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EcoPoint, Inc. is bringing the power of Geospatial Technology to the Oil & Gas, Agriculture and Large-Scale Mining Industries



Michael Clancy CEO

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Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Mr. Clancy, what is the overall vision behind EcoPoint, Inc?

Mr. Clancy: EcoPoint is an environmental and geospatial company. We focus on bringing the power of location technologies to extractive industries, oil and gas, agriculture, large scale mining. There are a lot of benefits associated with embracing technological advancements and using them for daily operations.

CEOCFO: Are the various industries you work with aware of some of the advancements or is it still a matter of education?

Mr. Clancy: Things are changing. Due to the consumerization of IT and cloud-based technologies, the general public is becoming more aware and effective with advanced technologies. There is still a lack of adoption across industry in leveraging these data platforms, centralizing data stores and embracing the advances that those can bring. Therefore, there is a general awareness, however there is a void in the actual industry implementation of these technologies. We are here to help fill that for our customers.

CEOCFO: Would you give us a couple of examples from different industries - what a company might need, what you can do for them and how it might differ from other methods?

Mr. Clancy: We currently have been focusing in the oil and gas industry. Right now, the oil and gas industry has a regulatory and environment concern. They are being asked to perform with a level of corporate responsibility that previously was not a question for them. In response to that, the industry was creating high volumes of data and reporting on all these data sets. By leveraging location-based technologies we provide our customers centralized data stores and access points to take information and make it actionable. A good example is, in Colorado, customers have a requirement for providing flow line registration and environmental monitoring protocols. Those protocols and those requirements are a new requirement in Colorado's regulatory framework. EcoPoint subsequently developed a geospatial data solution, combining a field collection protocol and reporting applications to aid our customers in not only complying with but excelling beyond the minimum requirement all while capturing operational efficiencies that allow them to operate, safer, cleaner, and more efficiently.

Another example of the power of location technology is data production inside of the agriculture space. Answering questions as simple as how many acres of a certain commodity are produced on an annual basis. This is a simple question that has large impacts on our customers business decisions.

We have developed data collection solutions, standardized data formats, and therefore, reporting tools to access and leverage that information to inform the business of current market conditions or anticipated production yields. We are using the same foundational location technologies and providing solutions to customers across different industries. These advanced location technologies are ideally suited for solving these core business problems and provides our customers productive actionable results.

CEOCFO: According to your site, EcoPoint is a company purposefully designed for attention to detail, flexibility and performance. Would you talk to us about how each plays out in engagements with your clients?

Mr. Clancy: For the first point, on detail, when we are talking about location and we are talking about accuracy and the capability of that data, it is highly dependent upon how precise we are with the gathering of that information. The question is, are we interested in data on a centimeter scale, are we interested in data on an acre scale or are we interested in hectare scale? By designing our systems and our solutions to specifically address what the customer expects from that data set, we are able to provide them the detail and transparency of data that can benefit their operations and provide an immediate ROI that businesses demand.

For flexibility, by leveraging some of these new advanced technologies, cloud-based systems, mobile technologies, rapid data-based deployment; we are able to quickly prototype, stand up, test and re-deploy solutions using some of the fundamentals of system development. This results in an iterative process where a solution can be iterated until it meets the customer's specific needs.

"There is a realization that organizations who do not have a sound data structure and a strategic data plan are falling behind with the requirements of operating in today's complex regulatory environment. Customers are seeking the capabilities that location technologies provide them and EcoPoint is focused on helping them adopt these new location-based solutions." Michael Clancy

CEOCFO: Would you tell us about the efficiency?

Mr. Clancy: Efficiency goes hand in hand with these other pieces that we talked about, where by using some of these technological advancements, customers no longer have these long build windows. You are not looking at standing up specific custom applications. With back-end infrastructure in place, we are able to leverage cloud solutions that are on the market. We work very closely with our partner with Esri, who is a leading geospatial software provider, and we can stand up solutions at an incredibly rapid pace. Providing our customers, the technology and field to office workflows and data transparency they require.

By configuring these cloud solutions and not building brand new standalone applications, we are able to build a solution, stand it up and then take those efficiencies to the field. Simple things like using mobile applications on cell phones, these incredibly powerful devices that we carry around and only use for email. We can now use these devices for rapid data collection, analysis and sharing. Therefore, it is not just a solution for reading our email or taking a phone call. These are powerful computers that we can use and implement in our day-to-day workflows and gain large amounts of efficiency.

CEOCFO: With so many potential industries, potential customers, how do you decide where to focus your efforts? How do you reach out to the different groups?

Mr. Clancy: Different industries and different verticals that we work in require different levels of marketing or participation. EcoPoint is fortunate enough to have most of our marketing efforts driven through customer referrals. We have been in this space for several years and have been able to provide enough value to our customers that we are generally referred to customers by other customers, which is a great marketing opportunity.

Additionally, we focus strongly on the client's needs in each specific industry. Every industry has its key pain points and problems that they are trying to address. We can track those industries, work very closely with our customers in a collaborative format to understand their needs and then help build those solutions. Generally, it is not just one customer

that has that same pain point. We can learn from a customer, take that learning and bring that learning to additional customers and offer those solutions, industry wide.

CEOCFO: How is business?

Mr. Clancy: Business is good! We have been growing every year since our inception in 2017. We have weathered the 2020 environment just fine, with no major reductions. Revenue has been on track and 2021, as the economy kind of reopens here, 2021 is looking to be an opportunistic year for us.

CEOCFO: Do you find that companies take full advantage of the solutions you offer or do they pick and choose among the things you can do in any given industry?

Mr. Clancy: I would say that companies generally focus on the specific solutions that they are interested in. That is a pain point of mine, to see a customer adopt a solution, find their ROI, get the benefits that they are interested in and then just hold on to that single solution and not look at expanding that solution across their organization. With technological developments of the magnitude we are discussing, it is often an impactful a process or medium throughout the organization and across departments.

For many customers, as soon as you begin talking cross departmental collaboration and data sharing, there is some level of protectionism or departmental interest that prevents organization wide collaboration. Therefore, bringing a solution, that benefits multiple departments, to the table, often drives the organization to look deeper and try to overcome any of the institutional barriers they face.

Customers that do embrace this technology across the board or are willing to work with other departments and share budgets and really advocate for solutions throughout the organization, find huge benefits and are able to really provide the organization a meaningful transformation. However, generally customers are interested in finding a solution that meets their specific use case and implementing that solution. Unfortunately, that is generally where people settle.

CEOCFO: What is your geographic reach today? Where are your customers?

Mr. Clancy: We are based in Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming and North Dakota. We have a presence in all those states and conduct work all the way from the Washington State to Texas.

CEOCFO: What is ahead? What do you see in the next year or so for EcoPoint?

Mr. Clancy: As we move forward, the adoption of geospatial technology is going to continue to increase. There is a realization that organizations who do not have a sound data structure and a strategic data plan are falling behind with the requirements of operating in today's complex regulatory environment. Customers are seeking the capabilities that location technologies provide them and EcoPoint is focused on helping them adopt these new location-based solutions. I think we are at the early phases of this adoption cycle with far more growth potential in the next 5-10 years. Location technologies and geospatial information have been around for a very long time, but actually implementing those solutions for strategic organizational goals is a new process.

Historically, people look to different formats, flat files, standard data base, user interfaces that are textual driven; people are now realizing we have advanced far enough that these technologies are available to the entire organization. They can embrace it from each user's individual cell phone, to their specific requirements in the office or reporting, working with regulatory agencies or business partners. Using spatial information to enhance their operations and organization has proven to be an area for development and efficiency gain not previously realized. Therefore, I believe that EcoPoint will continue to grow significantly with the adoption of the technologies and the services that we are offering.

