

ISS Group

Company: ISS Group

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Established: 1986

Q: To what do you attribute your company's success?

A: Focus, focus, focus. In addition, hard work, perseverance, and "persistence to break down resistance." It's our focus on selling Microsoft® product lines. We don't sell any product lines other than Microsoft and our own products. A mentor once told me "the company that survives is the winner." We've been in this industry for 21 years and have persevered through a variety of challenges.

Q: What keeps you motivated?

A: Personally, productivity keeps me motivated. I sleep well at night when I know I was productive that day. It doesn't mean we made a whole bunch of money, but we accomplished something.

Q: Who do you look up to in the business world?

A: I certainly look up to the folks at Microsoft. They created an impressive organization. I had an opportunity to attend a luncheon where Steve Ballmer was the speaker. The guy is so impressive and energetic, and I respected that he answered my questions directly. I've never had the opportunity to meet Mr. Gates, but I look up to him and what he has developed.

Q: How does ISS set itself apart from its competitors?

A: We sell only CRM. We don't sell any other Microsoft Dynamics™ products as opposed to other Partners. We're vertically focused (customer profitability enhancement opportunities), and this provides integration opportunities.

Q: You've been around for a long time. What's been your strategy for tackling change and growth?

A: There's no question that we've reinvented ourselves more than a few times. For ex-

ample, we became a CRM eCommerce provider in the mid-90s. You need to reinvent yourselves in the CRM business; you can't stay stagnant. It's a constant learning challenge. This is the key to survival, otherwise you become obsolete and whittle away. It's no different than when Microsoft comes out with new products and services annually.

Q: How would you describe your company's culture?

A: I run a tight but informal ship. We're not a large company, so I run it like a family. We help each other like a family both personally and professionally.

Q: What's one thing you make sure your company ALWAYS adheres to?

A: Teamwork. I'm constantly promoting teamwork. We're all part of the same team. I don't care about the title. As a team, we can accomplish great things. 1 + 1 definitely equals 3. I've been promoting that for years. I guess that makes me the cheerleader!

Q: What do you think is the "Deadliest Business Sin"?

A: Number one sin: not being Partner friendly. What I believe is that the biggest sin is to NOT be a good Partner with a company. Business is all about relationships. Microsoft knows this and has thousands of Partners around the world. I'm a friendly Partner, even with competitors that I partner with.

Q: What piece of advice would you give to other ISVs?

A: Keep moving forward. There will be hurdles and challenges; always persevere. Have faith and confidence because business is tough, and you'll be knocked down and challenged all the time. You just have to keep moving forward. 🌀

About ISS Group:

ISS Group is a Gold Certified Microsoft customer relationship management (CRM) solutions provider and independent software vendor (ISV) specializing in solutions for worldwide manufacturing and distribution industries.

Our iCRM for manufacturers and distributors solution is based on Microsoft Dynamics™ CRM and includes additional applications and services required by a manufacturer or distributor to implement their corporate CRM strategy. Our portfolio includes enterprise resource planning (ERP) integration solutions, eCommerce applications, product configuration and life-cycle management solutions, demand forecasting, business intelligence, and much more.

We're strategically focused on developing solutions that help organizations achieve the objective of enhancing profits through customer retention, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. We provide application development, business consulting, database services, software development, and systems integration for small to medium-sized businesses.

Business Challenge:

Our number one problem is finding and retaining good people to work in our organization. Another problem is being a small company and finding growth capital. We need money to grow, which means finding more opportunities for sales. If you ask any medium-sized Microsoft Partner, you'd probably hear similar answers.

Opportunities on the Horizon:

I see huge opportunities. We're a vertically focused company, and our goal is to become the number one CRM solution provider in our vertical. In our vertical, they're just beginning to adopt CRM and eCommerce-type solutions. We're in the beginning of the wave. As Microsoft continues to develop and deliver new functionality, it only allows us to bring more to our customers and prospects.