

Redi-Direct's mantra: Do more, know more, sell more

Marketing company has survived, thrived by adjusting to times

BY ANDREW SHELDON

Redi-Direct Marketing started in 1989 as a plan drawn up by three guys on the back of a scorecard after a round of golf.

By its first holiday party, at a pizzeria in Wayne, it had 11 employees. Twenty-six years later, the company has morphed from a direct mail marketing business into a technology brand with partners, and 750 employees, worldwide.

"I didn't know what it was going to look like when we started it," co-founder and CEO **Thomas Buckley** said. "Back in 1989, we started a direct mail company and we did a lot of business with New Jersey-based pharmaceutical companies."

Today, Redi-Direct has a global network of clients, brings in annual revenue of under \$50 million and is the parent company of three subsidiaries: **Redi-Mail**, **Redi-Data** and **StayinFront**. And the Fairfield-based business is now built on a product known as Edge CG, which uses cloud technology and data that enable clients to track products from the manufacturing process to the retailer — all to help them stay informed and guide their business decisions.

The most recent global client to work with Redi-Direct, through StayinFront, was **Kellogg**. The cereal company joins the ranks of **Mondelez**, **Mars**, **Energizer**, and **Colgate** and the 50,000 companies using the company's products to impact their strategy.

"The proposition for a consumer goods company is that they have someone delivering product to a small store or retailer and they want to drive more (sales) out of that," he said. "So, they want to turn the person who's delivering more into a salesperson rather than just a delivery person; they want to leverage that relationship."

"Someone has to get that



Above: Redi-Direct Marketing CEO Thomas Buckley. Below: The golf scorecard that started the business. —AARON HOUSTON

product to the store and, rather than just drop it off and shake someone's hand, you want them to say, 'If you changed your display or tie the beverage with the chips, you could sell more product.'"

Edge CG is truly a suite of various products, each with its own functionality. The newest release, an LTE version, is adroit enough to work on mobile devices.

"(It's) a product that's nimble enough to work on your phone and capture the important information, or deliver the information, that the rep or driver in the field needs to maximize that store visit, whether it's au-

diting a shelf and making sure that shelf looks exactly the way it needs to work or how a store stacks up against a similar store," Buckley said. "Then they can produce a customized presentation to the store manager that allows them to make good decisions about that manufacturer's products like where to put it and why to put it there."

According to Buckley, this ability to work globally was helped along by **Amazon Web Services**.

"Prior to that, you'd have to build data centers around the world and Amazon helped because they built the centers," he said. "Now we could be truly global and deliver mobile, cloud-based software anywhere in the world."

And the company is truly that: global.

"We have now nine offices and a pretty solid global footprint and partners like **IBM** and **Infosys** that give us a global reach," Buckley said. "And for large companies, having the ability to standardize and put best practices in place around the world is a compelling idea."

But there's also room to customize the system.

"They have the capability to do some of the things they need to do locally, like comply with local law or have a competitive advantage in their sales process," he said. "Our software allows our clients to both standardize and deliver a slightly different tweak by region."

And to think it all started with snail mail.

For Buckley, the company's success can be attributed to a willingness to pivot with the market when trends shift and opportunity presents itself.

Take, for instance, the company's shift from focusing on the life sciences industry to consumer goods in the mid-2000s.

"The life sciences started changing big time, particularly in New Jersey," Buckley said. "It started consolidating, so we had to pivot more to consumer goods, where the opportunity was greater, particularly for a global company."

With its new focus on consumer goods, StayinFront had to reassess its products to better fit that new market.

Biz in brief

COMPANY: Redi-Direct Marketing

FOUNDED: 1989

HEADQUARTERS: Fairfield

REVENUE: Under \$50 million

real and will track everything from the manufacturing stage right to where it gets into a store," he said. "Life sciences companies are influencing doctors to write scripts, so they might be tracking samples they're leaving, but there's no link between making the product and the sales force selling it because, in the U.S., the pharmaceutical sales reps don't sell the product."

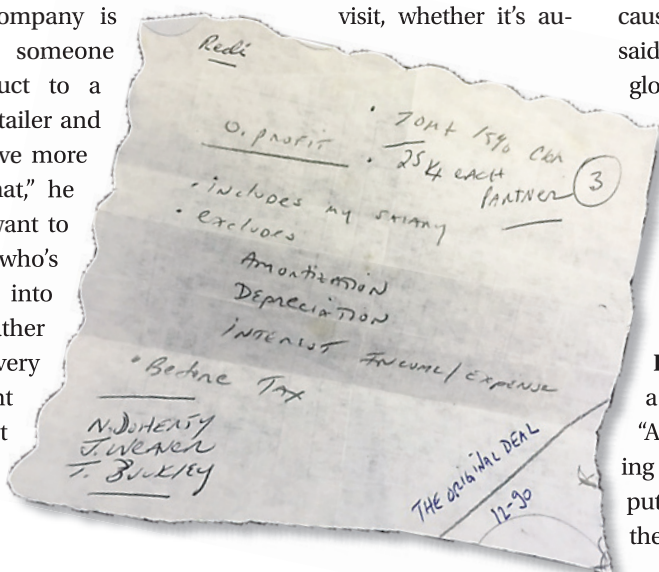
Where does this data come from? StayinFront's clients will often share their information, which they either have or receive from a licensed third party, or retailers such as **Wal-Mart** will often provide this data for free.

"Wal-Mart wants them to sell more in their store," Buckley said. "You sell more, they make more, so they'll help you with some of the data."

"That's our motto," Buckley said. "Do more, know more, sell more."

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