



***Given that the economic outlook in many parts of the world seems uncertain:***

***What's your philosophy on maintaining a focus on innovation?***

Despite three to four years of economic turmoil, the pace of global innovation has sped up. At Wave we believe that keeping a focus on innovation isn't just a "nice-to-have"-- it's essential to economic survival. If we take our eye off innovation, a new entrant will be nipping at our heels before we know it. So, while there are always other demands and To-Do items that compete with innovation for our attention and resources, innovation always rises as the top priority.

Incumbents like multi-billion dollar software companies have plenty of advantages: size, capital, resources, and brand power, just to name a few. As a start-up that is developing seamless online accounting and payroll services for small businesses, our advantage is the rate at which Wave can push out innovative technology and business models. And based on what we see in the market around us, in every segment of the industry, innovation can trump those other advantages and carry a company to success.

***How do you encourage and foster a growth mindset with your employees and partners?***

Growth feels good. The momentum associated with it is addictive, so that the drive to grow is self-sustaining: The more we innovate and grow, the more we're driven to do it again.

At Wave we try to ensure that the company is not putting rigid processes or protocols into place that will stifle our momentum. The same goes with our partners: we make our values, our culture and our goals very clear. If they don't share our core vision we move on to the next. We try wherever possible not to settle for less than what we are capable of.

***What do you do as CEO to keep your organization focused on customers and value?***

Most of us at Wave have been small business owners or self-employed contractors and consultants at some time. We have an advantage in knowing -- at all levels of our company -- the pain that our customers feel when it comes to back-office tasks like accounting and payroll. We have a built-in sympathy and understanding for what our customers are experiencing, and therefore strive to make their businesses run easier.

In other organizations even if you haven't walked in your customers' shoes, you can still find easy, agile and continuous ways of zeroing in on how they feel. We just implemented NPS (net promoter score) for Wave Accounting. It's a very useful snapshot of what our customers think about our products, and what pain points they still experience. With NPS data in hand, we can know that our efforts are focused on relieving customers' pain wherever possible.

*This interview was published in [SIIA's Vision from the Top](#) , a Software Division publication released at [All About the Cloud](#) 2012.*