



## Looking Out for Number 10, 11, 12...

**Mapes Consulting wants to help smaller collection agencies and institutions gain a competitive edge.**  
**By Brandy Colbert**

**JEREMY MAPES HAS A CLEARLY** defined plan for his young consulting firm: be a champion for the little guy.

Mapes Consulting specializes in helping collection agencies, hospitals and financial institutions improve IT and workflow operations – as well as dialer strategies.

Small- and medium-size companies, he says, should not be at a competitive disadvantage just because of their size.

“The [collection] industry is at a turning point and mom-and-pop shops are going away. There’s too much litigation and too many requirements,” he says. “I’d like to show them how big players operate, how they can compete with-

out having to be all things to all people.”

Mapes says his company, which he opened in November 2007, already has found a niche in systems administration support and remote risk assurance.

“A lot of the consulting companies dealing with dialers and systems administration don’t make the jump [to consider] the true needs of a collection agency,” he says.

“We’re able to put operations, technology and security together to put companies miles ahead of competitors,” he adds. “That’s where Mapes Consulting makes a difference – we have experience in operations, risk assurance and consulting.”

Mapes Consulting is deeply involved in automation – finding where human interaction can be eliminated, thus cutting the risk for human error. The company conducts audits to ensure firms are compliant with ISO 27001 security standards, considered the gold mark with many creditors – including Provident Financial and GE Capital, says Mapes.

ISO 27001 looks at new and evolving information security management laws and requirements, Mapes says, and “snap fits them into the business environment. It looks at all types of media and security protocol, like who you’re hiring and if they’d be at risk to divulge information or physical factors like risk of power outages and generators. It’s not just looking at data,” he says.

Ocwen Financial Corp. hired Mapes in 2005 to usher the company through ISO 27001 certification but his work in collections and information technology date to his college years. While in college, studying information systems and business, Universal Credit Services, based in Wichita, Kan., hired Mapes as vice president of operations. That company is now Omni Credit Services.

Mapes followed that with stints at collection agencies in Wyoming and Wisconsin, before moving to Orlando, Fla., when Ocwen hired him as a senior manager of technology business for its recovery group arm. Mapes spent about a year and a half at Ocwen before venturing on his own last year.

He made the move partly because Ocwen’s new ventures would require him to travel more often. “From a family perspective, I thought it was best to stay in Orlando and be able to provide services to customers across the U.S.,” he says. “By starting Mapes Consulting, I was able to stay in the region I love.”

Knowing the importance of work-life balance, Mapes offers remote work options to consultants.

His ISO auditors are hired to short-term contracts. They work remotely and may have other full-time jobs – often using vacation to perform audits.



## Client Coup

Mapes Consulting scored a coup by landing a contract with Ontario Systems, provider of collection software including FACS, Artiva and GC dialer.

Mapes' experience gave his company a solid reputation in a short time. "He brings a wealth of operational knowledge with a common sense background to the industry," says Jim Tripp, vice president and general manager of Hauge Associates Inc., a collection agency in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Tripp hired Mapes Consulting to integrate Ontario FACS with his agency. "We've increased our contact rate through the support Jeremy has provided – and without having to add staff," Tripp says.

Mapes' former supervisor at Ocwen, William Higginbotham, now CEO of Encore Receivable Management, adds, "Unlike some information technology specialists, he's able to take a business view of the system and its utilization."

Higginbotham believes this view made it easier for Mapes to negotiate and understand the needs of other members of the IT world.

## Building Partnerships

TransUnion also has partnered with Mapes Consulting. "If one of his clients looks like they'll be a good potential customer for a scoring solution, he brings them in," says Jeff Ragsdale, a major-account executive for the collections vertical at TransUnion.

Ragsdale met Mapes when he was with Ocwen and says they developed a friendship that has continued.

"When I was in Jeremy's office at Ocwen, I was constantly amazed at how many people would call him from other agencies to ask for advice about Ontario Systems and how to integrate our products," says Ragsdale. "He did a great job at helping a lot of folks in the industry with simple IT questions."

Adds Higginbotham, "He's well-thought of, particularly in his area of specialty, by the engineers at Ontario. His

Mapes Consulting	
<b>Founder</b>	Jeremy Mapes
<b>Location:</b>	Orlando, Fla.
<b>Employees:</b>	2 full time and several short-term contract ISO auditors. Mapes plans to hire a vice president in the next few months.
<b>Founded:</b>	November 2007

ability to develop good, strong relationships in the industry is a big help."

Mapes views his business relationships as a marriage of sorts.

"We don't come in, try to do a little fix and try to take your pocketbook later," he says. "We want to be there the next day and the next month for better or worse, to make sure the changes have a positive impact on the companies."

As for the future at Mapes Consulting, Mapes believes the risk assurance seg-

ment will grow – particularly with ISO 25999, a business continuity plan that rolled out for certification last year. "There's going to be a big desire for that," says Mapes, who says ISO 25999 is akin to a disaster preparedness plan.

"Collection managers and owners are thinking about the possibility of floods or hurricanes," he says. "They want to know what needs to be done to be here for the next generation, or if they want to sell the company in the future." **CCR**



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