

Founded in 1997 to commercialize an innovative technology that assures data integrity, Tripwire quickly built a global presence and an impressive customer list. From 2000 to 2001, revenues more than doubled. Today, the Portland, Oregon-based company is recognized as the thought leader in data integrity assurance.

With significant growth prospects ahead, the executive team recognized the need to establish a strategic framework to guide the company toward agreed-upon goals and success metrics. Tripwire engaged Connor Bates to facilitate the process of creating that framework.

Tripwire Expands Its Opportunity, Sets A Framework for Growth

A Connor Bates Action Report

“We needed to establish a shared, focused vision and strategy in order to sustain our growth,” explains W. Wyatt Starnes, Tripwire’s founder, president and chief executive officer. The executive team had begun the strategic planning effort, but quickly realized that each member had a different perspective on the issues. They turned to Connor Bates for an outside perspective that could facilitate the process.

“Tripwire had reached a stage experienced by many high-growth companies where a more pro-active management of the business toward a common goal would improve decision-making, enable teams to work together more efficiently and help ensure success,” says Linda Brackett, president of Connor Bates, Inc.

Through a series of intensive, interactive work sessions, the executive team gained consensus on a more strategic vision and a broader opportunity than they had previously imagined. They created a framework that sets guidelines for each aspect of the business strategy, ensuring alignment with a strategic goal.

“As a result of this process, we’ve positioned ourselves for a more strategic opportunity which helped in our effort to obtain funding in a very difficult environment.”

– W. Wyatt Starnes, President & CEO
Tripwire, Inc.



*"People are more focused,
and we're asking the right
questions to make sure
projects fit with the strategy."*

*—Dwayne Melancon
Vice President, Marketing,
Customer Support & Services*

*"Tripwire is a stronger
company as a result of going
through this process."*

*—W. Wyatt Starnes
President & CEO*

A Solid Framework Sets Guardrails for Growth

Connor Bates used a combination of facilitated planning sessions and small group tasks to help Tripwire create a strategic framework that, in Starnes' words, "sets the guardrails for growth." Specifically, the framework establishes:

- a future-oriented vision and opportunity for Tripwire,
- the Tripwire value proposition across customer organizations and markets,
- product, service and partner strategies to deliver maximum customer value,
- a set of goals, objectives, and metrics to support those strategies, and
- concise decision criteria for evaluating new opportunities and plans.

Having worked together through this process, the management team is more confident in its decisions and strategic positioning. "The Connor Bates team quickly picked up on subtleties that were affecting the efficacy of our decision-making and helped us broaden our thinking," says Starnes. "Now, we have greater clarity on strategic and tactical issues. We're better able to communicate those in a consistent, focused way both internally and externally, and we're able to execute in ways consistent with the strategy."

A More Strategic Vision Attracts Investment

According to Starnes, the company has continued the process established in the facilitated sessions to create a strategic plan, operations road map, and operating plan with the participation of its management teams. Today, the process is an integral part of the way the company does business.

The facilitated discussions also helped Tripwire articulate a more coherent message and a stronger, more forward-looking positioning for the company which has attracted significant investments. In early 2002, Tripwire received \$9.3 million in Series C venture funding and expanded its relationship with Visa International, entering into a two-year, global alliance to enable safer, more secure e-commerce and e-business initiatives for Visa customers worldwide.

"By asking tough questions and helping us step outside our comfort zone, Connor Bates helped us see a larger opportunity," says Starnes. "As a team, we gained a new and better perspective of the market and a clearer understanding of what our strategy should be. The process was very valuable."



Connor Bates is a hands-on consulting firm that collaborates with business-technology executives to assess market opportunities, set clear strategic direction, and bridge strategy with execution during critical stages of growth. The firm provides strategic go-to-market planning, proprietary research, executive coaching and program-development services designed to facilitate action tied to corporate goals and resources.