

Net2000 Founder Charlie Thomas Named CEO at NISCO

By Jim Garrettson

One of technology's best known players and former Net2000 founder and CEO, Charlie Thomas, was just announced as the new CEO of NISCO in Fairfax, Virginia. In an exclusive interview with ExecutiveBiz, you will hear about his new role and also a teaser about his upcoming book that will appear in area bookstores later this spring.



Charlie Thomas, CEO, NISCO

Executive Spotlight with Charlie Thomas

In the 03/10/2005 edition of *ExecutiveBiz* we had a chance to catch up with **Charlie Thomas**, CEO of NISCO.

ExecutiveBiz: You just joined NISCO as CEO. What does the company do? What are your day to day responsibilities?

Charlie Thomas: NISCO provides financial assurance software on a managed services or platform basis. We have a proprietary application that mechanizes the conversion of our clients' paper financial statements, invoices and other documents to a web based portal for much easier viewing and management. We also provide an application for analysis of this data. To date our modules address telecommunications, finance and we've built a pricing repository. Our clients include 6 of the 8 largest telecoms in the U.S. and the largest consulting company in the world.

My daily responsibilities include all aspects of the business—operations, finance, legal, sales, marketing, development, delivery, HR, etc.

ExecutiveBiz: What are your top priorities as CEO?

Charlie Thomas:

1. Implement the framework, infrastructure to support our rapid growth - this includes processes, procedures, systems, and personnel
2. Continually enhance our core technology and applications to maintain our market leadership position
3. Aggressively grow our customer base in the Fortune 500 enterprise market

ExecutiveBiz: What attracted you to join the company?

Charlie Thomas: The founder's (Sundeep Sanghavi) vision, intellect and accomplishments in the first three years. The marquee customer base. The enthusiasm, energy and dedication of the employees. The integrated software platform, it's role in the enterprise and the proprietary nature of our technology.

ExecutiveBiz: What is your biggest achievement at Claris Capital?

Charlie Thomas: I would say that Brian Keane, Warren Martin and I have positioned Claris very well as a "go to" boutique investment bank for mid-sized and small transactions (\$10 to \$50 million) in the D.C. region. We have executed over 20 transactions in only 3 years in business, and we've had several well-known, public company clients (including Pepco and Getronics) as well as numerous private companies. Attracting Paul Stern to join as a Partner in early 2004 was a major accomplishment.

ExecutiveBiz: You have a new book coming out this spring. What is the title and when is it scheduled to be released?

Charlie Thomas: "Entrepreneur: A CEO's Lessons in American Capitalism" arrives in bookstores, Amazon, etc. in May.

ExecutiveBiz: What unique insights do you provide CEOs in the book? How long did it take you to write?

Charlie Thomas: The book is not the story of Net2000, but the chronological backdrop does cover our growth and trials and tribulations. The book provides invaluable advice and guidance to entrepreneurs, recent grads, MBAs, etc. based on practical real world lessons learned—therefore it's geared

mostly toward other entrepreneurs and college curriculums. The 50+ "Lessons Learned" are the focal point. I learned a lot over the course of 9 years as CEO, and I experienced the full business life cycle. I am confident this will be educational.

Most of the book was written my first year after selling Net2000 to Cavalier Telephone—in 2002. However, by the time I wrote, and re-wrote all the chapters and made numerous edits along the way, in total it took 3 years.

ExecutiveBiz: You are involved with an upcoming award dinner for NFTE. Tell us about the event and how you are involved.

Charlie Thomas: NFTE is a national organization that teaches entrepreneurship and business basics to thousands of "at risk" inner city kids. The program is well organized and has an outstanding curriculum, marquee instructors and truly lifts many kids. NFTE is now part of the curriculum at dozens of area schools. The D.C. area chapter has served over 9,000 kids. This is my second year as a Vice Chair of this event. The reason I am so personally committed to this cause is that I feel that every individual has a comparative strength to enter the market economy, and the youth of our nation's capital city should not be left outespecially those living in depressed communities. We have all benefited from our wonderful free enterprise system and this is one of our ways of giving back.

For more information about Charlie Thomas and NISCO, visit the NISCO web site at www.niscosolutions.com.

Interview with Charlie Thomas conducted by JD Kathuria.