

Case Study

OK2Charge

Serial Entrepreneur Hails the Benefits of Finance as a Service (FaaS)

During a recent Client & Cocktails webinar, Consero's Director of Private Equity & Venture Capital, Tony Esposito, spoke with serial entrepreneur Eric Broughton about his experiences using the Finance as a Service (FaaS) model at some of the companies he had led over the past decade.

Broughton is currently the CEO of OK2Charge, an electric vehicle charging platform for real estate operators and owners. With this platform, vacation and short-term rental owners can allow guests to charge their vehicles at the property instead of having to go to a charging station. The platform can also be used at hotels and resorts, multifamily apartments, single-family rentals, and workplaces.

Going Beyond a Fractional CFO

Broughton first met Consero's Founder, Scott Tynes, a decade ago and decided to give the FaaS approach a try. "I'd been brought in as CEO to a startup business that was losing considerable money," he said. "There was a heavy burn. I wasn't seeing the trajectory of the business and wasn't seeing the financials as I expected to see them coming from a large public company."

Diving deeper, Broughton still couldn't get the data he needed. After discussing the problem with a board member, he was introduced to Tynes. "I realized the concept

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— Eric Broughton

went beyond a fractional CFO," he said. "There was a technology platform called SIMPL® that brought everything together in one place, with one single point of entry. This made sense to me because I don't want to be an expert in all these different platforms. I just want it to be done so I can have a Finance & Accounting platform that will scale so I can take care of my clients."

Esposito pointed out that FaaS helps companies achieve considerable time savings by outsourcing the finance function, which isn't a core competency. This frees up companies to spend more time focused on the core competencies that grow the business.

"Having greater peace of mind is one of the biggest benefits of the FaaS model," said Broughton. "My mind isn't spinning thinking about finance details. I can focus on the goal of achieving a successful exit for the business."

In using FaaS at OK2Charge, Broughton said he looks to his outsourced finance team at Consero as a partner even more than before. "I was looking through our financials last night and sent Juan, my Consero VP of Finance, a note asking if we could talk this morning because I had a question about financials. It's great to be able to just fire off an email to Juan whenever I have a question and have a positive conversation with him when I need to."

“There’s no doubt that cost savings is a big factor in using FaaS. We can receive the expertise of an outsourced accounting firm and finance VP and the quality of a top-notch integrated platform for the same cost as a mid-tier accounting employee. It’s extremely cost effective.

— Eric Broughton

The Importance of “Clean” Books

Broughton went on to describe the exit and due diligence process at his previous company, eSupply Systems, including the importance of having clean books for a successful exit. "This was critical and one of the main reasons I came back to Consero," he said. "We were able to close within 52 days from the letter of intent, which is really fast for a public company. Any time that isn't spent working on the business or the exit is lost time."

He also talked about companies that didn't have their financial house in order and the impact this had on their exit. "It really boils down to how they are managing their books and allocating their funds," he said. "This is the first level of trust when looking at an entity. You can tell quickly if it's a professionally run organization. Is the balance sheet off? Are business and personal funds being comingled?"

On the surface, Broughton said, some companies look great. "But behind the scenes, they can be a mess, which can significantly impact the exit. These companies were devalued very quickly to the point that some of them didn't exit at all. This was an important lesson I learned about managing businesses."

OK2Charge – Top Priorities



Get a scalable platform that allowed for easy access to all the important KPIs needed to make good sound decisions



Have a fully trained staff to manage the back-office activities and the day-to-day transactional accounting that will grow with OK2Charge



Develop well-documented processes that will allow the business to always be audit and due diligence ready

Consero Proposal and Budget Review

	Build In House Option	Consero VPF, Controller + Staff Accountants
Vice President of Finance/ Director of Finance	\$100,000	Included
Controller		Included
Financial Analyst	\$30,000	Included
Upgraded Technology	\$35,000	Included
Consero Annual Cost		
Total Cost Comparison (Annual Fees)	\$165,000	\$69,600
<div> 58% COST SAVINGS ONGOING </div>		
One Time Implementation Cost		
VAR/Consultants/Etc. vs Consero Implementation Team	\$35,000	\$13,100
Additional One Time Fees		
Financial Clean-Up – OPTIONAL- Not IN SCOPE	\$20,000	\$3,700
Time to Optimization	9-18 months	2 months

SIMPL®: Consero's Fully Integrated Software Platform

Esposito explained Consero's FaaS software platform, SIMPL®: a one-stop-shop for complete financial clarity. This fully integrated software platform features role-based, self-service tools that provide insight and control for CFOs, managers, department heads, and executives. These tools include cloud accounting software, invoicing, and vendor billing, expense approvals and payments, statutory and management financial reporting, task management and workflow software, and graphical metrics and KPIs.

"In running a business, you have dashboards that you look at every day," said Broughton. "The SIMPL® dashboard gives me a quick glance to see how much money there is in the bank account, current cash flow, outstanding receivables, and how I'm tracking to budget. If there's something I don't understand I can drill down into more detailed reports to get more insights, instead of waiting until month-end close. This way I can get on top of issues more quickly."

Improved cost-effectiveness is another reason many businesses choose to partner with Consero. Esposito noted that in the current environment of financial instability, many CEOs and CFOs are looking to reduce operating costs. Broughton compared the FaaS model to building an in-house finance team in terms of cost benefits.

"There's no doubt that cost savings is a big factor in using FaaS," he said. "We can receive the expertise of an outsourced accounting firm and finance VP and the quality of a top-notch integrated platform for the same cost as a mid-tier accounting employee. It's extremely cost-effective."

"And as we scale up, Consero can grow with us incrementally, so we don't have to add more employees," Broughton added. "This is critical in how I look at it."

Comparing FaaS to In-House Finance

As businesses are considering using the FaaS model, Consero helps them understand the costs of FaaS compared to building an in-house team. "The costs of FaaS are usually an order of magnitude less," said Esposito.

To learn more about Consero and the benefits of using the FaaS model, schedule a 20-minute introduction and we'll go from there! <https://conseroglobal.com/request-a-consultation/>

