

RAISE OTHERS UP, AND YOU WILL RISE

With purpose, vision, and strong values, this business management consulting firm helps small businesses grow and, in turn, powers its own growth



Rob Braiman, CEO

Cogent Analytics' team of business analysts and senior management consultants want to do more than help entrepreneurs improve their businesses—they want to help them improve their lives. The Greensboro, North Carolina-based consulting group specializes in supporting privately held, main street businesses. With a breadth of expertise, it helps clients increase sales and profitability, streamline operations, design the right team, and support any number of challenges a small business might face.

CEO and Principal Rob Braiman explains the firm's services have a ripple effect. Small business owners are "an amazing segment of society" that employ millions of Americans, create new jobs, and fuel the economy. Their success matters, not just to the owners themselves, but to their families, employees, employees' families, communities, and beyond. The Cogent leadership team communicates the company purpose daily, so every employee knows why they do what they do. Braiman uses a poignant aphorism to explain their philosophy: "Raise others up, and you will rise."

HELPING BUSINESS OWNERS TAKE BACK CONTROL

Braiman helped grow three startups before working directly with small and midsize businesses (SMBs) as a business analyst. He founded Cogent Analytics in 2014 with a vision for how a consultancy should be run. He understood many people launch ventures because they love their industry or trade—not because they love or excel in business. Running a company can quickly become stressful. He aimed to design a company that could help business owners take back control of their lives. By adhering to that mission, Cogent has grown from six founding participants to a team of 125+ in five-and-a-half years. It also earned a spot on

the Inc. 5000 for the past three consecutive years with triple-digit revenue growth.

Culture and core values are the key drivers of success. The firm's foundation is a code of honor: courage, wisdom, faith, perseverance, and loyalty. Those are more than words for wall plaques. They are a sincere belief system that informs how and why Cogent operates. They are not afraid to challenge old-school consulting model in adherence to those values, Braiman explains. For example, unlike many consulting firms, they engage with business owners long after the initial project to ensure plans are implemented correctly and the business owner is fully supported.

GROWING FOR A PURPOSE

Sometimes, people ask Braiman how big he wants the company get, but growth for growth's sake is not what drives Cogent. They grow for a purpose, with goals to support businesses in all 50 states by 2022. They are building a team to support that growth, one deliberate hire at a time. Recruits need more than skill. They need to understand the needs of small business owners and the culture of entrepreneurship, and most important of all, share in the vision of Cogent.

Braiman emphasizes the importance of ongoing skills training for employees, and of securing strategic partnerships so they can connect customers with resources like accountants, attorneys, IT firms, and marketing groups. The hope is that in the future, small business owners can have all their needs met with a single phone call. "We are not growing because we are chasing the almighty dollar," says Braiman. "We are growing because we are doing the right thing."

COGENTANALYTICS.COM

2805
2019
RANKING

\$12.2
MILLION
2018 REVENUE

**DOING
BUSINESS**
IN 24 STATES
AND COUNTING

134%
3-YEAR GROWTH

