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Executive Spotlight with Duke Chung



Duke Chung

CEO

[Parature](#)

PARATURE

In the 03/09/2006 edition of ExecutiveBiz we had a chance to catch up with **Duke Chung**, CEO of **Parature**.

Duke Chung is the CEO and one of the founders of Parature. He is recognized as one of the the up and coming entrepreneurs in the area. The company provides on-line customer support software for clients. In an exclusive interview, we discuss the company, the trends in on-line customer service, and the future of this young and growing company.

ExecutiveBiz: **Tell me about Parature and how the company got started.**

Duke Chung: We started this company in mid-2000, and I started it with several co-founders right out of school actually, right out of Cornell. It was an idea that we had early on about being able to find a way to fill some of the voids that we say in support, in particularly online support. We saw that as a real growing trend for local businesses out there and for other organizations, as well, particularly for what we see on the mid-level and small to medium sized businesses for online, on demand support software. A lot of the complexities we've seen in traditional software in the last ten years have just been overwhelming difficult to put together, to get set up, and extremely expensive. We saw that for the mid-market and for the small, medium sized businesses, this was a great opportunity for Parature. All of products and all of our services have really been driving towards fulfilling the needs of this market segment.

ExecutiveBiz: **What are the solutions the company offers?**

Duke Chung: We provide on demand, online support solutions for companies of all sizes. Its purely hosted software, and its completely web-based. What we do is we help companies get set up with a complete support solution that helps them automate all their customer support issues, questions, and also provides a way for them to communicate effectively their spoken communicate with their end-users, their customers, in this case, right here with support portal systems, which we implement and build for all of our clients. We are reaching about over 400 clients worldwide today, and supporting roughly 30,000 portals across all our accounts.

ExecutiveBiz: **Who are some of your customers?**

Duke Chung: We have clients from big companies like HP, Office Depot, ATI Technologies, which is the world's largest graphic card maker...even down to the 2-5 man job industry, small startup companies that are just getting going who realize that customer support can be a real edge for their business.

ExecutiveBiz: **As an ASP, how do you handle the issue of data security and privacy?**

Duke Chung: One of the big things we've always preached is that we allow our companies to get access to their data. They own all of the data that is being put into the system, particularly we've been lucky because for support, support is general basic information. Knowledge based content is generally public information already that our companies and our clients encourage their customers to get access to free right off their website. When it comes to security and privacy, generally people don't have an issue or problem with that because its public data. Some of the other on demand products that we see out there where security could really be a big issue because of the private information. We really focus on providing a strong infrastructure here on the hosted business for our technology to make sure that everything is locked down and is good as far as people getting access to our codes. More importantly, the reliability and performance of the software is the key of our on-demand platform.

ExecutiveBiz: **What are the company's plans for this year?**

Duke Chung: This year we are really gearing up right now to prepare for the Parature 6 launch, which is the biggest product that we have worked on in the past couple of years. We rebuilt the entire software from the ground up into a dot net platform, so we'll be the first on-demand dot net platform for CRN in the industry. It takes everything that we've learned. We rebuilt everything from the ground. We're actually launching some new modules as well. We are continuing to increase the complete support solution that we are offering our clients today and that will happen at the end of quarter one. We are really excited about that.

ExecutiveBiz: **What are some of the trends you are tracking in the on-line customer service space?**

Duke Chung: There's no question that the on-demand space is a new and emerging concept. From the get-go, from early in 2000, we really believed that this was the new way that software would be delivered. So, for a lot of the larger enterprises out there, it was still a very early concept for them. It would be very common for us to go all the way to the very end only for them to tell us that they needed software to be installed locally in the organization, and that's been a challenge. Lucky for us, as the market is becoming more educated about the benefits about going on-demand and through hosted solutions, we've been able to benefit over the last five years. Companies are actually now asking us for a hosted solution or an on demand solution. For us, we've been fortunate, and we've really been on the right trends. I think one of the key things we've learned is really staying, believing, and watching the trends and what's going on and investing into that and not diverting from that and seeing the benefits and results of it, long term.

ExecutiveBiz: **How would you describe your leadership style?**

Duke Chung: I'm really a hands-off manager. I would classify myself more of a product visionary to work with all of our managers. We have a relatively young team here which in a lot of ways makes it fun for us. It also lets us be able to see a lot of trends that some of the older companies won't see out there. In general, my leadership style is pretty hands-off. I like to make it fun for all the managers and realize how exciting what the potential really is here for Parature.

ExecutiveBiz: **What is the future of Parature?**

Duke Chung: We've been growing this company year after year, and we've been growing well over 100% every year, so there's no question. My goal is to build this business to be a really big, successful company that's really famous. We'd like to take this down the ideal path and make this a big success and continue to see it grow after that point, and introduce new products and services that are really helping solve problems for our clients, particularly in the support space and the CRM realm. We are really at the early stages now even with all of our success and the success of the industry, where products in this space are really are going to be.

ExecutiveBiz: **What is something most people don't know about you?**

Duke Chung: I am a real avid basketball player. We've got a really unique team. We have a young company, so we have a lot of great basketball players in the company. We actually have an event called ParaHoops every Wednesday that the company sponsors. We have a gym and people in the company play. We actually invite outside people, so its not just exclusive only to Parature, but I am a pretty avid basketball player. Another thing people probably don't know is that I am a pretty avid collector of art and some other collectibles out there. So I spend my time outside of work doing those things.

For more information about Duke Chung and Parature, visit the Parature web site at www.parature.com.

Interview with Duke Chung conducted by JD Kathuria.

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