

#HelloDisruptors



NetSuite presents Joe Del Preto
Vice President, Global Controller, Groupon

GROUPON

NETSUITE



JOE DEL PRETO
Vice President, Global Controller
Groupon

SPEEDY SUCCESS

GROUPON SETS UP A SOLID SYSTEM TO RAPIDLY DEAL WITH GLOBAL EXPANSION

Global e-commerce marketplace Groupon has been an important partner for local merchants to acquire new customers with wildly popular deals. Helping neighborhood restaurants and stores promote their businesses has been incredibly rewarding, but in order to continue its success, Groupon needed to scale quickly.

Joe Del Preto talks about what characteristics make a company disruptive and the challenges of international expansion.

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– Joe Del Preto



What are the characteristics that make it possible to become a disruptor?

You can’t be afraid to fail. What people don’t realize is for all of the successful ideas Groupon has had; we’ve had a lot of failures. **When you reach a certain scale and you’re trying to disrupt the industry, you have to be able to move fast.**

You’ve got to have the proper support behind you, whether that’s systems, people or infrastructure. The hardest thing when you’re growing is maintaining all of that while you’re trying to get new customers, deal with merchants and build technology. You have to have folks that are thinking two or three years down the road because you don’t want to just sit there while your business is doing great today. If you do that, people will pass you by very quickly and you have to be on top of the technology that’s out there.

We have a big mobile presence. Over 50% of our transactions are now on mobile devices. So we are always trying to say, “Hey, we knew that mobile was the future two, three years ago,” and we focused on making the mobile app really easy. **And we are constantly trying to think of ways to make that experience with Groupon easier. In order to do that, you have to think outside the box.**



How has software helped you with that?

Groupon is now in 40 different countries. In order to have a backend system that helps integrate with our up-front platform, we need to be able to cover all these different regions. We needed a system that you can deploy in all these different places with ease. Groupon has very small dollar transactions, so we have massive amounts of data. We need to be able to take that data and use it to make good business decisions because buying behaviors, what deals people like, all this information is important to us. Our software needs to be able to grow with us as we've expanded into these different countries and support the business as it keeps growing.



What are the challenges of going global?

The biggest challenge is that every country has different rules, tax regulations and reporting requirements. **We need the ability to customize for those different countries.** Right when I started we had just made an acquisition and bought a company that was in 20 different countries. I got there and we were closing the books in 30 days. We had countries on QuickBooks, Excel, whatever local accounting system they had in Spain...we had that everywhere. We just couldn't get all that information into one spot. So right off the

but I realized, “Hey guys, we need a global ERP system that can support these 20 countries.” We didn’t want something that’s expensive and hard to maintain. We needed something quick. To date, we have deployed in over 40 countries and 130 entities.



How did having everything in one spot help you grow?

Business would have been a lot slower because we would have had to wait to integrate with multiple providers. You want something that continues to grow with you. We’re constantly trying new things, launching new businesses, and because we’re so big now, it’s got to be automated and integrated.

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How does it help you disrupt?

It’s helping us launch these products that are disruptive in a way that’s supportive and not hindering the business. **It’s allowed us to launch countries faster. And it’s really easy to replicate integrations we have with software and the internal tools we use.** So when we go into new markets, because we have done all the work on the backend, there’s a lot less to do.

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