

Onward: How “Now” Prepares Cast & Crew for “Next”

By Eric Belcher

A couple months ago, I wrote that “Onward” is more than just a word at Cast & Crew. To me, it’s a frame of mind characterized by positive action, momentum and progress. I also like the fact that the letter “O” focuses on the concept of One Company, a word that captures what we are building at Cast & Crew.

Recently, I’ve moved on to the letter “N” and found myself thinking about Now and Next. These words are incredibly appropriate for our company as well. What we learn today informs us for the decisions we will inevitably need to make tomorrow (or, even better: later today). The challenges, struggles and successes we experience today make us that much stronger, better equipped and more confident to face the issues of tomorrow.

So, where are we **now** as a company?

Short answer: In a really good place.

We are integrating three companies (Cast & Crew, CAPS Payroll and Final Draft) and leveraging the best parts and lessons learned of each to create the next Cast & Crew. Importantly, we are doing this without stripping away the essential cultural elements of any of our companies. I imagine this is just as important to me as it is to all team members at each of the companies.

We are also growing. As of right now, I am fortunate to work with hundreds of colleagues in our 11 offices. Our executive management team has grown in size, expertise and experience. We have the industry’s strongest, brightest and most dedicated payroll professionals. We are proud of our roots – and will never forget them – but we are excited for what the future holds ... and more importantly, how our team at Cast & Crew is shaping that future.

For the past eight months or so, our integration team – comprising members from all three companies – has been working diligently to bring our combined company together in ways

designed to benefit customers and employees alike. I'm proud to say that the team's enthusiasm and hard work is paying off as we're on schedule against our integration plan. Moreover, I'm looking forward to the next couple of months as we welcome our CAPS and Final Draft colleagues to our Burbank headquarters.

And, what does **next** look like for us?

Even shorter answer: Exciting.

Our product and service solutions are technology enabled and put our team and our customers at the forefront of the industry. As we forge this new path, our vision is for Cast & Crew to become the industry's undisputed leader in digitizing the way we do business ... starting with the script, to employee on-boarding, scheduling and budgeting, processing payroll and even through to post-production and residuals. For nearly all productions – film, television, commercials, live events, digital or music tours – employee on-boarding and start paperwork is a cumbersome but necessary process. And that's just at the beginning. Digitization will inevitably create an endless number of efficiencies for our customers, and Cast & Crew will be there making it happen.

Our business has been paper-intensive for decades. Our digital vision for the way we do business – or the “next” way we do business – is automated, simpler, faster, more accessible and more powerful. As we continue to build and roll out our suite of digital products and services, Cast & Crew is becoming THE provider of end-to-end technology-enabled solutions.

We are working with studios, production companies and independent producers to develop a more-productive, best-in-class and flexible way for companies to manage their projects. In fact, we have dozens of clients and productions currently using the first of our digital products – Start+ for on-boarding and Hours+ for time capture. We're adding business value with new tools that will deliver a variety of new features and advantages, including greater speed and agility; improved flexibility; scalability and mobility, and greater adaptability.

As part of “next” – albeit further down the road – data analysis will become a critical tool in understanding more about our business, so our customers can understand more about theirs. This “Big Data” capability will allow our industry to analyze comprehensive information like we've never been able to do before. Our data strategy has the power to unlock analytics and insights to better inform our clients' future decisions.



I am delighted that our “next” will bring benefits across the board to clients and employees alike. And I am even more delighted that we are doing this as partners – clients and employees working together to build a dynamic future.

Onward!

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