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Dedicated IT: What makes them a GrowFL Company to Watch

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CEOCFO: *Mr. Steinhoff, what is Dedicated IT, LLC?*

Mr. Steinhoff: Dedicated IT is an Information Technology provider. That means that we outsource IT department needs, from small and medium sized businesses to our company. That makes us the company that gets the help desk calls if something is not working properly at the organization. We are the ones who make sure that the servers are secure and reliable. We meet all compliances for our clients and, in some cases, we act as a virtual CIO for them.

CEOCFO: *Your site shows that Dedicated IT is a creative IT solutions firm. What does that mean, day to day? How does that creativity come into play?*

Mr. Steinhoff: It comes from one of the core values at our company, which is that we attack challenges with action and innovation. We are the ones who often say, "Wouldn't it be cool if...", and then we actually do it. We don't shy away from road blocks, things that seem insurmountable, opportunities that feel impossible, or things that no one has done before. We are constantly looking at our clients' challenges and thinking outside the box. We look at things from different viewpoints and different perspectives. That is because, chances are, if the solution was easy, someone would have already done it before we got there.

CEOCFO: *Would you give us an example?*

Mr. Steinhoff: One example would be, often in our industry, the companies that we go after, usually have been untouchable to other companies of our size. Other companies seem to be afraid to be responsible for companies that have a thousand employees across forty states. We looked at that and said, "Why is it that other managed service providers or IT providers are scared to touch these large companies, or why have they chosen not to?" What we found out was that, a really unique service model was needed to be able to manage a network of that size as an outsource provider.

We basically white boarded and innovated, and we came up with a model that works. We created a centralized service desk that handles and acts as the quarterback for everything for that client. When necessary, we will place on onsite resource there. This gives them that warm and fuzzy feeling of an internal IT resource, but with the maturity, the ability and the bench staff to be able to fix just about anything that is thrown at them. That is just one way we look at an environment, and think, "Where is the need, and how can we fill it and why hasn't anybody else?" Then, we tackle it and have been very successful.

CEOCFO: *Are companies turning to you as they understand the depth and the capabilities you provide or are they sometimes surprised to find out they have hit on a winner?*

Mr. Steinhoff: I think it is a little bit of both. We have a pretty good reputation in this industry in the areas that we have targeted as our unique niche, so, in that respect, the clients are getting exactly what they expect. On the flip side, there are some people who may be referrals from one of our existing clients. They are told that, "You ought to deal with Dedicated IT. They are really good." That is when we go in and knock their socks off. We really surprise and impress them.

CEOCFO: *You have many industries of focus. How have you decided what types of companies? Are there some areas where you have a little greater presence than others?*

Mr. Steinhoff: Yes. One of the things, that we have elected to do at Dedicated IT and designed into our model, is that we create subject matter experts who understand specific industries, and they know them well. That way, we can provide an IT service that really makes them feel like we know them, their business and the challenges that they have in their unique industry. With that said, one of our really unique focuses, or laser focuses, is in the healthcare industry. We have done very well there because of the focus. The reason being is that we know what software they run, we know what a medical practice office is supposed to be and we get their rhythm. We know that the docs come in at 6:30 in the morning, and they need to know that their calendar is ready to go for the day. If it is not, there is a problem! Therefore, we speak their language, and it has been very successful for us. Now, as far as why, we find that in the industries that are very technology critical, they also have compliance needs, either required by a government entity or something else. That ups the game as far as how important technology is to them, and we shine in those areas.

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CEOCFO: *Regarding healthcare, how do you help a company tweak some of the systems that they are using? How are you able to help practices proactively, particularly with patient contact?*

Mr. Steinhoff: That speaks exactly to what I was saying about really specializing in a specific industry. We have had very good success with orthopedics, optometry and other medical fields like that. For instance, a dentist's office really is not our strong suit. It is not a place that we focus on. However, for the clients that do fall specifically into our niche, we are at conferences on a regular basis, usually six to eight a year. We not only have a booth to meet them, but we are sitting in the same seminars that they are to get up to speed on the latest technology, the latest trends and how practices are running. Again, we speak their language, and we understand what is coming down the pike. We understand many of the challenges that those particular clients have and some of the innovations that they want done.

Anytime we land a new account, one of our unique processes is that we implement a four month period where we have an IT advisor who sits down with their organization and maps out the next three years of what needs to happen in their organization. That includes short term things, like, "Man, that font on that print out is just too small. What can you do about it?"; all the way up to, "Hey, Windows 2019 is going to be sunset in x number of years, and we need to start budgeting for that now, rather than being surprised later."

It is a matter of just listening to your clients, surveying all of their staff in a very detailed way to figure out what they hear on a regular basis that is not working or that is a challenge for them. Going forward, we work with them as partners, to make incremental improvements every single day. The mission of our company is that we exist to help people and organizations be better tomorrow than today, and we live that through and through. Every single day, we are pushing that forward.

CEOCFO: *What has changed in your vision and approach over time? What do you do better today than you might have a couple of years ago?*

Mr. Steinhoff: The nice thing about having a mature organization, or one that is maturing, is that you can spend time working on the business, rather than in the business. That allows you to, very clearly, articulate and hold true to the mission of the company and to really understand what the core values are for the company. Doing so, allows you to hire

people who really do believe in what you believe in and what the organization does on a day to day basis. Then, just get out of the way and let people get down to work.

Now, I have the ability to do regular employee reviews and manager meetings. I have gotten to the point where I can run the business in a very intelligent, strategic way, unlike when it was a smaller organization. It felt like I was running it in 'urgent' mode and always putting out the next fire and the next fire and the next fire. Ultimately, I think it is a maturity and it is a shift from the urgent to the strategic.

CEO CFO: *What do you look for in your people? Are you having the same difficulty so many other companies are in augmenting your staff?*

Mr. Steinhoff: I hate to be a braggart, but we really do not have a hard time finding people. We have a unique organization that gets people excited to work for us. We are not stealing people from Google or Amazon or Facebook or any place like that. The bottom line is that we have one of the best staffs around! I am sure that you hear that from every organization that is growing like we are, but we really do! Part of it is because we have stayed true to our core values, which is that, we attack challenges with action and innovation, we deliver results and we are obsessed with excellence.

We create and foster win-win relationships, and we have fun. We allow our employees to be themselves, and we don't discourage acting a little weird. When you take those four major things, those four core values, and you surround yourself with people who meet those four core values, it is really easy to have fun at work and get a lot done. We've created a place where people want to stay, and they want to invite their friends to come work for us. When they experience the company during the first interview and they walk around and see what is happening, they are infected by it and they want to come work for us!

CEO CFO: *I have to ask; "acting a little weird?" Would you define that?*

Mr. Steinhoff: I think it is about really allowing people to be themselves, giving them a safe place to just let their hair down a little bit. We constantly have running inside jokes around the office. Someone will take a picture of someone else, photoshop a background on it that is just funny, put it up around the place and it becomes an inside joke. What I put in our core values is a statement that, "We vow to fight stale corporate culture by having regular company gatherings and forcing lax dress codes and encouraging terrible Dad jokes and as long as your fun and weirdness does not require HR to step in or the authorities to haul you off; game on!" Going back to your original question, I think it is just allowing people to be themselves. Let them be unique. Do not have everyone cookie cutter to the point where it is just boring. Normal is boring.

CEO CFO: *Would you tell us about working with nonprofits in the community and why that is important for you?*

Mr. Steinhoff: Again, I look back to the mission statement of our organization, and we stay true to it. We exist to help people and organizations be better tomorrow, than they are today. We feel that branches out into the community as well, because what we do for our community will make everyone who lives in it better. Most likely, the organizations that call that particular neighborhood home are better as well. Therefore, if we are true to the mission of our organization, then everything that we do to make tomorrow better than today is a win. We feel that we have been blessed with this organization and what it has been able to do for all of the people whom it has touched. Giving back is a huge part of that.

CEO CFO: *Are there any services that you would like to add that you do not provide today?*

Mr. Steinhoff: The real answer is anything that helps our clients. We have a good client base that believes in DIT as a trusted advisor, and when we see something that looks like it could improve them or us, we find a way to offer it. For instance, we are in the process of purchasing a telephone company right now, because it just makes sense. Telephones are becoming more and more digital, and they are integrating with the technology much more closely. Therefore, why not have that service as something to be able to offer to our clients? We will continue to look for value added solutions that we can bring to our clients and integrate in a really smart way.

CEO CFO: *Dedicated IT was recognized as a Florida Company to Watch. What should we be looking for? What is ahead?*

Mr. Steinhoff: I would say that we are making organizations better tomorrow than today, having a little fun while we do it, but putting brass tacks behind it. We have a pretty lofty goal to grow revenue, to grow jobs, and to really set ourselves apart. We have a list of the largest IT companies in Florida, and we are watching ourselves climb up that list. I don't know that anyone in this company is going to be happy, until we are in the top three or four of that list. I would say growth is definitely something that you guys will be seeing.