



Call with Helm Group - Jeff McCoy

Matt Hetrick with Helm Group
Recorded on 1/19/24 via SalesLoft, 52 min.

Participants

SERVICETRADE

Matt Hetrick
Field Manager

OTHER

Jeff McCoy

Topics

<i>Type of work</i>	1:59
<i>Pricing</i>	4:04
<i>Implementation and ongoing support</i>	4:46
<i>Paper process</i>	7:36
<i>Type of work</i>	9:05
<i>Accounting integrations</i>	9:23
<i>Accounting integrations</i>	11:00
<i>Accounting integrations</i>	13:17
<i>Purchase decision</i>	14:00
<i>Implementation and ongoing support</i>	14:41
<i>ST app contracts and pricing</i>	18:19
<i>Type of work</i>	18:40
<i>Type of work</i>	20:36
<i>ST app contracts and pricing</i>	22:00
<i>Purchase decision</i>	25:48
<i>Purchase decision</i>	27:18
<i>Implementation and ongoing support</i>	28:28
<i>Purchase decision</i>	28:58
<i>Pricing</i>	29:18
<i>Implementation and ongoing support</i>	29:45
<i>Purchase decision</i>	29:56
<i>Purchase decision</i>	30:40
<i>Accounting integrations</i>	32:33
<i>Purchase decision</i>	34:24
<i>Purchase decision</i>	37:52
<i>Purchase decision</i>	39:11
<i>ST app contracts and pricing</i>	39:43
<i>Purchase decision</i>	40:22
<i>Customer engagement</i>	43:55
<i>Dispatch</i>	45:52
<i>Purchase decision</i>	47:32
<i>Purchase decision</i>	48:22
<i>Purchase decision</i>	50:11

Transcript

"This English transcript was generated using Gong's speech-to-text technology"

MATT

0:00 Hey, Jeff. Good morning.

JEFF

0:02 Hey, how are you? My link was acting a little goofy. So I just tried to self, but hopefully that works out or do we need to reconnect somehow?

MATT

0:10 No, that's just fine. We, we can talk right here. Way way to think on the fly. How are you today?

JEFF

0:12 Okay, good.

JEFF

0:16 Yeah, yeah, good. How are you?

MATT

0:21 You know, Jeff, I'm usually good on a Friday. Not many complaints here.

JEFF

0:27 That's that's good.

JEFF

0:31 Yeah. So, is Michael, who was it? I was dealing? Is he not with ServiceTrade anymore?

MATT

0:37 Yeah, he moved on to a different company. I think even a different vertical... that it was a better fit for him.

MATT

0:46 So, I am, I'm the guy that's replacing him. I'm taking over.

JEFF

0:51 Okay.

MATT

0:51 And I wanted to first and foremost meet you and just learn a little bit more about the helm group, your evaluation team, what's important to you guys? Just so that when we go in on Tuesday, we'll have some more context and it won't be, you know, just one big blind date.

JEFF

1:12 Yeah, yeah, no. And I can give you the helm commercial if you want a little bit, and maybe some information will fall out of that unless you've got some specific questions you wanna know or maybe I'll give you my spiel, and then.

MATT

1:18 Yeah.

JEFF

1:28 Maybe some of that will knock some of those questions off, maybe or something like that. You want to try that?

MATT

1:34 Great minds, thinking like that's exactly what I was thinking with it.

JEFF

1:36 All right. Yes. Yeah. So helm, which has really just been rebranded two three, four years ago, it's always been the helm family privately owned company. Two brothers started out in really asphalt, and paving type stuff in 1946.

--- *Type of work* ---

JEFF

1:59 I think it was. And then they got into some wastewater treatment stuff. And so then they, in 1967 started out with... the company named mechanical incorporated, and that was to just do the piping to support their wastewater treatment. And then I started to grow into a decent sized mechanical contracting company, but they never had service. And so, I a, I started out after I got out of the military.

--- *Type of work ends* ---

JEFF

2:32 Right after the gulf war, I started out, one of my first jobs was a dispatcher for Johnson controls back in the nineties and did that worked my way up to service manager with those guys. And that was going well. Barbara Coleman got a hold of me who was home office at that time in Rockford and said, hey, we're kind of getting our aspect here in our own hometown. Would you come from Johnson and just grow our service?

JEFF

3:00 Offering. So I switched after those six years of Johnson to Barbara Coleman. And during my time at Barbara Coleman, they got bought by CB invents across the palm of London based company. So that started to kind of just fall apart a little bit. They lost your focus at the same time mechanical came to me and said, hey, we're growing, as a I'm sorry, as a mechanical contractor, but we don't have a service offering. We don't know anything about it. We hear that you do. So, would you come over and just start up?

JEFF

3:33 A service group from scratch. And so at the time mechanical was about 40 40,000,000 of sized company. And that was 2024 25 years ago. In that time we've you know, grown our service offering, you know, we came over and, I got is on perfect. Where in the very beginning just through some peer group type stuff and looked in the old days of Jonas and all the different type of softwares, but started on perfect. Where, and...

--- Pricing ---

JEFF

4:04 Since grown that service offering over the last 27 years and we've branched out. And now we're you know, 250 service vans and seven.

JEFF

4:16 Offices over four states. So our top line revenue for service is gonna be about 100. And I'm sorry, 115,000,000 in service alone.

--- Pricing ends ---

JEFF

4:27 The entire helm group has also grown aggressively and, you know, next year this year we'll do somewhere five, 607 100,000,000 as well. So I, we've had a lot of growth. We've had a lot of stuff. Perfect. Where has hung on, our Construction side years ago.

--- Implementation and ongoing support ---

JEFF

4:46 Maybe six seven switched over to. Viewpoint had auditioned at the time that they had a service offering as well. I sat in on maybe just half of the meeting because they were still just virtually like imagine if they this and imagine if that was that. And I said guys, you're not anywhere ready for what we're doing, and I'm pretty tight to the service stuff at least from my days of a dispatcher, and, you know, service manager and sales manager and just work my way up through the various steps within the service organization. So a lot of that stuff I'm probably gonna be a little bit more.

--- Implementation and ongoing support ends ---

JEFF

5:25 Tuned in or keen on or caring about, you know, when it comes to that, then maybe a lot of typical people just because I sat in the chair and I have an appreciation for it. But so now it's time obviously that we've all grown perfect where and quite frankly we've probably outgrown it a number of years ago, but there wasn't anything else that jumped off the page. It me, that the juice was worth a squeeze in changing out and going because we run our business services much different than any Construction. And we run our business minutely or hourly. We build quicker. We do all the things that we need to do. And so as we sit here today looking at with the acquisition of perfect, whereby.

JEFF

6:07 I believe BuildOps bought those guys. You guys have the Northboundary component and that's correct? Yeah.

MATT

6:16 That is correct. Yeah.

JEFF

6:18 Yeah. So, so really those are the two horses in this race. And so the nice thing is that the Northboundary we made that move a couple, I want to say it's probably coming up on a maybe two years here and a half ago and we like that a lot. And so part of me is very happy that, you know, I don't really have to worry too much about anything with my sales group because we've gone through that pain and suffering. We switched everybody over. So all seven locations in four states are all on Northboundary, everything is standardized. Everything is in place running operational. That part is really we done right now and I don't have to worry about that. So that leaves, you know, the discussion for my dispatchers and my accounting folks to those are the opportunities that I want to have you guys spend time with our guys. And honestly from the generation of what perfect, where was at to almost anything that we buy.

JEFF

7:18 We're gonna get more horse power than what we would probably need or what we would use. Now, you know, we've done a lot of, I mean, for the sake of the conversation, probably work around stuff with perfect were and the stuff that it wouldn't allow us to do that we are looking forward to.

--- Paper process ---

JEFF

7:36 You know, there's gonna be some things like I've got our guys doing, you know, our front line sales folks all do field proposals through canvas apps and they do a lot of other stuff through customize canvas apps. And our billing and stuff is, you know, if I have a control technician and sheet metal guy all go to the same customer. Right now. It's very cumbersome with trying to identify four different labor rates that can flow into this customer. The technology is long since been out there now by all the other, you know, your guys' stuff and the others that...

JEFF

8:11 I'm hoping a lot of my workarounds end up going away, you know, my canvas subscriptions and different things that I'm spending time and energy on this, you know, refrigerant tracking or some different things that we've customized.

--- Paper process ends ---

JEFF

8:24 And also in the billing side of the house that, you know, we're looking forward to a new system that we think will help us standardize around, you know, the things that we either are doing through a workaround or that we have long wanted to do. So that is kind of the...

JEFF

8:43 The three minute commercial, what questions and thoughts or comments from you? And...

MATT

8:50 That was excellent. I was doing everything I could to keep up with the notes here. So, so thank you for that. That's that's fantastic stuff.

JEFF

8:53 Yeah.

MATT

8:59 So a few questions that I have is you guys switched to vista for Construction?

--- Type of work ---

JEFF

9:05 Huh.

MATT

9:05 And I know the Construction arm of a helm group is significantly larger than service. That tends to be the case for a lot of companies.

JEFF

9:13 Huh.

MATT

9:14 So, is vista handling the Construction side of your business adequately or is there a burning need on that side as well?

--- Accounting integrations ---

JEFF

9:23 Yeah, no, they're very happy with Viewpoint and if it was up to the, if it was up to, the accounting heads really within the corporate part of our company, they would love to get that standardized around one platform. And it would be the Viewpoint platform. But unfortunately Viewpoint is just not.

JEFF

9:47 Not really, a good service software. And as much as what they would like to think that they are, they're just not, it doesn't make sense for me to switch my business over there. So we are a separate pandl, we do all of our counting sides for the most part through Viewpoint and then we just export our stuff over to them. And then they put it into for the company view just one, one top line view, but everything comes from perfect. We're over to them so that they can do their financials and report accordingly within their own organization. But yeah, they're very pleased with Viewpoint.

MATT

10:27 Excellent. Okay. Because I think perfect. Where I, from what, I don't know a lot about it, but I believe it can work for Construction, but you guys aren't using it that way.

--- Accounting integrations ends ---

JEFF

10:39 Yeah, no, it's no, yeah.

JEFF

10:44 They can talk to one another a little bit through some of the stuff and certainly they're you know, that's one of the things that BuildOps is touting that, you know, they can do, but really, it's just a matter of we're going to run our business through a dedicated service software.

--- Accounting integrations ---

JEFF

11:00 And then we will just export our data accordingly, whatever reporting functions that we need that way. Now, I'm sure with technology and with what we're at just modern day that export or that sharing of information within your guises platform or really anybody else, is gonna be.

JEFF

11:21 Will be simpler than what we're doing now and what we're doing now is not horrible.

MATT

11:26 Yeah. Okay. Well, that's good. And, you know, at some point we'll talk about it further. You seem like a sharp guy. So you probably already know this, and just based on the way that you guys are doing things now, you know, it... the accounting integration or, the relay of the service billing over to your accounting system, is.

--- Accounting integrations ends ---

MATT

11:54 Relatively unimportant in terms of driving more revenue in a service operation?

JEFF

12:00 Sure.

MATT

12:01 You know, he obviously, any way you can squeeze efficiency the better, but it's kinda like what you've already alluded to and all in one, or using vista service module would probably be the best integration to pass information over, you know, to the billing team, but you'd be doing it at, the sacrifice of your tech productivity, your customer service and, your ability to deliver a premium program for your customers. And that's a.

JEFF

12:32 Yeah, no. And, and that's a, yeah, that's yeah, that's the conversation that it would work it just where we would get gains the losses that we get. I'm not interested in and how we run our business. So.

MATT

12:46 Yeah, absolutely.

MATT

12:50 Well, we have customers on vista as well. And one of, our bigger customers is using ServiceTrade actually as a standalone from vista kind of doing something similar to what you're currently doing because what they found is that they can significantly grow their revenue with service trade and it justifies any manual steps to get that information into their accounting system.

--- Accounting integrations ---

MATT

13:17 But we also have people that are using more advanced methods to pass information over to vista as well. So, there's options there... but I'm glad to hear that. It sounds like and correct me if I'm wrong, the integration and the relay of information is not the most important part of, your software evaluation. Do I have that right?

JEFF

13:17 Huh.

--- Accounting integrations ends ---

JEFF

13:35 Yeah, no, we... yes, that's a correct statement. We're we're anticipating regardless of who we land with the exporting or sharing of information just from a reporting structure. Is, is almost the least of my concerns.

MATT

13:54 Excellent. Okay. That's that's good to know. That means that we're talking to, the right customer.

--- Purchase decision ---

MATT

14:00 Because yeah, in the grand scheme of things, that is not the most important. So I guess, in that case, that would be a good transition into what is the most important for you guys. What, what's your wind criteria? What are you gonna be looking at to feel confident that you've selected the right platform for you guys?

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

14:18 Yeah. And, and really again, I'll have a tendency to probably unjustly oversimplified things. But whatever technology we land on right now, the offerings the bar is not extremely high for us to go from perfect were to anybody else, right? And, and so perfect, where is adequate. But we've made it plenty of workaround.

--- Implementation and ongoing support ---

JEFF

14:41 So any service offering, is probably going to meet from a technical standpoint for us quite quickly so that it gets down to, you know, ease of use for our teams, the support that we have from a, from guys like you and from, you know, the folks that are we're gonna be interacting with all of the time that's really where the stuff is gonna get on at? Where do we feel most comfortable with our interactions, of stuff, you know, I think.

--- Implementation and ongoing support ends ---

JEFF

15:13 When I was at msa, I had about, I don't know, 10, 15, 20 minutes with BuildOps, and I spoke with a look and some of those guys, and you know... again, it's saying that, their product will work. I mean, it'll work just fine. It's a matter of the guys. And so we're having conversation. But one of the things he said, you know, we've got 240 programmers. We've got this. We're constantly doing this. We're constantly doing

that and part of that I care about. But immediately, what I want to do is buy a system that's gonna work. And then if we continue to add the niceties, the stuff that's outside of the core of what we're trying to do to run our business. I'm interested in that. But, you know, I'm not looking for, you know, super tech, you know, the fact that we have like I got 240 programmers that are always, I said, I suppose I should be impressed with that. But, you know, I'm looking to buy a service software and ready to rock and roll right now. And then we can continue to add and do some of those things. So, you know, basic block and tackle stuff that our, she are gonna be interested in for the seven locations. How are we dispatching? How are we entering service tickets? What's the ease of taking a project... from Northboundary, and pushing that through when we sell a PM agreement? You know, here's the tasking here's, this here's that, and it goes into now, you know, getting set up within the system. So then we task it for the year and, how are our reports looking with our estimated versus our actual in our performance? And are we able to do, the EPA stuff that we need to do? And are we able to do the callback stuff, for refrigerant leak? And, and are we, how, what kind of value added reports can we pull at the end of the year for a customer, buy equipment and buy, you know, much of it is how it gets entered in. It can only be as smart as the stuff that you do in the very beginning. But, you know, how is there a field quoting option for our guys? And then, you know, the accounting side of things. And Rick and his team, my coo will do a really good job of talking to you a little bit about just the tax jurisdictions that we jump all over the place from Wisconsin to Kansas, to Nebraska to Illinois, you know, all of those are real things and real headaches for those guys. We were trying to set up various customers in different states and when we're trying to do multiple billings with.

JEFF

17:38 You know, some different skill sets right now that, you know, it's as simple as that. So it's difficult right now just because of, how and where we're at, you know, when, we have to do some of that stuff more manually than what we like. So just a basic block and tackle of what's your schedule board look like? How is it easy to enter the stuff? How is it easy to transfer all the information from, you know, that's our business? We have spot calls, we have PM calls and we have a very robust... project side of our business as well. So, you know, that's gonna be something that I know will be better for us.

--- *ST app contracts and pricing* ---

JEFF

18:19 But when we, you know, our service side will U, we'll run projects which some people might refer to as like instruction at the higher margin stuff, and we might run anything that's over 40 hours, really falls into our project bucket. But we'll also do project stuff of, you know, we just sold one for 13,000,000 that we're executing within the service organization.

--- *Type of work* ---

JEFF

18:40 2,000,005 1,000,000, 7,000,000 Aia certified payroll. You know, is there tools that can help my project managers, with loading and scheduling, and billing and percent to complete and all that stuff? So that's as big of a component within our service world as managing entering and operating, our preventive maintenance base.

MATT

19:06 Okay. So some of your service projects are very much like new Construction projects with, the Aia billing schedule values and that stuff.

JEFF

19:13 Yeah. So yeah, really we're kind of a goofy organization and, you know, what if we are relationship based, right? That's not goofy. And we're owner direct. We don't like to do a lot of bidding back within service. So really, what our relationship drives the opportunities and many of our projects, if they can fall within the service required margins, then we will manage those within service and we will throw 40 guys on a project to do some of this. Maybe we'll get some Construction guys, and they'll do an inter company built to us and more a really that relationship and then managing the work. But yeah, we will have projects that have some of those requirements of very, you know, it sounds much like a Construction job. The only difference is when you look at the project margin, you can see that it's not a Construction job because it's relationship based and it's making plenty of money.

--- Type of work ends ---

JEFF

20:10 So, but how it's put together sometimes is very similar with that. So, yeah, we're very active, in that. So that'll be another component that we're gonna be looking at and hopefully pleasantly surprised with, you know, our project side of capabilities.

MATT

20:29 Yeah. And are you guys doing that AI billing and stuff for those larger service projects currently in perfect were?

--- Type of work ---

JEFF

20:36 Yeah. And, and in perfect where with the combination of some of the Construction side, but I, you know, again Rick would be able to shed a lot more light on it. But there's you know, a lot of, you know, we're doing the billing of all the projects through perfect E, but a lot of that is more manual based on percentage completed and the tools that are within that perfect where system really are not very friendly for running, you know, that type of application. And so we just kind of created it ourselves a little bit to.

MATT

21:10 Okay. So.

MATT

21:13 And I believe in transparency as well. I know that BuildOps is claim to fame is being able to do both new Construction and service in their platform. My understanding is they are Construction first service. Second, they tend to be stronger on the Construction side of things. We have a little bit of a different playbook where

we are focused exclusively on commercial service contractors and, we have the ability to manage what we call service projects or small projects. And that's usually your retro swamp outs, change out owner direct projects.

JEFF

21:26 Huh.

JEFF

21:49 Huh.

MATT

21:56 That, that don't require things like Aia billing at charts and stuff.

--- ST app contracts and pricing ---

MATT

22:00 But in service are, you can, you know, track and manage a budget, manage change orders, you can do Progress billing and all of that stuff. It just doesn't have, the heavier Construction capabilities like the Aia billing and some of the things that you mentioned.

JEFF

22:17 Sure. Yeah. I think if you spend time with Rick and we, you know, perfect where it doesn't either.

--- ST app contracts and pricing ends ---

JEFF

22:21 So we're pretty effective at it, but I think it'll be part of the discussion as to okay, here's. Here's one of the other three big pillars that we operate within our service group. And here's how we're currently doing it. And and then that's where that conversation will lead itself with Rick and that, you know, accounting, and some of the project management team of okay, a, you know, there's not gonna be anything that, you know, I would be very surprised if throughout the entire conversation, somebody say shit perfect or it's got that. You guys don't have that. I don't think you're gonna see that. I think you might find that where we're doing this, maybe it's best that we continue to do it in our workaround or that'd be cool. That's something that we can drop out of. But the conversation, will, you know, seek its own level when it comes to when it comes to that, you know, really, you know, I like the service trade stuff that I've seen. I like the idea of how close to Northboundary, it is and that that's going to continue to be supported. So that's a leg up, in that regard. And like I said, I'm not worried that anybody that we talked to isn't gonna have the capabilities to take care of what we need to do. It's gonna be E, like I said at the outset, it's gonna be tied very closely to the individuals and the support and just to feel we get from the teams when the teams are interacting. I don't want, you know, at the end of this, I don't want to tell my teams. This is what we're doing. I want my team to come back to me and say, this is what we need to do, you know, with the selection of who it is, that they're dealing with, you know?

MATT

23:55 Yeah, that's smart at the end of the day, you're looking for a long term partnership. This isn't something that you want to taste test every year and be constantly overhauling your system.

JEFF

24:04 I'm hoping that I'm E, I'm getting old. I'm like in my mid fifties, I'm hoping this is one of my last service softwares that I've got that I've got to push through. I just did Northboundary, I got that done. We've had perfect where like I said, for 27 years, software change outs are painful and that's gonna be part of the discussion too. Is what level of support when we start trying to crack open our perfect, our database that's obviously 20 years old and probably going to look and feel 20 years old and some things and how we're going to merge everything over. And, you know, do all that, and much of that that's where, you know, that's where this will be one for us in a lot of regard is, you know, how long are you guys looking to do?

JEFF

24:46 You know, the migration of it, and who have you done this with and who's your partners that, you know, that we can talk to and do some of that sort of stuff. So, you know, this isn't a matter of if, we're going now, it's us and quite honestly, you'd mentioned transparency to the only people that I'm talking to are you guys and BuildOps, so that's it. Yeah.

MATT

25:10 Okay. Well, as honestly, I mean, I'm pious but that's probably the two you should be talking to. There's a lot of them out there, but none of them.

JEFF

25:17 There's a lot. Yeah. Coins was trying to make a run here on some stuff and some other things. And, and, you know, the nice thing is that we're so connected with.

JEFF

25:29 You know, msca is one of one of the groups. I was the chairman of that organization a 1,000,000 years ago, and we've got, you know, just such good partners, and good network of different people that are doing different things within the service world. And so we're we all talk and so we, you know, we know who's got what, and where it's working and where it's not working.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

25:48 And, and you know, some of that stuff. So, you know, we could probably expand that conversation. But honestly, like I said, if we land on either one of them from a technical standpoint, and from an ability of, are we better than what we were with perfect where I could make that decision blindfolded and I'd be right. So now, it's going to get down to the people and the relationships, and the ease of use.

MATT

26:09 Yeah, I love that. Well said. Okay. Well, it's not a matter of if it's a matter of when, so that's another good transition to timeline. Have you guys as a team, a timeline for making a decision, an ideal, go live.

JEFF

26:21 Huh.

JEFF

26:23 Yeah.

JEFF

26:30 Yeah. So it is right now, the first step is the step that we're gonna do with you guys when you come in next week is just start to meet with our dispatch group or one of our heads of dispatch, I guess I should say.

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

26:43 And then Rick and one of my vice presidents that's in sales, that touches some of the spots and that's a smaller group to just kind of get the flavor in the taste to kind of be able to share. Rick will give you a lot of nutrition down will give you a lot of nutrition. The others of us should be good listeners and we'll see exactly where we're at with that. And then moving forward, I don't wanna have that stall. I'm not in a hurry to be bad, but I'm also, you know, there is no great time to swing at this. So we're just gonna go ahead and obviously, I would like to have something... you know, for practical purposes unless logistics start to kick me in the ask this year for sure.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

27:23 And so now it's just a matter of, you know, are we looking at a three, four, five month integration? But we'd be looking at a two month type thing. What, you know, those are gonna be the conversations that we're a, once you guys understand or learn more in depth of what we've got, you know, I'm thinking you guys would come back and say, yeah, okay.

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

27:42 So, you know, here's, what we think it would take to do this or to do that. And maybe it's a staged approach with some offices and we're running double platforms for a little while or something. But yeah, I'd like to do something in 24.

MATT

27:58 Okay. Well, and, if we reverse engineer this, so you're absolutely right when we meet with you new, we learn more about you guys. We'll be able to give you sharper clarification in, you know, a more accurate estimate of what the list will be and what the appropriate timeline is to expect.

JEFF

28:18 Huh.

MATT

28:19 And that's a big question to answer because if you get a company telling, you know, one of two things, it should be a red flag.

--- Implementation and ongoing support ---

MATT

28:28 So, if they say, yeah, no, we'll have you up and running in two months, that's a red flag. If, if they say, well, how long do you want to take? We'll take as long as you need. That's another red flag because nobody wants the never ending implementation where they don't get to the ROI piece implementations are exhausting you guys have money to go make. So, we pride ourselves on having this down to a science and we've onboarded customers bigger than you guys.

JEFF

28:29 Sure.

JEFF

28:38 Yeah.

JEFF

28:46 Yes.

--- Purchase decision ---

MATT

28:58 So, we'll be able to make some recommendations and give you a good timeline. Now an organization of your size, right off the bat. I will safely assume that you likely won't have it fully implemented in less than six months. It's not saying it's not possible, but that's a good place to start.

JEFF

29:13 MM, HMM...

--- Pricing ---

JEFF

29:18 Sure.

MATT

29:20 So, considering that I would, you know, let's say you want something by 2024. So we'll say if you're good, you know, say, your go live date is December before, you know, 2025 you know, backtrack six months from that, and you're looking at, you know, beginning implementation around mayish in that area.

JEFF

29:43 MMHMM. Uhhuh...

--- Implementation and ongoing support ---

MATT

29:45 And I don't know the way it works for us is it's usually four to six weeks before your implementation begins, is when there, there need to be a signature, there's kind of like a buffer period. So, all I had to say if we first engineer this, you'd likely want to have a decision on whatever platform you go with.

--- Purchase decision ---

MATT

30:03 I would think by the end of Q1, sometimes by the end of March to have you in position to begin your implementation sometime, you know, April, or early may.

--- Implementation and ongoing support ---

JEFF

29:56 Huh.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

30:14 Yeah. In, in my mind, IO, none of that would concern me with that time frame. It's it's really from a decision making process.

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

30:24 You know, you guys will interact with our team. We'll interact with the team and then, you know, that's the beauty of privately held companies that have been around forever with our flexibility, and that's just a matter of me just saying, yeah, we're gonna go this way and then we just went that way.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

30:40 So, you know, it, that won't take long, but, yeah, by the end of March, I think that's a timeline that I would also share that I think is doable for a decision making.

MATT

30:41 Yeah.

MATT

30:51 Excellent. And so Jeff, you mentioned a couple of names here. You mentioned, I, what's Rick's last name?

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

30:57 Rick, is Rick setter, steder, so, Rick is...

MATT

31:03 Ster?

JEFF

31:05 Yeah, steder. Yeah. And he's been on some of the emails back and forth. So, Rick is my general manager, but he's runs all of my accounting functions and has the accounting team that reports to him. So he is...

MATT

31:10 Order?

JEFF

31:26 Yeah, he's very much about the numbers and the billings and the, you know, much smarter guy than I am. That is, he spends a bunch of time in spreadsheet. So he loves all that stuff. So.

MATT

31:37 Yes, perfect. Okay. And then you mentioned your coo?

JEFF

31:43 The person Rick setter is, yeah, yeah, technical title, is a general manager for service, but yeah, Rick is the one that handles all, the accounting side of our house and then down Gardner runs my dispatch teams for all the locations. And so, she'll be sitting in on the meeting.

MATT

31:44 We...

JEFF

32:11 Sue smalley.

JEFF

32:14 Will be in on the meeting and she, she's been with us quite a while and she is... really kind of the, a very good resource to have for when PM agreements are sold. She's the one that would enter them. She's the one that's doing the renewal.

--- Accounting integrations ---

JEFF

32:33 She's the one that's doing, you know, a lot of the customerfacing type stuff within the current software format. She's the one that's customized and built just about every canvas app that we have for different applications. And so, you know, that'll be part of the stuff that she's listening to see what can be, what can go away that we have worked around or customized, that may be a current offering within service rates platform. So she'll be there. And then Patty crippendorf is my vice president.

--- Accounting integrations ends ---

JEFF

33:10 What's that? Yeah, kri? Yeah, krippendorf.

MATT

33:11 Man help with that one.

JEFF

33:22 And she, I, yeah, that one's got all the letters you can buy all. She's she is the vice president of service. She comes from a strong Construction background.

MATT

33:22 That's a fun one. I like.

JEFF

33:36 But yeah, she, she's been with the company 30 38 years or something like that. But when you see here, you'll be like 38 years and she's like 53 or something. So... she is very knowledgeable on everything that the project side of things and, is well versed within all aspects of what we're doing from an operations and just how we would bring it all together. And again, like I said, one of one of the big advantages that, you know, we've kind of done all the heavy lifting for the sales side of this component. And so we're pretty happy there. So this would be less about, you know, how are we booking our work or selling or estimating or doing any of that. Now, we're just talking about how we take care of it when we have it, you know?

MATT

33:46 No...

MATT

34:18 Yeah.

JEFF

34:23 That should be.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

34:24 I believe that's the group that I've had. And then yeah, that should be, that should be the, a, the main players. And then as we continue to peel this back a little bit, we a, and as needed, we can get deeper with more aspects of account folks if needed or more aspects, of dispatch folks as needed. But for the most part down and Rick and paddy and sue will be representative of all my teams throughout the whole thing. So there should be plenty of nutrition there.

MATT

34:24 Excellent.

MATT

34:54 Yeah, no, that sounds good. And again, I appreciate, the background on those stakeholders now, a, have they been involved in other software evaluations? I know you did Northboundary kind of looking to get an idea of what your procurement process typically looks like. I know you got it down, to BuildOps and ServiceTrade at some point we're gonna go in, and do you know an initial demo of everything?

JEFF

35:01 Yeah. And.

MATT

35:22 You know, where does it go from there for you guys?

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

35:25 Yeah, that's a good question as to how it flows once it's in the stream before I get into that, I should throw one other name at you that will be there, Maria, dirking, die dierking. And so Maria is... again pretty well versed in and, you know, she used to be my general manager from my Chicago office. She now works pretty heavily, in our energy administrative sector for, you know, any cost savings or anything that we are doing very active in Northboundary, almost one of the key administration platform, but would also be sitting in on those meetings to listen to see again what, you know, how can we harness some of the horse power that you guys may have into how we're currently doing some stuff or tracking some stuff or doing some of that? So, she'll be,

should be another resource that's been with our company for a number of years and should be sitting in on it as well.

MATT

36:29 Excellent.

JEFF

36:30 Yeah. From a flow standpoint...

JEFF

36:34 I think that's your question and how would I, you know, what I mean? Are you asking what steps it needs to do in order to be, to become a real or?

MATT

36:44 Yeah. So, so it helps us to kind of map this out, you know, that way we can be supportive as a resource for you guys throughout your performance process versus, you know, two shifts passing in the night and, you know, making suggestions that are irrelevant to, your needs. So, for example, some companies will go through, you know, like a functional evaluation where they'll look at the platforms. Maybe they'll use scorecards to score it, compare notes. And then it might undergo a technical evaluation from an IT department.

JEFF

37:05 Seven.

MATT

37:21 You know, so I just was hoping to get a better understanding of what your evaluation process looks like for technology purposes.

JEFF

37:27 Yeah. So again, we're gonna move it pretty quickly once we get there and we've been someone in the game of reviewing and researching, you know, in order to get it down to these two with other folks that use ServiceTrade with other folks that use BuildOps, with other people, that, you know, are active in the market that we're talking to. And so, you know, we will.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

37:52 The, the key decision makers are the folks that are gonna give me feedback... Rick myself Patty, you know, the group that you're meeting with is really going to...

JEFF

38:04 You know, have the interaction with you guys and then start to touch and feel and kick the tires a little bit with this stuff.

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

38:12 To your point about an it group really, there won't be, I mean, eventually, obviously, they've got to be heavily involved when we start to bring some of the stuff in, but that's usually a catch up procedure that you know, we haven't had. Nor do I think that this would be an issue with, you know, that it's gonna be cumbersome or that they need to sign off on any of it. Their, their job is just to support and implement what we buy. So, I'm O, if I had some big concerns about, hey, do we think that we can handle this or support this platform or do any of that? They would be more at the table but I don't have any of those concerns so much. So, their job would be to, you know, certainly, we would get with them and say, hey, we're thinking about doing it in this timeframe but their job is just, to allocate and push resources to us to support us to do that stuff. So, you know, it probably sounds over simplified, but really the folks that you're gonna meet with are the ones that you've got to win over from the standpoint of the product and the relationship.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

39:11 And, then, you know, they'll get with me. We'll have our discussion. There won't be a matrix of scoring. There won't be, any of that. There'll be some just some good conversations. And then... I'll pick one.

MATT

39:30 Simple enough.

JEFF

39:30 Yeah, yeah.

MATT

39:33 Well, I like that. I think probably the last question, I really have for you before I cut you loose, be very generous with your time by the way. And I appreciate that.

--- ST app contracts and pricing ---

MATT

39:43 Is, have you guys set aside any sort of budget for software investment?

JEFF

39:50 Specifically to a dollar amount. I do not have a budget. I've got some frame of reference that, you know, it's gonna be more than I want to spend, but, you know, we'll us, we will do what we have to do.

--- ST app contracts and pricing ends ---

JEFF

40:06 And so that's the other component. I mean, we are in the service business and we're in the relationship business. And so the stuff that we speak is also the stuff that we have to listen to. So price will play a factor. It won't be the factor in this.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

40:22 You know, we have to move forward with it. Obviously, it has to be competitive for what is out there and in the market. And so that's something that we'll look at, but that's it's not a concern you know, from a, is it earmarked and do we have the money to kind of do something like this? We're just at that point to where now we need to make that decision. You know, this would have been something that we were probably gonna move into a little slower. Honestly, we would have taken this on over the a, I'm sorry, over the next couple of years. But with E, with the BuildOps acquisition of.

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

41:02 Perfect. Where, and then the service trade acquisition of Northboundary, everybody picking which wagon they wanted to ride on. It's been kind of fun just watching the software guys jump around a little bit and say, well, if we get this, then we get these customers. And if we get this, we probably get this market share. So everybody has now picked who they want and they've got what they've got. And so now you guys all have your guns cocked and say, okay, here we go. Now, do we pick up, and deploy your business strategies that effectively to say, well, obviously we want to go scoop up all E, all the Northboundary guys for sure. We want to get those. And, and BuildOps was like, okay, we bought perfect were just for the sole purpose of try to scoop up those guys. So you guys are doing all what is very much expected. And so that's pushed my time frame probably ahead by one to two years because it just became actionable, right? So the two places that I had both got acquired by software companies that I knew I was gonna have to deal with sooner or later. So that's where we're at.

MATT

41:03 Perfect.

MATT

41:55 Okay. So it sounds like we've got to shoot out coming up.

JEFF

42:05 Yeah, yeah, exactly. Exactly. So, yeah, for me right now, I would say that, you know, if there was any advantage and I would lean more towards ServiceTrade but that's me because I like, the plug and play with Northboundary, and I'm probably, you know, some folks would tell me that, you know, really that's more of an emotional type of thing, Jeff Northboundary, you know, if it's BuildOps, they're gonna be like absolutely, we could support that. No problem will push it blah blah

blah, they give me that spiel and we go backwards from there. And, and so, and they're probably not totally wrong on that either, but, I like the idea of keeping it under one roof with the folks that I'm working on. But really, I think this will be the third or fourth time all underscore, it's all gonna come down to the final decision on. I doubt I'm gonna be like I need to buy this for this technical aspect of it. I doubt that I'm gonna be in that position. It's gonna be more, these are the people that I want to work with.

MATT

42:57 MM.

MATT

43:03 Yeah. And I love that perspective. It's... it's very big picture. It's very long term because, if you get into bed with the wrong partner, you're not just, you know, usually you're talking about longer term contracts. So the buyers remorse, is gonna be extensive. It's not gonna be a couple of months of it. So that's really?

JEFF

43:24 Yep.

MATT

43:26 You know, like I said, if I had to kind of compare the offerings without over generalizing. Like I said, before BuildOps, they're claim to fame. What tends to be attractive for their customers is the all in one aspect because every contractor is looking for that one mythologic unicorn that can do everything in one roof.

JEFF

43:48 MM, HMM.

MATT

43:50 They're stronger on the project side, than the service side ServiceTrade.

--- *Customer engagement* ---

MATT

43:55 We are heavily focused on, you know, helping sell maintenance contracts, execute on maintenance contracts, optimizing the pull-through work. And then a really big part of our playbook is the customer experience, how you guys interact with your customers to provide a premium program that helps, you know, not only go out, and sell the best customers in your market, but retain them for the long term and take more money from a better portfolio of customers that's more our playbook. So.

JEFF

44:09 Yeah.

JEFF

44:24 Yeah.

--- Customer engagement ends ---

JEFF

44:26 Do you, a, is Russ bars in your guys's camp from hers mechanical? Is he on your board by chance? Yeah, yeah, Russ and I are very good friends. So... Russ was the chairman of msa the year before I was chairman of msa and so, yeah, Russ and, I just spoke to them last week. So, so it's kind of again, it's fun for me to watch, you know, the service trade. I believe you guys are probably with Russ pretty tight and maybe even back with Jamie, Lois from out in California from a Reed. And I know Jamie really well. So those, that's some of the research that we, you know, like I said, we were very active in stuff and then BuildOps went and plugged up woody Wood all who was also past chairman. So, a lot of, you know, a lot of, the folks just trying to, I love watching people just trying to position and do stuff. I'm like hell, Russ is on the damn board. You know, he's probably got a little stipe and that he's getting paid to tried to be a service as our service trade kind of spokesperson. And so, yeah, I'm in regular conversation, with us for sure. And Jamie just retired. So, I saw her at msa this year a little bit. But yeah, a lot of those folks. So those a, those are all key contacts that we're talking to. I respect to Russ a lot. He's he's a super sharp guy. He's pretty much.

MATT

44:31 Yeah, he is, you can.

MATT

45:00 Yeah, you know, her too.

--- Dispatch ---

JEFF

45:52 Sold and retired and done some of that stuff. His business albeit a little bit smaller, you know, I'm interested if you get, if you get a nod from Russ that's the it's usually something that I'll listen to as well.

MATT

46:04 Wow. That's awesome. So, have you talked to Russ about service yet?

JEFF

46:06 Yeah.

--- Dispatch ends ---

JEFF

46:08 Yeah, I did. Yeah. So, he liked the way that, you know, he said some of the implementation in the beginning but he thought that it worked out well. Obviously, he was very pleased with it. Overall. There were a few bumps and we talked about what those were, and some of that. So, yeah, I know we're very active with conversation and then after our guys would meet them, we were gonna compare some notes. We might even do a little trip up to big rapids and go see rest when it's warmer to see what's going on so him and I can do efficient and then send my dispatchers to go talk to each other and my county people to go talk to each other. So we'll see about that. Yeah.

MATT

46:43 Well, the good thing about having a close relationship with Russ is he's a good one to talk to about that after sales support, you know, the stuff that you care about, what that longterm partnership looks like.

JEFF

46:55 Yep.

MATT

46:58 Because, I know BuildOps is a newer company. I think they're about half hour age.

--- Dispatch ---

MATT

47:02 So I don't know what kind of track record they have for their customers to speak to. I'm sure they've got some people for you guys to talk to, but I'm glad that, you got Russ as a resource?

JEFF

47:03 Huh.

JEFF

47:09 Sure.

JEFF

47:12 Yeah, no. Ross is a good friend there. Yeah.

--- Dispatch ends ---

MATT

47:16 Awesome. Well, I don't want to hold you much longer. So I guess what a good note to end on is really next week is introductions and kind of an extended discovery like you said, I wanna, we wanna get to know your team. We want to get to know their individual needs.

--- Purchase decision ---

MATT

47:32 You give me a lot of good information here and I think I'll be able to supplement that nicely, with input from them as well. We, we might have some time to show you a couple of things, but we weren't really planning on making it a full deep dive demo. Is, are you on that same page?

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

47:48 Yeah, I would say, you know, we start, you know, if we could, I would say let's start at like 10 o'clock you know, have you guys to our office whenever you get there, you're welcome. But I would say the meeting have that kick off at 10 o'clock and then really just a discovery, talk to some people, just interview them, you know, as we sit around the table, what, what's important to you guys? A, what's working well with what you have, what is not working well. And they on, you know, they're gonna dump a bunch of stuff out so that you guys can just get smarter, you know, the last thing that I'd want if somebody come in and saying, hey, you know, here's a demo with all the ship before you know anything about us. So, IU, I like what you're doing there.

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

48:24 IU, I would say that we for sure want to get something lined up that, you know, even if it's a snippet and after lunch type thing or something. So they can just kind of get a little flavour, for what that just some very basic demo for dispatch and maybe for accounting and some of that sort of stuff. So that if people can kinda, you know, walk them through if they've got a few questions or maybe you'll uncover some of, you know, do your morning interview and then have a chance to, you know, compare your notes during lunch break and then afterwards say, hey, let's show you just a few of these things. This is not intended to be full scale at this point but, you know, just based on what we heard this morning, here are a couple of those things we can address, and, you know, we're gonna just work our way through it. We, you know, we're gonna be, we're gonna be in a hurry but we're not in, you know, we're not in a great hurry. So we want to make sure that we do this right? And give everybody, the chance to be heard is more important right off the bat then just looking at product without knowing how we tick. So.

MATT

48:22 Yes.

MATT

48:41 Absolutely.

MATT

49:29 Yeah, no, that's perfect. That's that's what we have in mind because of course, the next step assuming all that goes well, which I have no, no concerns about, is I would recommend scheduling, you know, a full day on site demo where I can bring out, you know, my experts, and resources and we can do a deep dive and go down a bunch of rabbit holes and, you know, really kind of bullet test the platform so that it stands up to your expectations.

JEFF

49:52 Yep.

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

49:57 Yeah, yeah, no. Everybody knows this is just one of many in the beginning and it's just an intro, and it's as important. Like I said, and you agreed that, you know, they're coming to interview us so that they can hear about, what we are doing, how we're currently doing it?

--- Purchase decision ---

JEFF

50:11 What's important? What do we wish was better? What could we wish was the same? So on and so forth? So we're I think we're on the same page for this first meeting. It's just more of a get to know an intro.

MATT

50:22 I love it. I love it. Well, very good, Jeff. I really appreciate you taking the time to connect with me here. I think this is really helpful in terms of positioning us for success next week. If you think of anything else that I should know or have any other questions between now and then please let me know. Otherwise, I really look forward to shaking hands next week at your office.

--- Purchase decision ends ---

JEFF

50:45 Yeah. Where are you coming in from?

MATT

50:48 So, I'm coming in from Raleigh. I'm gonna be in town for a HR in Chicago.

JEFF

50:52 Okay.

JEFF

50:55 Okay. That's right. So you're gonna be out there? Maybe I think you said you were gonna pop in on ams or you might have had something going with those guys. So, yeah, I look on the map and see from Chicago to freeport is a little bit of a jaunt. You know, some folks in the old days thought that they would just land in on hair while swinging by over and see you and I'm like, yeah, in about an hour and a half, you will. So, you know, from Chicago to Rockford, and then Rockford is about 40 minutes into freeport small town, just kind of where they started. And that's one of where we're at with, you know, we've got offices in Chicago and all over the rest of the planet. But for this part, it's all housed out of freeport. So, yeah, we should be good. And like I said, well, well, I'm gonna give people a chance to clear the deck in the morning with some of the stuff they're doing. So, you know, anytime you walk in the building, you're welcome, just ask for me and we'll get you set up in a conference room with some stuff, but I'm gonna tell everybody we'll plan on the meeting starting around 10 o'clock...

MATT

51:14 Yeah.

MATT

51:53 Yeah, that's perfect. And that's what we got on, the calendar that'll give us that'll give us plenty of time to get coffee and make the track. So, I think that sounds like a plan.

JEFF

52:00 Yeah.

JEFF

52:02 All right. I look forward to it. I appreciate the follow up in, the pre game.

MATT

52:07 Likewise, Jeff. Thank you so much. I hope you have a great weekend. All right. Bye now.

JEFF

52:10 Yeah, you do the same. Thank you. Take care. Bye bye.

The End