



An Interview with Richard Williamson, CEO, G10

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By Commodity Technology Advisory LLC

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Recently, we asked Richard Williamson, CEO of G10 to answer a few questions about his company, the market and CTRM. Given Mr. Williamson's status of a long-time veteran of the Ags CTRM market, his answers provide an honest and insightful assessment of the market and the trends that influence it. It makes very interesting reading and we thank Mr. Williamson for his time.

- **CTA:** *G10 has made a couple of key hires in the last several months in sales and marketing, does that reflect on the readiness of the product for the market?*

- **Richard Williamson:** Readiness for *new* markets, yes. We have a number of things going on at the moment but in terms of recent key hires for our CTRM platform, we have taken on 5 more commodities over the last 18 months, which now that they have been commercially proven, that's 5 new markets for us to sell into.

- **CTA:** *What do you think are the key differentiators of G10's Commodity Manager?*

- **Richard Williamson:** There is an adage that is often applied to software provision that says you have 3 options; good, fast and cheap and that you can only choose 2 of them. With today's technology, and with the right structure, we believe customers can have all 3.

Our key differentiator I think is in the total package - Product, Service and Price.

We underwent an entire technology rebuild around 5 years ago – something that others will have to go through sooner or later and I mean a proper architectural redesign, not just some cosmetic overlay.

With the benefit of 10 years hindsight, we took the opportunity to really step back and examine the wider market and what the problems were that we were trying to solve. Simply put, the market was being served by products that were inflexible, clunky, required substantial customization and that took a long time to implement. It enjoyed an after-sales service that wouldn't always listen and when it did, it was slow. To top it off, all of this would cost a lot of money. We saw it as a great opportunity.

It was reassuring to see it confirmed in some of the presentations at your CTRM Conference last year and again supported in your recent survey on the use of spreadsheets in commodity trading and risk management.

In terms of our product, we have a modern, modular platform that has a user friendly interface with a lot of functionality and flexibility behind it – a culmination of over 15 years experience in providing bespoke software solutions to different stakeholders in the value chain. It comes with integrated CRM, market intel, embedded analytics, a configurable business process engine and it can truly handle multiple commodities. I believe we are unique in this regard.

In the area of services, we have developed a very clean efficient implementation process, helped by the fact that the system comes pre-configured for a number of



Richard Williamson
CEO, Generation 10

About ComTech Advisory

Commodity Technology Advisory is the leading analyst organization covering the Energy and Commodity Trading and Risk Management (E/CTRM) technology markets. We provide invaluable insights, backed by primary research and years of experience, into the issues and trends affecting both the users and providers of the applications and services that are crucial for success in markets constantly roiled by globalization, regulation and innovation.

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commodities and types of business process.

Our team structure is vertically integrated, meaning the same people that do the implementations, training and support also do the development. They visit the farms, the ports, the warehouses and the trading desks to get first-hand experience and understanding of the issues they are trying to solve.

Our clients really appreciate that when they call on us for help, they are in direct contact with someone who can, more often than not, solve their issue there and then. They see us as an extension to their team - their technology partner.

Most of our after-sales service for our clients is based around data mining, analytics and optimisation rather than development of functionality. We are also advocates of the continuous improvement model, constantly looking to refine the user experience. These things combined provide considerably more value and on a continuous basis than simply buying a license to use a piece of software.

And finally in the area of price or costs – traditionally, a CTRM implementation has been expensive, and not necessarily to drive fat margins for vendors. It has traditionally been a mammoth job with costly implementations that took up a lot of man-hours and ever-changing requirements. The product architecture and holistic service delivery model that G10 provide enables us to deliver real value more quickly at a fair value price point that makes this kind of product more accessible.

- CTA: *Where do you see the future of CTRM software in terms of getting an improved Total Cost of Ownership?*

- Richard Williamson: Business disruption with new implementations will be minimal, prices will be cheaper and software selection timeframes will be quicker.

Faster implementations: it will be a matter of username, password and a simple API (for data migration, system integration) to get up and running.

The software will be so intuitive, training will not be required. The software platform and business process engine will be organic so as to adapt to change.

Analytics will reveal many new opportunities and bring efficiencies to the supply chain.

Sharing data up and down stream will be the theme. Data input will be greatly reduced. We will be data managers and explorers rather than feeders.

ComTech Advisory will set up a taskforce to explore the benefits of standardization of data sharing between CTRM systems.

- CTA: *What key trends do you see in your markets and how are you responding to those?*

- Richard Williamson: Honestly? Skepticism, through jaded dissatisfaction all the way through to apathy towards the CTRM space. We are responding by demonstrating our products and delivering on our promises at a reasonable price in a reasonable timeframe.

- CTA: *The G10 Commodity Manager has a very visual UI and G10 has also performed a number of data visualization projects in the cotton and other industries via its D3 product, tell us why G10 places so much emphasis on visualization of data?*

- Richard Williamson: Thank you! Ultimately, as there is so much valuable data, you need a means to digest it so you can extract that value. Business visibility, traceability, risk sensitivity are all more effectively communicated visually. That's what visualization is about I guess. User experience and engagement are also key to success, and a visual GUI is I believe requisite to this end.

Dr Terry Townsend, the then-Director of the WTO organisation that we partnered with, phoned me up to tell me he had learned something new about cotton from the analytics tools we provided. This meant a lot to me as he is *The Authority* in

agriculture statistics and had been for some 35 years. It's not that the information was previously unavailable. It's that it might have taken a couple of analysts several months to reach the same conclusions. It is an honour to now have Dr. Townsend on our Advisory Board.



Generation 10

Richard Williamson is the founder-CEO of [Generation 10](#), a software technology company that provides solutions to various sectors of the global agricultural supply chain including CTRM, quality assurance, cargo marine insurance, finance and big data.

He shares the view that information is key and is a firm believer that key to getting it is through collaborative software and knowing what to measure in order to optimise and find opportunities through better data management and analytics. This is evidenced by the attention given to user experience and data visualisation in the products and services that G10 delivers.

Richard consults for a number of trading companies as well as the USDA, WTO and various international commodity associations and writes regular contributions for trade publications.

Having dedicated his professional life to solving the complex issues in commodity management such as traceability, quality assurance and risk management, Richard is committed to improving the flow and value of information in the world of commodities. He encourages his development team to get first-hand experience on the ground at origin, at the ports and at the trading desk, on the premise that you can only solve a problem you can understand.

G10 has recently launched one the industry's first truly multi-commodity trading and logistics platforms, G10 Commodity Manager, that has proved to be uniquely positioned to serve the needs of the market in terms of functionality, flexibility and ease of use with its quick and cost-effective implementation and pro-active service model.

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