



**BLUESCAPE**<sup>®</sup> | COHNREZNICK

CohnReznick Creates  
"Agile Consulting" Model  
to Inspire Clients  
and Accelerate Performance  
3-Fold with Bluescape

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**PAUL GULBIN**

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF COHNREZNICK'S DIGITAL AND INNOVATION SERVICES TEAM

## Agile Consulting Inspires

Historically, accounting and consulting firms have been opaque businesses where consultants are driving business transformation for clients but are doing so in a veiled environment using traditional ways of thinking. Clients are encouraged not to ask too many questions about how consultants arrived at their results, only to accept them.

CohnReznick set out to disrupt the existing consulting model and mindset, so it could more effectively close that innovation gap all while bringing clients through the journey with them every step of the way. Taking a page from the tech development community, the Advisory team at CohnReznick sought a way to employ an agile, continuous innovation process rather than adhere to the traditional sequential or linear-based models used within other advisory firms.

The firm started by re-imagining the traditional “war room.” CohnReznick wanted to ditch the physical limitations of conference rooms and sticky notes, so they could create and collaborate in new, digitally-driven ways, making quick, nimble, and continuous innovation possible.

**COHNREZNICK**  
ACCOUNTING • TAX • ADVISORY

### About Company

CohnReznick is a global accounting, tax, and advisory firm in the United States with a focus on helping growth companies seize the ‘innovation advantage.’

The consultants at CohnReznick identify and develop new ways for clients to better engage customers, accelerate performance, and drive business transformation.

But in the age of customer and digital disruption, when companies must foster innovation to compete, far too many consultants take a “do as we say, not as we do” approach, resisting true innovation in their own methodologies and practices.

CohnReznick believed in order to foster a mindset of innovation in its clients, it had to live this in its own consulting practice and in a way that was plain for all to see. But it couldn't be innovation for innovation's sake. Re-engineering the model had to result in dramatically better collaboration, transparency, and efficiency with clients. It had to mean astonishingly significant improvements.



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## Breaking Down Barriers to Innovation

But how could CohnReznick break down the barriers of the physical war room and create a new, virtual space that was sufficiently collaborative and flexible to transform the way teams interact and ideate? Having a workspace that is always accessible and provides a way to showcase the team's thinking and their work throughout the entire project was also a requirement.

With Bluescape, an innovator in visual collaboration software, CohnReznick created an Innovation Lab in its New York office that brought the firm's vision to life. The lab provides clients with the ability to brainstorm with their CohnReznick teams solutions to their business problems and manage program development and progress quickly and efficiently.

With a capacity to fit the equivalent of 18 football fields worth of information and content, the Bluescape visual collaboration platform lets users edit and manipulate anything—documents, videos, graphics, etc.—on multiple screens. The room has also been equipped with Cisco video conferencing cameras so clients can participate via video.

Now, with Bluescape's interactive, visual collaboration software accessible from large and small screens simultaneously, there is a way to see a project from 30,000 feet down to the most granular level of detail, all in one persistent workspace.

Bluescape has helped CohnReznick remove the physical handicaps to innovation and enable design teams and their clients to see the whole picture of a project in one visual, yet entirely digital platform.

“Because the workspace allows us to collaborate in real time with consultants and clients in different locations, our meetings not only have become more productive, but our team has become more aligned with clients,” said Paul Gulbin, Managing Director of CohnReznick's Digital and Innovation Services team. “We are no longer making linear decisions and bringing them to the client for review, we are making collective decisions based on interaction and discussion, not decisions based on flat PowerPoint slides.”





“Since implementing the Innovation Lab, CohnReznick has increased the number of client engagements and produced more than \$1 million in incremental revenue.”

## Speed to Value: Better + Faster = Higher Revenues

The Innovation Lab has become a safe place for ideas, driving connectivity and community within CohnReznick, which in turn is driving successful innovation on a whole new scale.

Internally, the Innovation Lab and the firm’s agile innovation process have enabled the company’s cyber security practice to create and deliver new services that were never before possible.

Externally, CohnReznick reduced the process for developing a solution for a major pension fund client from nine weeks to two and a half weeks.

The CohnReznick teams are 60 percent faster at solving problems and from an operational process standpoint, they are 45 percent more cost-efficient since the implementation of the Innovation Lab.

Overall, the speed to value has increased exponentially.

“Our Innovation Lab is a game changer. It has brought a new sense of community and collaboration to our client engagements, which in turn created new levels of trust between teams and clients,” said Keith Denham, Managing Principal and National Director, CohnReznick Advisory. “We are able to think differently as a result, and ultimately solve the big problems for our clients faster and more efficiently— reducing client fees and putting real solutions in their hands instantly. And, the Bluescape technology paid for itself within the first month.”

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