

Tony Coba - Executive Bio

A seasoned thought leader in the world of sports and entertainment, Tony Coba is renowned for his technical prowess, compassionate leadership and outstanding aptitude for innovation. Add the fervent enthusiasm of a James Brown fan, and you've got an unparalleled upper-level executive with an award-winning tenure in the information technology industry.

A Chicago native with the true tenacity of a Midwesterner, Coba has been scoring slam dunks with the championship Miami HEAT organization since 2001. For over 15 years, he and his peerless team have been advancing the information technology infrastructure of the city's sports and leisure landscape.

Brought on board as Vice President and Chief Information Officer, he became Senior VP and CIO in 2006 and was subsequently promoted to EVP and CIO in 2014. From managing network security to designing new ticketing systems to spearheading the organization's mobile-first strategic initiative – you name it, he's dominated it. Coba lives and breathes the HEAT's technical vision, part of which includes overseeing the technological advances of Miami's 19,600-seat AmericanAirlines Arena. Auspiciously, he's also an avid sports fan.

Achieving the impossible is Coba's *modus operandi* – proven by his development of the revolutionary “All You Can HEAT” sales portal. By offering customers more purchasing choices, he increased top-line revenue for partial-season ticket sales by a jaw-dropping 100%+ per transaction.

Coba is a true pioneer. Under his leadership, The Miami HEAT became the first and only sports organization in the world honored with the prestigious CIO100 and CIO100 Plus-One awards (the latter awarded annually to only five information technology leaders and innovators across the globe). Coba also took home the 2013 Trace3 Outlier Award, an illustrious honor awarded annually to one outstanding, innovative leader in the IT field.

Part of his knack for cutting edge endeavors includes an uncanny ability to predict the future of tech. The consumer's preference for partial-plan choices? *He called it.* The explosion of in-venue smartphone usage? *He saw it coming.* The paradigm shift from traditional websites to contextually aware mobile delivery? *He knew.*

Above all, Coba believes that technology can serve as a facilitator, connector and enabler (in addition to a brilliant tool for keeping in touch with childhood friends, which he's done for decades).

“We are witnessing the dawn of the always-connected mobile consumer and IT delivery systems must evolve in order to service those limitless opportunities – on the consumer's terms – through the medium of their choice,” he says. It's this commitment to customer satisfaction that makes so

many of Cobra's initiatives remarkably successful, driving fan loyalty, ticket sales, increased efficiency and lots of social media shout outs.

Ask his colleagues, and they'll tell you Cobra's passion and industry proficiency reverberate through every sales portal, ticket platform and system construct he creates. He brings a unique brand of collaborative innovation, a light-hearted attitude and an inspirational outlook to every personal and professional project. Cobra also takes his extensive expertise on stage, keynoting summits, symposiums and workshops nationwide.

A dedicated volunteer and champion of paying it forward, he's also served on the board of the Miami Dade College Business Advisory Council, co-chaired the United Way of South Florida at Knight Ridder and earned kudos along the way for his community service efforts.

Prior to joining the HEAT, Cobra spent nine years as Director of Technology Operations at Knight Ridder, overseeing corporate tech and development for 32 newspapers and data center operations. Before that, he ran a custom residential development firm as a General Contractor where he honed stellar project management, communications and cost accounting skills during his eight year tenure.

Deeply ingrained in Cobra's DNA is doing the right thing – with or without an audience. This inherent sense of sincerity guides his every endeavor, be it as a father, husband, friend, team mentor or senior-level executive.

In the digital age, those who can create a seamless blend of technological advancement, marketplace foresight and personal integrity stand poised to usher in the future of sports and entertainment. That's Tony Cobra in a nutshell. Besides, what's not to admire in a man who shuns standard office art in favor of a framed photo sharing a "soul-handshake" with the Godfather of Soul himself?