"We exist to transform the way people work together. Effectively, we believe that the collaboration solutions available today are limiting and cumbersome. To address this, we created Bluescape, a persistent cloud based workspace, accessible from various devices that leverage the best of all methods of collaboration, enabling idea and concept creation through workflow execution, all within a single location. If you think about how people ideate and collaborate today and you look at an actual physical space itself, you will see white boards, dry erase markers, pinned images, charts and spreadsheets. Bluescape takes that experience into a virtual environment where teams can ideate in a way that is easy, natural and immersive and where those ideas are captured and preserved."

- Scott Poulton

Bluescape
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you simply do not share or you lose the benefit of the participation of others on your project, which is not ideal. We believe we have created the digital environment to truly enable people to work much more naturally and effectively avoiding all of the frustrations and roadblocks to true collaboration.

**CEOCFO: What have you come up with at Bluescape to make it a real collaborative experience?**

**Mr. Poulton:** We have created a space where you can ideate and collaborate naturally from many locations and devices while leveraging the benefits of a physical environment. Basically, we have created an intuitively designed workspace that empowers people to work the way they want to work. It also enables individuals to tap into the natural processes they are used to for ideation. For example, in the workspace, individuals and teams can simultaneously use note cards, create written content, pin and place images, bring in spreadsheets and charts, and perform research within the environment. Moreover, all of this can be done while connecting to the workspace from different devices. This enables remote individuals and teams to connect into the same experience, without having to be in the same room.

By doing that, we are bringing together the best of both the physical and digital world in a simplistic way, so that people do not have to be scared of the technology. Many people today avoid using collaboration technologies because deployment can seem too technical. As a result, they try to leverage some of the more simplistic methodologies to communicate – video conferencing, document sharing, email threads. You see a great deal of collaboration technologies that only leverage a fraction of what they are capable of doing because they are complicated to use and still don’t allow teams to truly collaborate simultaneously.

**CEOCFO: What was the challenge to putting it together and why have others not been successful in doing so?**

**Mr. Poulton:** In some ways you will find that people have talked about trying to do things like this before, but the technology just was not available at the time. The concept of Bluescape is unique, because it originated from our parent company, Haworth, which is one of the world’s largest interior solutions and workspace effectiveness providers. Through their research on workspace strategy and the impact of space on human performance, they were able to capture a different perspective on what makes people productive within and between rooms. We were able to harness the frustrations people have with their physical workspace and look at how the tools and technology can help alleviate these common workplace pains.

**CEOCFO: Who is using your services today? Is there a common thread among the users?**

**Mr. Poulton:** The common thread is that our users all have strong visualization needs within their process or industry, or work on complex projects or issues. Often these users have teams that are geographically dispersed. We work with teams across many different industries because what we are doing is creating a more effective and engaging way for people to communicate with one another. At the end of the day, that is what collaboration and creation really is. Bluescape is used by many different industries already, including technology, manufacturing, hospitality, higher education, automotive, financial services, architecture, engineering and design firms, biotech, aerospace and entertainment. As
you can see, the technology can add a great deal of value across different industries because by improving how teams work together and creating a single location for people to be effective at what they do, we save companies time and money. Further, it provides them with a competitive advantage, because if they can create ideas and bring those ideas to market faster, those are things that will be sustainable to them.

**CEOCFO: How do people find Bluescape?**
Mr. Poulton: Like any small company, you try to create awareness. We also leverage our parent company, as they have a large direct sales organization that is already heavily engrained in the Fortune 500, and they give us a great deal of exposure. We also do digital ads, as well as our own direct sales force that is out there trying to leverage our message every day in the marketplace.

**CEOCFO: When you are first talking with a company about Bluescape, do they believe that it is as easy as you are presenting or is there some skepticism?**
Mr. Poulton: Typically, if we are just talking to them without the benefit of having them in the Bluescape environment, they do tend to be skeptical. This is because generally people are frustrated with the experiences that they have had with other collaboration approaches. When you mention collaboration people tend to roll their eyes. However, we've noticed that when we get people into a Bluescape workspace, whether it is through a remote experience or in front of our large scale visualization walls, people really get it. After the first engagement they understand the power of what Bluescape can do and how natural the experience really is. They see how it can benefit their organizations.

**CEOCFO: Gartner considers you a Cool Vendor. Would you tell us about the recognition?**
Mr. Poulton: It is great that Gartner recognizes us as a Cool Vendor. Every startup organization looks for validation in the marketplace so they can confirm that what they are doing resonates with their target audience, important stakeholders, and industry influencers. We were thrilled with the recognition.

**CEOCFO: What is better or different today with your offering than when it first started?**
Mr. Poulton: This month we are celebrating the first year since the release of 1.0. Since the launch, we have been working on making the product more scalable and polished for the enterprise. We are now at a point where we have reached a certain level of scale in our development capabilities so that we can add in new functionalities. Ultimately, we are moving toward developing Bluescape into an enterprise-scale platform.

**CEOCFO: What were one or two of the biggest technological challenges?**
Mr. Poulton: That is a great question. The biggest challenge that we have had so far was when we first sat down to think through the architecture. We had to come up with a solution to scale Bluescape from a simple and intuitive mobile-based application, all the way through to a fully integrated enterprise capability. This would allow the opportunity to bridge the solution for mobile devices and have the same experience in a developed corporate environment and large-scale wall as well. It was important to have all of those technologies work well together in real time with the performance requirements that are necessary. For example,
those situations when people are all collaborating and everything is being seen instantaneously in different rooms or different locations. That was probably the biggest challenge; the scalability of it all.

CEOCFO: What might be different a year from now at Bluescape?
Mr. Poulton: We are going to be moving to a platform where we will be in a position to have many other people working on and with our product. What we have created is a very simple solution for people to ideate and work on; something where we will have many partners developing very specific applications that will work within our environment. We want to incorporate a great deal of tools and solutions people need that are specific to their businesses or industries.

CEOCFO: What is the key to staying on top of the new technologies?
Mr. Poulton: There are two things. First, we will maintain a very close relationship with our parent company, because they are always in midst of new research and insight around how people work more effectively together. The second thing is that we have great people here. We have extremely strong and creative technology-focused people that are always looking for the next thing. We are always doing research on hardware, software, or anything that could disrupt what we are trying to do, so that we can stay ahead of the game.

CEOCFO: Put it together for our readers. Why pay attention to Bluescape?
Mr. Poulton: Bluescape really is the way people will work in the future. As the world becomes more global, we have to cross the bridge of culture and language. The way in which Bluescape approaches communication is the way in which work is done most intuitively. It is the most effective way for people to work more efficiently together and create a better connection between people, organizations, and their information.

CEOCFO: What might people miss when they first look at Bluescape?
Mr. Poulton: When people first look at Bluescape they sometimes misinterpret us as a hardware company, when in fact we are not. We are a software company, and while we do provide large scale displays, they are just one medium through which people can connect to the Bluescape workspace. What we are trying to do is create an ecosystem for organizations that are distributed to be effective and we do that through software.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine