

## ConnectALL Brings a Human Touch to Value Stream Management While Solving Work Flow Issues



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**Interview conducted by:**  
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**CEOCFO: Mr. Knight, what is ConnectALL, LLC?**

**Mr. Knight:** ConnectALL is a company that is dedicated to helping organizations keep higher levels of traceability, visibility and predictability in their software delivery value stream. We help companies be more effective at developing and delivering software to their customers. In today's world that is so important, because every company is a software company in some regard. Everything needs to be at done at the speed of delivering a software, and everyone has got to be able to self-serve in their environment.

For instance, if you are a bank you need to have the right applications and right tools so that customers can deposit money into their accounts. All of that centers around software. Your employees need to be able to self-serve with their HR needs and to be able to self-serve if they want time off. Your partners want to be able to self-serve, meaning to log on, get an application and apply for things. The world meeting and getting together is not the same anymore and software is going to start to run the world and serve our needs on an even bigger basis.

**CEOCFO: Would a company turn to you for a specific problem they are having? Would someone turn to you and say, "Preventatively, keep us on our toes or keep us up to date?" How does a typical engagement work?**

**Mr. Knight:** From us it is all different pieces since we interact with three different types of companies from three different types of customers. Sometimes it is the customers that just want to automate simple pieces of how to develop its software. Sometimes it is the CIO that does not have visibility into how they are developing software and they need the metrics, the analytics and the measurements to make sure that what you are developing and designing aligns to his desired business outcomes. Therefore, it all depends on the company and what they are trying to solve.

Many times, customers come to us with simple needs and then they realize the value they are getting so they want to integrate their tools. We are seeing a global trend where analytics are becoming more and more important. There is a great need for the ability to see what is happening across the whole life cycle of software when there are multiple solutions and tools being used to manage those in one place. What I call that is getting visibility into the black box of IT and software development. There are many customers coming to us for that reason.

**CEOCFO: Is Value Stream Management what used to be called data analytics or business intelligence? What exactly is your niche?**

**Mr. Knight:** That is a great question to ask, not that all of your other questions have not been great. However, that is especially important because people are going to ask, "What is this space, what is Value Stream Management (VSM)." At

ConnectALL, we are one of the leaders in this Value Stream Management today, but many are still trying to understand what it is. We are still in that education phase of the development of this market. Yes, it could be data analytics, but the analysts are saying, and I am agreeing, Value Stream Management is about three fundamental things:

First, its ability to SEE the work. If you look at making a widget in manufacturing, you can see the products being built. You can see the pieces going on, the bolts going in and things flowing and being put together. This is Value Stream Management in manufacturing, because you can see the work. However, delivery of IT and Software is not the same. It is all bits and bytes. One of the things that people are coming to us around Value Stream Management is to be able to see the work, to map the flow of work, map the value stream, see work and how it flows through their organization.

Now that I can see the work and the solutions used to track the work through business requests coming into IT through ITSM solutions such as ServiceNow or Jira, I can see the requests are most likely broken down across different tools for delivery. Over the last few decades, there has been an explosion of tools to support software development and delivery so work is broken down across a lot of different solutions. By mapping the value stream, we can now see where the work is broken down and in which tool creating a visualize of the flow of work in the value stream. Now we can measure it, analyze it and capture real time metrics to help improve the flow of work.

The ability to know what my team velocity is, the flow of the work, that's important. In manufacturing, you see that by seeing the flow of the parts and the flow of the work orders. However, in IT you cannot and in software delivery you cannot. Therefore, with these analytics and seeing the things flow based on their artifacts, I can get that information and make decisions.

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Now that I can see it and now that I can finally measure it, I can automate, orchestrate and start to improve it. Value Stream Management itself allows me to see, measure and automate. That is really what it is all about.

We offer a great value stream measurement tool. However, most of what I talked about is actually the human factor. It is taking these old lean manufacturing principals and applying them to IT and providing the tools to see, measure and automate so businesses can make good decisions on how to develop software.

**CEOCFO: *When someone turns ConnectALL, do they know what they want? Do they know what they should be looking for? Are there different solutions available?***

**Mr. Knight:** People turn to us for many things at ConnectALL. However, when they are turning to us and looking for consulting and understanding about how to implement a value stream strategy in their organization, many times that is more like education data and consulting services. Then, when it comes to getting the analytics, doing the metrics, giving those views and doing the automation piece, that is the value. Therefore, they turn to us to get education about the space and then to get the solution that allows for them to see, measure and automate.

**CEOCFO: *How have you been able to make your solutions user friendly? How do you keep it rich with possibility, but also easy?***

**Mr. Knight:** I do a little bit of UI stuff, so it is about maintaining consistency in your user interface, providing more of an easy step approach. At ConnectALL we will do just integration, so if you want to integrate Jira to ServiceNow, we have this wizard approach that lets you do it in three easy steps. Right now, we are working on using and applying machine learning to our integration, so that when you click a button and you say, "I want to integrate these two," it just does it for you. Therefore, as you look at your value stream it has to be intuitive and understood so that you can see areas where you need to automate. For example, rather than a textual representation, we have a visual representation of how work flows in your organization between our tools. If I want to integrate all I need to do is drag and drop from one to the other and I have integration. That is how you make it simple.

**CEOCFO: *Is it easier for ConnectALL with so many advances in technology and AI or is it harder with so many different ways people interact with their data that you have to cover a lot of bases?***

**Mr. Knight:** The good part is that the tools themselves that we have to integrate to help people orchestrate and automate in their value stream are pretty stringent in the way they operate. In order to set up a simple integration or a complete value stream, it is not so bad, because you have to understand that organization's governance in how they are doing things and then we can represent that. Most of them already talk about how their work intake works, where they are going to add value, how they are doing their governance and software delivery. We just give them an easy way to look at it from a product perspective. Then once it is visible, I can figure out how to improve it.

**CEOCFO: *Do many customers take advantage of your full set of tools? Are there some areas that are overlooked?***

**Mr. Knight:** The space we are in, which is Value Stream Management, is still relatively evolving. I would say that we are still in the market education phase. In that phase, many customers are not leveraging all of the details about it. However, the analyst firms like Gartner and Forrester are saying that seventy percent of all of the organizations are going to be involved in Value Stream Management in one way or the other by 2023.

We are on an acceleration of education on the Value Stream Management environment, Value Stream Management solutions what they are going to do for organizations in creating integration hubs and the like. We are still in that education phase of our market, relevant to software delivery and software development with all the tools that are in that space.

**CEOCFO: *How are you reaching out to potential customers, both to education and to offer your services?***

**Mr. Knight:** We are on a really heavy thought leadership tour. I have been in this space for a long time and I have written articles for publications and all kinds of things about it. We have worked very hard with some of the industry leading media firms in order to educate people. At the same time, we are still marketing to the companies that just want to integrate something small. We are using that as a catapult to have these higher-level integration conversations with organizations.

We used to have these conversations from a white board perspective. We are just having our own tools. We are providing these workshops to our customers that may have just bought something simple, so that they can understand their value stream and understand where all of the tools are. We enable them to communicate and understand how they integrate, because they are already integrating even if that is just someone re-copying things across the tools. We help them understand how they can pull this information out of all these tools to make sure that what they are doing aligns with the business outcomes that they want.

We are working to expand the market through our workshops, education and metric guides. You can go to our website and download the "Ultimate Guide to Lean Metrics in Value Stream Management." We are really working hard to give people information, so that they can get the value, not just from us, but just from the concepts in this space.

**CEOCFO: *If someone is reading some of your material or participating in a webinar or a demo, is there a somewhat typical "eureka moment" when it clicks?***

**Mr. Knight:** From the VSM perspective; yes. They have already clicked that they just want to integrate two things. From a Value Stream Management perspective; clearly, absolutely right. There is this moment when they are like, "Yeah, oh, I get that." Therefore, we can look at how all of this stuff is working together, get metrics that show flow and show the flow of work or the work breakdown, from ConnectALL through these tools. Many larger organizations are like, "Yes, we need that so that we can better understand where our budget is going, where our investments are going and so on."

**CEOCFO: *What is your geographic reach today?***

**Mr. Knight:** We are global. We have customers in Australia. We have some customers in Japan, China, Brazil, all the way through to the US. We have got customers in Russia, all through Europe and so on, so we are pretty global. We have a pretty good outreach.

**CEOCFO: *What has changed in your approach over time? What have you learned?***

**Mr. Knight:** I have learned, and the company has learned that this is just as much about the thought leadership as the solution. We could have the best solution in the world to solve a business problem, but if we cannot help companies improve from the human perspective, then the solution is not really relevant. All of these things, all of this software, all

these things that make people write software, create software, do it at scale, do that faster; the bottom line is that software is here to support humans, so software development is human.

Software might have a better or a quicker way to do it, but really it is human. Task management software; that is for the humans to be done. Value Stream Management is a human thing. When we go at this to support the humans doing this work, we get better results. If we make it not about selling our tools or solutions, but about helping people, we ultimately end up in a better position altogether.

**CEOCFO: *How is business?***

**Mr. Knight:** I do not know how to describe this. I was sitting there with my management team talking about this today, and every year at about this time when we are approaching Thanksgiving, I look at all I have to be thankful for. It is 2020 and there is pandemic, financial downturn and there is this and there is that, and the glass is half empty not full, as you talk to a lot of people. I am looking at my management team going. "Wow, how did we do all of this during this difficult year? What is it about ConnectALL that made us so far escalate our business this year? What was it that was in us that made us accomplish all of these goals and outcomes? This year ConnectALL, little known and out of the blue, which is a testament to why you are probably talking to me; suddenly here is ConnectALL. Where did this company come from in one year?"

Now we are a two-year-old company, and we sit on top of this space called Value Stream Management. We are one of the thought leaders in this space. We have been named in Forrester and Gartner. We released a new user experience in our product. We have published, I do not know how many articles. We have increased revenue this year, in a year where everyone's revenue is decreasing. I do not know how to tell you how much we got done this year. I just sat there saying, "How did we do that, what is it about me that made me? What is it about my team, what have we done to make this different, because we are on fire! Business is great! Our products services people are doing great: our awareness is through the roof. I guess that is the long way of saying that we are doing great!"

**CEOCFO: *Because at ConnectALL you believe in what you are doing!***

**Mr. Knight:** That could be really true!

I think you are right. We believe in this space and what we are trying to do. There is this old statement and I remember when the pandemic hit, I looked at the whole team and said, "Okay, well when the going gets tough the tough get going, so we better get going." What do we have to get done to stay on top of this? We have just been on full force, ninety miles an hour, just delivering value to our customers, to the market, from new products and services and thought leadership all year long and we are not going to let up.

