



Analyst Perspective

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Conga Propels a Revenue-Focused Revolution

[Conga](#) is part of our Office of Revenue market coverage and I recently attended the [2023 Conga Connect conference](#) held in Orlando during April of 2023. The conference was the public reveal of a new Conga, with significant announcements in three main areas. First was the overall positioning within a self-designated category of revenue life cycle management. Secondly was the first public revealing of a new Conga platform. And finally, announcements of new partnerships were headlined by a significant relationship with Accenture.

Focusing on the future and not the past, the new management team at Conga has sought to satisfy its customers, develop updated market positioning, and announce a more cohesive and strategic product road map. The Orlando conference was a significant milestone on the journey to achieve these outcomes.



CEO Noel Goggin presented Conga's view of the revenue life cycle management category and represented this as a continuum of processes supported by technology, involving many different teams across an organization.

Incorporating many elements of the quote-to-cash process, revenue life cycle management is an evolution in this category. It includes the notion of a series of repeating, interlocking processes that support not just the initial sale, but subsequent, additional sales and renewal

engagements, especially for subscriptions and other recurring models.

This revenue continuum has four main areas: propose and quote, negotiate and execute, manage and fulfill and renew and expand. Although Conga does not plan to have offerings in every part of this continuum, it did demonstrate for the first time two existing applications rebuilt to use a new microservice and application programming interface-first revenue life cycle management platform. Conga may not own all the components of



the revenue life cycle, but wishes to create and own the platform that would support these and other partner-delivered applications. This notion of a third wave after enterprise resource planning and customer relationship management is interesting and was a topic of my analyst perspective, [Why Your ERP and CRM Won't Transform Your Business](#).

Included in on-stage demonstrations were new versions of [Conga Contracts](#) and [configure, price, quote \(CPQ\)](#), showing much-improved performance and interoperability. These are built on the new platform, which is independent of any underlying CRM platform such as Salesforce, but is still accessible from within the Salesforce user interface. And although not generally available, Conga has initiated an early adopter program. The target is to have initial applications more widely available later in 2023.

As with any technology shift, vendors are well-served to enable existing customers to transition with minimal effort. Conga has announced that all existing customers are encouraged to move to the new platform, and existing implementations will be supported. It should be noted that this is an opportunity to review existing implementations and current customizations, determining whether they are needed in the future. This is especially important for customizations that were added to help with performance and scale, as they may no longer be needed. Future versions of the platform will support native Conga web versions as well as via API.

As mentioned, Conga does not envision supplying all elements of the revenue life cycle management process and has recently announced a formal partnership with [Billing Platform](#). In addition, there was a joint stage presentation with Amazon Web Services, emphasizing Conga's global ambitions, independent of existing dependencies such as with Salesforce CRM. Conga's use of a consulting strategic value assessment and audits as part of the selling process can in my experience divert resources and time from advancing its focus as a software vendor. Depending on consulting partners is essential and I was pleased to see the announcement of a strategic partnership with [Accenture](#), with the potential to offer a more scalable, complementary, strategic consulting approach that will pull Conga into deals. In addition, there has been a welcome de-emphasis of in-house professional services, restricting Conga's role to solution architecture and design validation, with partners taking up the slack.

Finally, the Conga's new platform is not just about the improved customer experience from automation afforded by the new platform, but in addition from the platforms promise to support continuous improvement and uncovering new avenues of revenue opportunity. And this improvement is a direct result from having access to customers and process data in context, which is why the emphasis remains on Conga developing its revenue platform. Having access to integrated and contextualized data rather than spreading it among myriad systems and stand-alone applications is the key to being able to analyze and build actionable predictive and artificial intelligence models to continually improve processes and uncover new opportunities. Conga should embrace instrumenting



the new platform so customers can see quantified improvements in efficiency savings for themselves and, more importantly, revenue gains.

Although the Conga revenue life cycle platform is in its infancy, Conga's current product portfolio is delivering value to existing customers. I would recommend prospective customers buy into the vision, but recognize they are purchasing what exists today. For existing customers, ensure release dates are well understood and upgrade plans are made with a clear understanding of not just how much technical resource is needed, but also requirements for change management to ensure staff understand not just the "what" of change, but the "why" as well. Adoption of new applications are often not successful because of a failure to communicate not just how the organization may benefit, but also benefits for the individual and their customers.

Regards,

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Stephen Hurrell is responsible for the overall research direction for the Office of Sales at Ventana Research, including the areas of digital commerce, price and revenue management, product information management, sales enablement, sales performance management and subscription management.