

Lester Hightower

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CIO / CTO / IT Director / Senior Account Executive

“Providing Business and Software Solutions that Drive the Transportation Industry”

Multi-talented and transportation industry-focused senior information technology executive. More than 14 years of successful, diverse and progressive experience in various positions in IT, including roles as VP / CTO, VP and Manager of Information Systems, Technology Entrepreneur, and Lead Developer. Deep understanding of macro- and micro-economics, generally, and Software as a Service (SaaS) business models, specifically. Effectively and efficiently leveraged the benefits of open-source software to build and grow a prominent SaaS provider to the railroad transportation industry that concurrently served **Fortune 500** and quite small companies. Management abilities to plan objectives, determine strategies and implement methods; staff (recruit, hire, train and mentor); direct; organize; coordinate; and evaluate business and IT policies, projects and procedures. Excellent interpersonal relations and abilities, including oral, written, and presentation skills needed to communicate with all levels of management, IT personnel, and clients. Author of countless highly technical documents and numerous white papers.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Business process analysis, improvement, automation and computerization.
- Software as a Service (SaaS) architecture, deliver, support, and pricing.
- Open source software technologies, including Apache, Javascript, Linux, MySQL, Perl, PHP, PostgreSQL, Python, Xen, and many more.
- Railroading: Design/Build and Operate/Maintain (DBOM) processes for signal, communications and track, plus DBOM elements of Positive Train Control (PTC).

MANAGEMENT & I.T. EXPERIENCE

Vice President, RailDOCS Solutions **2009 – 2010**

RMI, Engineering and Maintenance Division Jacksonville, Florida

Directed all business activities of this SaaS business with a 30+ person staff and over 5,000 users across 30+ customer accounts.

Vice President and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) **2002 - 2009**

10East Corporation Jacksonville, Florida

10East Corp. was formed in January, 2002, by Three Cities Research (TCR)—a private equity firm—and senior management of The AIMS Group and immediately following TCR's purchase of ABC-NACO from bankruptcy; 10East was sold to RMI in April, 2009.

Managed Software as a Service (SaaS) provider to the North American railroad industry, including all services marketed under the RailDOCS brand name that served over 5,000 users in half of the continent's Class 1 railroads, plus many regional and short-line railways.

Vice President and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) 1997 – 2001**The AIMS Group, a Subsidiary of ABC-NACO** (NASDAQ: ABCR) Jacksonville, Florida*Predecessor to 10East Corp. and a wholly owned subsidiary of ABC-NACO.*

- Managed all IT for ABC-NACO's Rail Systems Division (~350 employees in 11 locations).
- Also managed a for-profit subsidiary called The AIMS Group, Inc. and its RailDOCS-brand SaaS offering and served as its VP / CTO.

Vice President and Manager of Information and Communications Systems 1995 – 1997**United Railway Signal Group (URSG)** Jacksonville, Florida*Independent signal-design contractor to the North American railroad industry. URSG was sold to ABC Rail Corp. in 1997.*

- Joined URSG's team by way of a small subsidiary named Progressive Computer Concepts.
- Developed the SaaS business that became RailDOCS prior to sale of URSG to ABC-NACO.

Sole Proprietor 1995 – 1996**Computation Integration Technologies** Tallahassee, Florida*Internet-related consulting and software development services provider to small- and mid-sized companies.*

- Managed two employees providing connection of companies to the Internet for the first time.
- Migrated LANS from Banyan VINES, LANtastic, Netware IPX, etc. to TCP/IP, or overlaying TCP/IP.
- Installed routers, firewall, SMTP and POP/IMAP e-mail servers, web and FTP servers, etc.
- Closed company after accepting employment with URSG.

Lead Developer of the WANE Project (and other projects) 1990 – 1995**The Supercomputer Computations Research Institute (SCRI)** Tallahassee, Florida*SCRI—initially federally funded supercomputer center—later became Florida State University's Department of Scientific Computing.*

- Following several promotions, became the Lead Developer for the Wide Area Network Environment Project in which the fledgling and open-sourced Linux operating system was enhanced to support very large numbers of simultaneous users on commodity x86 hardware.

EDUCATION**Bachelor of Science: Economics 1992 – 1996****Florida State University** Tallahassee, Florida**REFERENCES**

- Mr. Craig King, VP of Transportation - Northern Region, CSX Transportation, Jacksonville, FL
- Mr. Dennis Boll, Assistant VP of C&S (retired), BNSF Railway, Fort Worth, TX
- Mr. Mike Choat, President, Railroad Controls Limited, Benwood, TX
- Mr. Sid Bakker, President, Transportation Products Sales Company, O'Fallon, MO
(many more available upon request.)