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In Tough Times, ImageSoft Finds Efficiency A Good Niche

Southfield-based ImageSoft is finding tough times good for business.

But then, good times were good for business too.

"Because we're in the efficiency business, we tend to benefit when the economy is bad as well as when the economy is good -- for different reasons, obviously," said company president Scott Bade.

ImageSoft offers services and customized software to help institutions in a variety of industries reduce office paperwork.

The company was started in 1996 by founding partners Steve Glisky and James Leneschmidt, with the narrower purpose of helping advertising companies manage their media assets on the Web. The company broadened its business and reinvented itself with the arrival in 2000 of Bade, who is also considered a founding partner.

Bade and Glisky had actually known each other their entire careers -- they started out at EDS on the same day in 1986 after their college graduation, Bade from Western Michigan, Glisky from Oakland University.

Leneschmidt, Bade and Glisky later worked at Pyramid Solutions, breaking off to put their knowlege to use for their own company.

Today, the company is focused on helping customers automate processes, eliminate paper and improve productivity. It concentrates in the health care, insurance and local government markets -- with a particular emphasis on counties and courts.

"Some states have mandated that attorneys e-file," Bade said. "We lay the plumbing to support that."

ImageSoft now serves 13 counties in Michigan and several in Ohio, and just got a deal in Oregon that will touch all 36 of that state's counites. Other customers include the Canadian Automobile Association, the Accident Fund Insurance Co. of Michigan, Farm Bureau Insurance and others.

A typical ImageSoft engagement has ImageSoft studying a customer's work flow, then figuring out how a combination of direct electronic input and paper scanning can render a paper-intensive process -- the handling of court documents, for example -- completely paperless. The company says it offers a quick payback, using custom software along with Hyland Software's Onbase and Microsoft SharePoint products. And its products aid in preparing for disaster recovery and government document security standards.

"The system is backed up every night, so if the courthouse burns down they can pick up right where they left off," Bade said.

Bade said the system allows customers to go department by department, converting paper to electrons.

The company currently has 51 employees, 36 at headquarters, and offices in Raleigh, N.C., Portland, Ore., Grand Rapids and Columbus, Ohio.

And it's currently hiring technical staffers -- developers, project managers and business analysts. Growth is also forcing the hiring of more non-technical staffers like accounting and HR workers.

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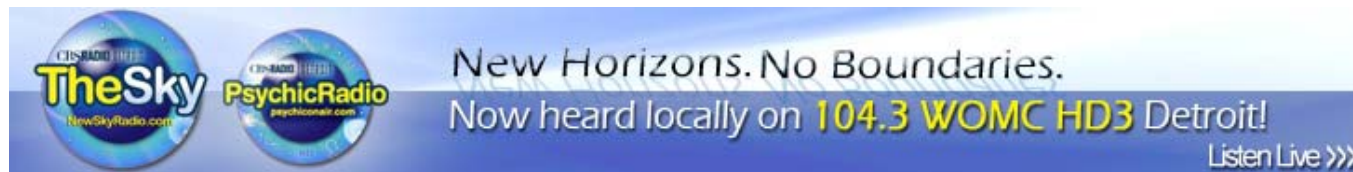
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