

IBM Announces Planned Acquisition of Bluewolf to Accelerate Cloud-based Customer Experiences for Salesforce Users

Acquisition of global strategic Salesforce consulting partner uniquely pairs cloud services and strategic consulting with innovation in experience design, mobility and cognitive solutions

ARMONK, N.Y. - 31 Mar 2016: IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) today announced plans to acquire [Bluewolf Group LLC](#) -- one of Salesforce's top partners and a globally recognized leader in cloud consulting and implementation services.

Acquisition of global strategic Salesforce consulting partner uniquely pairs cloud services and strategic consulting with innovation in experience design, mobility and cognitive solutions. (Credit: Bluewolf)

Together, Bluewolf and IBM will extend IBM's analytics, experience design and industry consulting leadership with one of the world's leading Salesforce consulting practices to deliver differentiated, consumer-grade experiences via the cloud.

Upon completion of this transaction, Bluewolf will join the existing Interactive Experience (iX) practice of IBM Global Business Services to form a deeper consulting capability for clients adopting the innovative Salesforce solutions that transform relationships with their customers.

IBM iX's deep proficiency in experience design and data integration, combined with the cloud consulting and implementation capabilities of Bluewolf, will uniquely position IBM for both midmarket and enterprise clients in the Salesforce professional services industry, projected at \$111 billion (1).

Bluewolf is one of Salesforce's longest standing consulting partners, with 12 global offices and more than 500 employees in the United States, Europe and Australia. Bluewolf is consistently recognized by market analysts as a worldwide leader in the Salesforce implementation ecosystem, including in [The IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Salesforce.com Implementation Ecosystem 2015 Vendor Assessment](#). Bluewolf has also delivered more than 9,500 successful Salesforce projects for clients including Stanley Black & Decker, Sapa Building Systems and Vodafone Hutchinson Australia.

"There is no question that the consumer-grade experience has emerged as a fundamental element in modern business strategy," said Bridget van Kralingen, senior vice president, IBM Global Business Services. "Meeting that expectation defines next-generation differentiation and competitive position, and with Bluewolf, we add expertise to scale that capability to the cloud-based capabilities of Salesforce."

"I'm so proud of Eric, who built Bluewolf from a startup into a leader in Salesforce services," said Marc Benioff, chairman and CEO, Salesforce. "The powerful combination of our strategic partners, IBM and Bluewolf, will help clients transform and demonstrate the growing client demand for our Customer Success Platform."

"In 2001, Bluewolf became Salesforce's first consulting services partner and today continues to occupy a unique position within the Salesforce consulting ecosystem as one of its most strategic and successful pure-play partners," said Eric Berridge, Bluewolf CEO. "We have since expanded our business model, market experience and incredible talent across the world for companies of all sizes and industries. Now, I believe we have the perfect alliance as part of the IBM iX team -- equally sharing our passion, discipline and desire to be a global leader in the Salesforce partner ecosystem with the scale, skills and expertise of IBM iX to catapult us there."

Businesses are evolving to meet rising consumer expectations for sophisticated experiences. Eighty one percent of C-suite leaders anticipate more digital and virtual engagement by 2020 and 66 percent anticipate a stronger focus on customers as individuals (2). To deliver, companies are transitioning from legacy CRM platforms to cloud-based solutions that enable the agility and innovation required.

Upon close of the transaction, as part of IBM iX, Bluewolf will continue to develop solutions around Salesforce industry implementations, with a strong foundation based on Bluewolf's library of industry-specific assets, accelerators and mutual expertise in the financial services, healthcare, manufacturing, higher education, public sector and new media industries, among others.

The planned acquisition is expected to close in the second quarter of 2016 and is subject to applicable regulatory review and customary closing conditions. Financial details were not disclosed.

IBM iX is a next-generation hybrid consultancy and digital agency dedicated to creating experiences that connect data with design and develop personalized customer experiences that change how companies do business. iX services span industry strategy, creative and design, to scalable digital, commerce, mobile and wearable platforms. iX specialists work side-by-side with clients including Nationwide, Qantas, Jaguar and Wimbledon to co-create experiences that transform brands and result in greater business outcomes.

For more information, visit ibm.com/ibmix and follow IBM iX on [@ibminteractive](https://twitter.com/ibminteractive) on Twitter.

1. Salesforce, *“This Way Up: A Blueprint for Sustaining Growth and Increasing Profitability (Salesforce Investor Day).”* September 15, 2015

2. IBM, *“Redefining Boundaries: Insights from the Global C-suite Study.”* 2015. <http://www-935.ibm.com/services/c-suite/study/>

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