of the inability of the larger Service Providers to service not only the account but the specific integration that's needed to meet customer expectations.

6. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?


I define the process and my company gets to define what the customer relationship is going to look like.

7. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

The most money per circuit is not the best solution for the customer. Do right by the customer and the success will follow.

8. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

Trusting the wrong people and wrong Companies with my clients. NEVER AGAIN. EVER....I have turned my referral network into a mafia—"you gonna vouch for him?"LOL

 Sarasota, FL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jim-eckes-8629b94a/>

 <https://tietechology.com/>


JIM ECKES

9. WHAT SHOULD
OTHER PEOPLE DO
TO BE SUCCESSFUL?
DO YOU HAVE ANY
BEST PRACTICES
THAT YOU COULD
SHARE?

Walk like you have a full funnel, have confidence in YOU and Be relentless. But be relentless in your belief that what you're doing is the right thing for the customer.

10. ANYTHING ELSE
YOU WANT TO
SHARE?

I often joke that the problem with Telecom is it's filled with people from Telecom. Now, my friends in the industry that know me, know exactly what I mean. As our industry is plagued by retreads from other companies that take failing ideas to new companies only to drag those companies down while forcing out talent while repeating the same failed process. Telecom management is literally the definition of insanity (doing the same thing over and over expecting different results). As agents and independents, we truly have the ability to create real change- Not for everyone but directly for our customers and their businesses and their relationships. The more GOOD agents that are out there that can connect with each other not only strengthens our relationships but creates further value for each of our customers. I have long said "people who do business the same way tend to find each other".

 Sarasota, FL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jim-eckes-8629b94a/>

 <https://tietechology.com/>

JIM ECKES



DELAINÉ CLIFFORD

The most wanted woman in telecom

PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATION ACE

1. WHY DID YOU
CREATE YOUR
TELECOM
CONSULTING
BUSINESS?

Building residuals for my family was a key reason I decided to start Communication Ace.

2. WHAT MAKES YOU
(SPECIFICALLY YOU)
SUCCESSFUL?

My approach with Communication Ace, is to educate clients. There are many phone solutions out there, but which is the best for their organization? I do a deep dive into their current needs and talk about the future of communications. From there I will present many options that are a good fit for their needs. I encourage clients to look at 2-3 options, from there we go on a journey, that allows the client to pick the one that is best for them.

3. IN WHAT WAYS DO
YOU PROSPECT?

LinkedIn keeps bringing me new opportunities, but you have to give to get. But most of my business comes from referrals. I always say, my favorite clients bring me more favorite clients, so remember to tell your friends about me.

4. WHAT IS THE BEST
PART ABOUT BEING
A TELECOM AGENT?


I just love my job, my favorite part is solving problems for clients.

5. WHAT ADVICE DO
YOU HAVE FOR
PEOPLE LOOKING TO
BECOME TELECOM
AGENTS?


Find out where you are strongest and get really good at that. From there you will organically grow and expand if that is your desire. Being excellent at one thing, is way better than being mediocre at lots of things.

6. WHAT SHOULD
OTHER PEOPLE DO
TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

Show up every day ready to win!

 Roseburg, OR

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/delaineclifford/>

 <https://communicationace.com/>



JAY MORRIS

CHIEF AGGREGATION OFFICER,
MORECOMM VOICE AND DATA
SOLUTIONS

1. WHY DID YOU CREATE YOUR TELECOM CONSULTING BUSINESS?

After 35 years as a sales and marketing professional, beginning at MCI in the 80's when I first left the PGA of America with the realization, I was not going to be able to survive chasing that dream, telecom became my new passion. Following MCI, I worked for, was a founder/co-founder of, board member of, stakeholder in, and even most recently just "carrying a bag" in a number of communications companies. All somehow connected to the indirect channel, which explains my affinity for it. When I left my last company, I decided (or maybe my ego decided for me) at my age, I had little interest in interviewing, possibly moving, or even building another supplier company. I thought to myself, I've been buying technology on the wholesale level for 30 of the last 35 years, there are too many great suppliers out there already, and I was considered one of the industry's most well-known SME's in some key growth areas of telecom and IT. Convinced I had the pedigree for this, I made the decision to go "all in". I downsized and prepared myself mentally that it was going to be tough, I am going to feel it, I mean really feel it, yet convinced I would be successful and that eventually, it would pay off.

2. HOW LONG DID YOU THINK ABOUT MAKING THIS CHANGE BEFORE YOU PULLED THE TRIGGER?

Tough question. I can distinctly remember questioning to do so far back as "pre-indirect channel" or around the time of AT&T SDN, and MCI VNet resale. But my career and companies I was involved with on the supplier side, were exploding. I was simply making too much money at that time, I enjoyed 60-80 hour work weeks, globetrotting, and selling product into the Channel. Although I can remember considering it very early, I really wanted to after leaving ECI, an early CLEC I was a stakeholder in, however the timing was not right for me. In the end, I would say the burning desire began a decade ago.



Miami/Ft lauderdale, FL



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jay-morris-1847137/>



<https://www.morecomm.net/>

3. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SERVICE TO SELL? WHY?

First, the only thing I try to sell is myself. The product and services my clients buy are not mine anymore, they are one or more of hundreds of other supplier services. But as far as what types of projects and solutions I seek to be involved with, that's simple. It is always some form of aggregation, consolidated billing, single/fewer bodies to hug/fewer throats to choke solutions depending on your perspective. It's a fun and challenging space and I can often work on a single project at a time when they're large enough. I take a unique approach to this market, my value position differs than most, I can stand out as one of the industry most accredited and renowned SME's so these are the accounts and opportunities that I make the most difference on. In other words, do what you like and be great at it and the rest will follow.


4. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?

Success is relative. It has differed over the years. I have achieved great successes and I take personal responsibility for epic failures. Rinse and repeat your successes, and course correct your failures, focus, and drive on. I think that came from golf first, and then my early marketing days at MCI and ATC/LDDS. Dropping 30M pieces of direct mail and getting it wrong will humble you very quickly when that's your budget. These days, my exclusive focus is a project's success. Whether that project is a single DIA install, a security or MSP solution for a medium sized client or thousand of locations and multiple products and services all consolidated into a unified billing and management platform. Size and scope is not really relevant- success is success. If a project is successful, that is all that matters to me. The rest will take care of itself.

5. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

I assume most would say the independence and of course, that's part of it but for me, it's about learning and teaching. Again, my early PGA days I suspect engrained. The smile on a face, a job well done, the mission completed on time/on budget, just like a breakthrough or aha moment on the lesson tee when a student hits it dead-solid-perfect, or accepts a fundamental as gospel and embraces it, or achieves to them what was previously believed to be unachievable. It's these moments in my life and in business that I covet the most. Not to mention you get to work with amazing teams, to learn new things clients can teach you if you stop, listen and ask questions.

 Miami/Ft lauderdale, FL

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jay-morris-1847137/>

 <https://www.morecomm.net/>

JAY MORRIS

6. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?

Work for a small to medium sized agency in a space that fits your wheelhouse first. Move around the agency to gain experience and diversity is skill set. Set up a nest egg so you're prepared for the income hit. Hit single and doubles, network, and ask for referrals to help reduce sales cycles and be true to your client. I mean a true fiduciary. About 10% - 20% of the sales made that I have a hand in I make nothing on, why? It's best for the customer, there is no channel program, or I can get them a better deal by removing myself or my agency from the deal. Don't be greedy. You never have to explain reasonable compensation for hard work and value. Like I said, I am transparent to a fault and have lost engagements over it because again, some customers simply can't wrap their head around it. All while booking their air, hotel, contracting for insurance policies and clicking links on the internet all day, or leasing office space while all of the above are heavily weighted toward commissionable programs. It's easy to sell good value and a service that you believe in. Find a niche that is above and beyond quoting and slinging circuits. In five years, we will all be sourcing and procuring 90% of IT via online tools and so will your prospects and customers. In the same manner you can spool up a server, rack, and circuit in a data center in an hour today, we'll be doing the same for more like 90% of what current IT Advisors are compensated for today across hundreds of more product sets. Finally, cement and maintain your relationship with your clients up and down the organization. Decision makers can change frequently.

7. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

So many mistakes. But I'll name a few. I'm too good to fail. Maybe, but still, stuff happens. Not firing clients early when I am being used as a tool. Most of all, and this is to my earlier point above. Make sure you widen your audience and relationships within a client's organization. I often relied on one really good relationship and mostly high up. What's next at that level? Their moving on and you're out in the cold. Engage and maintain up and down and throughout the organization. Tops move on, and bottoms move up, win win.

8. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

I can't share all my secret sauce. Don't be afraid to express ignorance or lack of knowledge about something to a customer. I tell customers all the time. That's not my specialty but I know people or I can find out what you're looking for, or let me look into that, etc. I was at a recent channel event and sat next to one of the best Agents I know. I was a bit taken back by his lack of hesitation to ask what I am sure was easy pleasy for most in the room. I was impressed by his ability to get the answers he needed, watched him document it in great detail, and never any thought or cared about what his peers or speaker thought in the room. Again, knowledge over ego. An IT Advisors best friend.



[Miami/Ft Lauderdale](#)



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jay-morris-1847137/>



<https://www.morecomm.net/>

JAY MORRIS



DAVID PHILBROOK

SALES & MARKETING, DATATEL COMMUNICATIONS

1. HOW LONG DID YOU THINK ABOUT MAKING THIS CHANGE BEFORE YOU PULLED THE TRIGGER?

Career direction change in 2012 – Architectural Coatings to Telephony.

2. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SERVICE TO SELL? WHY?

Whatever solves problems and opens the door for other solutions. Why you ask...the greatest assist in any sales opportunity is urgency – solve the problem of the moment, become the trusted advocate and then you are no longer a salesperson – you are the resource.

3. WHAT MAKES YOU (SPECIFICALLY YOU) SUCCESSFUL?


Faux humility, a sense of compassion, a good communicator and better writer, and a happy blend of intensity and irreverence.


4. IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU PROSPECT?

I mainly try a well-crafted e-mail supported by a direct reference whenever possible and follow up with a phone call or three. I'll DM from LinkedIn Navigator - that has generated dialogue with more than one C-level type.

5. WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A TELECOM AGENT?

Being a low-key hero (Underdog/Super Grover...that level) and being part of the solution and not the pollution.

 [Meridian, ID](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-philbrook-48b49731/>

 <https://www.datatelco.com/>

6. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO BECOME TELECOM AGENTS?


Be pure “you” and, on a practical level, manage expectations....mostly, be fun, and be the person that other people are happy to see on the caller ID.


7. WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE IN THIS BUSINESS?

Not going in with the right support (e.g. engineer) to meetings. Charm will only take you so far and technical people have a low “tap-dance” tolerance. Know your product and process, and if you don’t – take a pal.

8. WHAT SHOULD OTHER PEOPLE DO TO BE SUCCESSFUL? DO YOU HAVE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT YOU COULD SHARE?

I’m not a big fan of “dime store dogma”, but Mr. Covey nailed it when he said “win the internal victory first” – be true to yourself, be honest with yourself, try to keep fit on all levels and, “do the day” – nothing more. That day, done well, will inform the next days. It keeps the illusion of control in perspective. (see: The Sanskrit Proverb...”Look to this day, for it is life....”)

 [Meridian, ID](#)

 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-philbrook-48b49731/>

 <https://www.datatelco.com/>

DAVID PHILBROOK

Thanks for reading. So what's next?

JOIN THE PRIVATE COMMUNITY



TECHNOLOGY ADVISOR

ALLIANCE

Where Telecom Agents/Channel Partners go to discuss:

- Best practices
- Desired business outcomes
- Vendors they love
- Vendors they hate
- Problems they are looking to solve NOW

Redeem a free trial at:

[HTTPS://WWW.RECURRINGRAISE.COM/TECHNOLOGY-ADVISOR-ALLIANCE](https://www.recurringraise.com/technology-advisor-alliance)

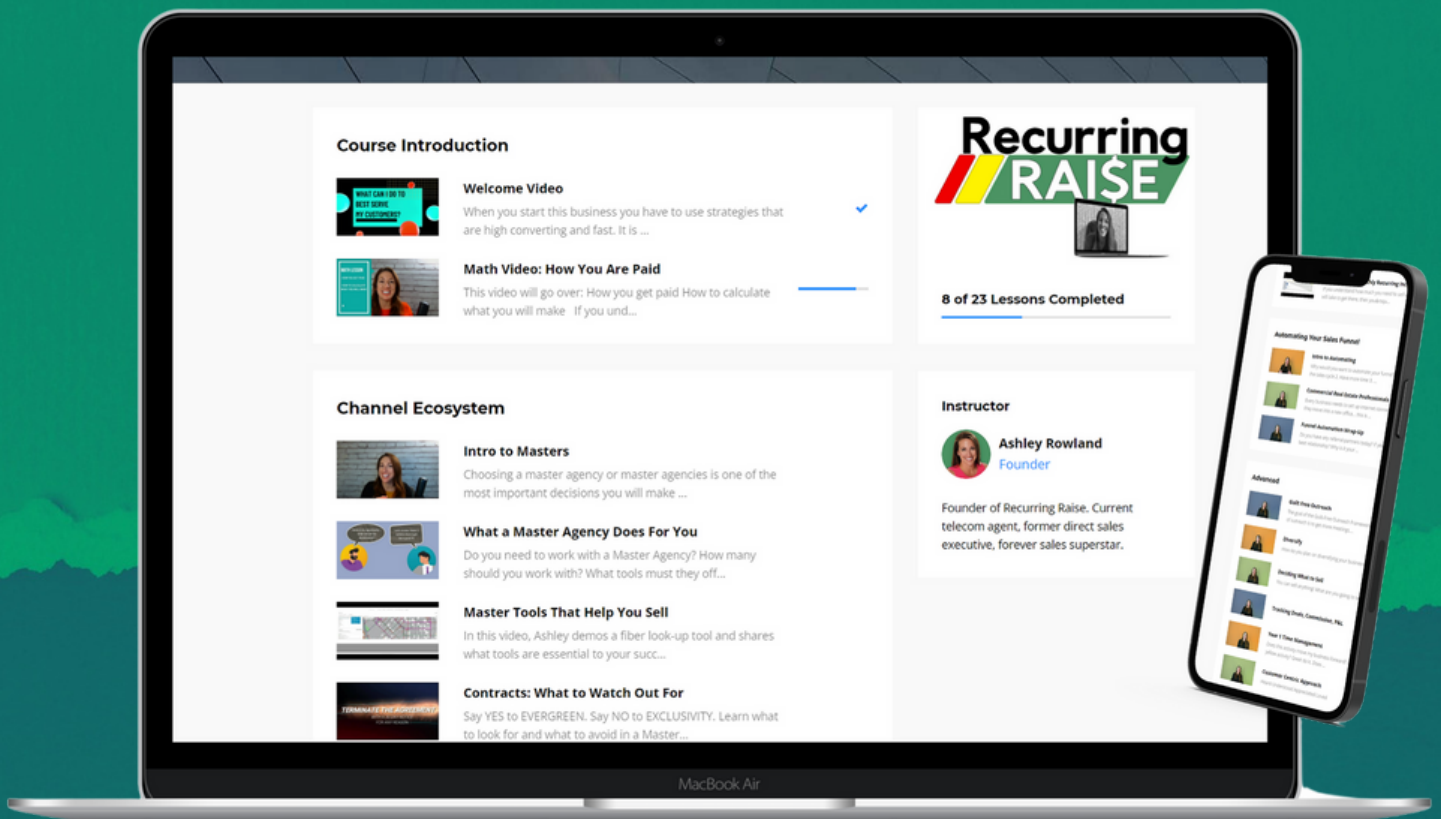
FREE TRIAL



FOR EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO CREATE A TELECOM
AGENT BUSINESS AND SCALE YOUR RECURRING INCOME

GO TO RECURRINGRAISE.COM

FOR AN INSANELY ACTIONABLE 2-HOUR COURSE TEACHING
HOW TO BUILD RECURRING PROFIT AS A TELECOM AND
TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT



AVAILABLE SOON AT RECURRINGRAISE.COM

Your ability to turn strangers into relationships determines your level of success. The better you are at building relationships, the more successful you'll be at your goal, whether that's building your business, hitting your sales goals, or something else. Unfortunately most people that attempt to build relationships are focused only on themselves. This mindset leads to horrendous outreach and results in a lack of successful new relationships.

- Learn why most cold outreach fails and how to fix this.
- Uncover the fastest way to automate your sales funnel with highly qualified leads.
- Use this method to create an overflowing sales funnel without spending hours cold calling.



*DO NOT REACH OUT TO A NEW PROSPECT, PARTNER,
OR CUSTOMER UNTIL YOU WATCH THIS.*

