

BRISA: a company to trust their technology and their people.



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Interview conducted by:
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CEOCFO: *Mr. Toledo, according to the tagline on your website, BRISA has extensive experience delivering custom quality solutions. What types of solutions are you providing and to what types of companies?*

Mr. Toledo: BRISA started its operations back in 1988. We are a 30-year-old technology company and we have been in the market for that long with a huge diversity of clients. It includes technology companies with big names on the global technology business like LG Electronics, Epson, Ericsson and many, many others. It includes health organizations. Like hospitals and other organizations in that area. Here in the US, it mostly includes hospitality companies, especially hotels, property management companies and others in this business.

CEOCFO: *What do you understand about technology that perhaps people with less experience do not recognize?*

Mr. Toledo: Technology is something that people, many times, understand as expensive. However, as a matter of fact, it is a major differentiation factor. If you want to be alive in many businesses in those days, it is required that you go through a process known as digital transformation, which implies you are using technology better than your competition. I think this is the trick that you need to understand in those days; to smartly invest your money in technology.

CEOCFO: *Would you give us a couple of examples of when a company turned to you, what they requested and what you developed for them?*

Mr. Toledo: There are many, many examples, but I can mention some recent achievements that we did. A very large technology company came to us with the need to differentiate its image projectors. What we proposed to them, and we completed the development recently, is to do the projections on non-flat surfaces. Most projections need a flat surface for projecting images. However, a flat surface is not always available. Sometimes it is just curved. Sometimes it is multi-dimensional. With a regular projector now, using this software that we have developed for that company, you can project data onto regular surfaces, and you can even project the image on a sneaker or whatever surface you can imagine.

For hotels, in these pandemic times that we are living in, there are two major requirements in the market that is making their lives more difficult. One is social distancing. Hotels were required to implement many social distance measures. Therefore, what we did for hotels is that we developed front desk automations, set up applications, software and devices in order to help them deal with this labor force scarcity and social distancing and health measurements needed.

CEO CFO: *One of the things that I see on your site in the Why Choose BRISA section, is about your highly qualified full-time employees with very low turnover. How do you manage that? What is the atmosphere? What is it about working at BRISA that makes people want to stay?*

Mr. Toledo: When you are talking about engineers and other skilled people, so what those people are looking for in their career is challenges. And we are living in a very challenging environment. R&D, Research and Development of new technologies, is in our blood stream. This is what makes people interested in staying with the company.

We are a very open company that has developed some internal policies, such as the evaluation of our own professionals in order that they are always part of the business and part of the team and feeling that they are living in a very promising company for over 30 years.

CEO CFO: *Do people in the industry know BRISA and your reputation leads the way?*

Mr. Toledo: I can tell you both stories. There are some industries, especially in the technology industry, that we have a good reputation after years of good work, and we are known, and people reach out to us. However, when we are talking about smaller businesses, like the hospitality industry here in the US, we need to go after those people and make ourselves known in this new area that we are working on.

CEO CFO: *What type of outreach to you do? How do you reach potential clients?*

Mr. Toledo: We do that through marketing; that is one of the tools. We do participate in trade shows. We are always trying to be exposed in magazines like yours and other magazines in the IT industry that are important, too. Those are basically the tools that we are using these days.

"BRISA is very advanced in technology, and we are always there for our clients, when they face problems. And this is the main reason we have a very loyal and recurrent client base". Paulo Toledo

CEO CFO: *Are there particular industries that you are pursuing a little more aggressively than others?*

Mr. Toledo: Yes. At this moment here, the hospitality industry is our number one priority. We are also targeting the IT industry because this is where everything started with BRISA.

CEO CFO: *Is it easier to get interest from the hospitality industry as it is so challenging for them now, or does it make it harder because they are running around in all directions to keep afloat, that they cannot really look at new things as easily? What do you find?*

Mr. Toledo: The industry is facing tough times. Because of the pandemic many of them had to close down completely for a while. In some states here in the US they are still facing difficulty. The reason (to look at technology now) is recovery and this makes things a little bit easier, but the debts are there for them to face. This means both things are true of the hospitality industry.

The hospitality industry has delayed its digital transformation. They use very little technology. There are many, many improvements that technology can bring them, not just cost wise, looking at the hotels, property management and transportation companies and so on, but also on the standardization of services, and quality of services. There are many improvements that can be done through the use of technology. They are very delayed in using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to improve their business and improve their services. Robotization is also something that is delayed in the hospitality industry.

CEO CFO: *What is your global reach today?*

Mr. Toledo: We are established. We have laboratories and people in South America, and we are in North America, in the United States. Most of our clients are in the Americas region, but we also have some clients in Europe and in Asia.

CEO CFO: *Do you see expanding more outside of the Americas or not right now?*

Mr. Toledo: Not right now. We are expanding more here in the Americas.

CEO CFO: *There is lots of opportunity here!*

Mr. Toledo: Here, the best opportunity we have is in the hospitality industry, hotels, automation, property management automation, software integration, and also technology, software technology for technology companies, too.

CEO CFO: *How do you help a potential client get over some of the trepidation in making a change?*

Mr. Toledo: That is a very good question. There are different kinds of companies. When you talk of Microsoft for example, Microsoft is a company that, although they do a good job and they try to do their best, they leave much of the work of testing and fighting the bugs and fighting the problems to the end clients. That is their approach. Several Chinese companies do the same. They just do not care. They just make the product and when you comply, they know there is a problem with it.

There are other companies, like LG Electronics, Epson, and others, that are very keen about avoiding this kind of problem for the end customer. They want the product to be as close as possible to perfection when it reaches the market and there are less headaches for the end client when working with these sorts of companies.

Then we go to small businesses. Small businesses are afraid of technology. They are most afraid of technology supporting costs, and they do not have these huge engineering departments that will handle the technology for them. Therefore, you need to build the trust, first of all, and you do that by being side by side with the client. When you take the chance of a problem, and problems happen every day, if you are there for them at the times that they most need you, that is the way to build their trust and go ahead with smaller companies.

CEO CFO: *I see on your site that 90% of your revenue is from recurring clients! That seems very high to me, so I am guessing you are really satisfying people, or they would not be coming back!*

Mr. Toledo: Yes, that is our major effort; it is to make our clients happy and make them return with new projects and demands to us. As a matter of fact, more than 90% of our total revenue comes from old clients and most of our growth is organic. That means we are stepping up slowly in the number of clients, but we are servicing the best we can for our client base, and that is what makes the revenue recurrent.

As a matter of fact, when we started the company back in the 1980s of the last century, there was an article from the Harvard Business Review that made calculations about the lifecycle of a client. What those people at Harvard have proven is that if you make a little money from many clients for their whole lives, it turns into much more money than making a lot of money from one client, but for one time only. This was something that influence our company since the first days. What we are looking for are very happy clients that stay with us for life.

CEO CFO: *What are you surprised that we cannot do yet with technology? What are you surprised that we are actually able to do today?*

Mr. Toledo: That is a really tough question. I think that what we are not able to do today is to have machines replacing people. At least people are still irreplaceable. Everything that they said about the labor market, that machines are going to replace everybody before the next decade; I do not believe we are ready for that yet and technology is not ready for that, for sure! However, we can avoid some risky tasks, we can avoid many low skill or low brain tasks, replacing that with technology. I think this helps improve the quality of life for everybody, for better education for everyone and this is something that technology can help along.

CEO CFO: *Why chose BRISA?*

Mr. Toledo: BRISA is basically an engineering company that is focused on continuous research and development. Altogether with the company belief that helping a client for life is better than making much more money in one single shot, is something where we differentiate from most of our competitors. We are very advanced in technology, but we are there for them when they have problems, and we are most recognized by that by our current client base.

