

Accurate Communications Hits 'Speed Dial' to Growth

In an industry known for its high employee turnover, Omaha-based Accurate Communications is the exception to the rule with its special culture that has maintained an 80 percent employee retention rate since the company was founded in 1964 as a telephone answering service.

The stability of the company's workforce impressed owner Jeff Zindel when he purchased the business back in 2000. At that time, the average tenure of the company's 30 employees was 12 to 15 years, with some staff members having been with the organization 35 years.

"When I heard of the longevity here, I knew I had to buy the company," Zindel recalled. "My biggest challenge was to keep my mouth shut and my head down." He joked that his quiet demeanor may have scared some employees at first, but his low profile allowed him to observe the corporate culture and what makes it so special.

"Since buying Accurate Communications, 85 percent of the employees I started with are still here 12 years later," Zindel acknowledged. "And I've been able to observe what they do, how they do it and how to use this special culture to grow our business."

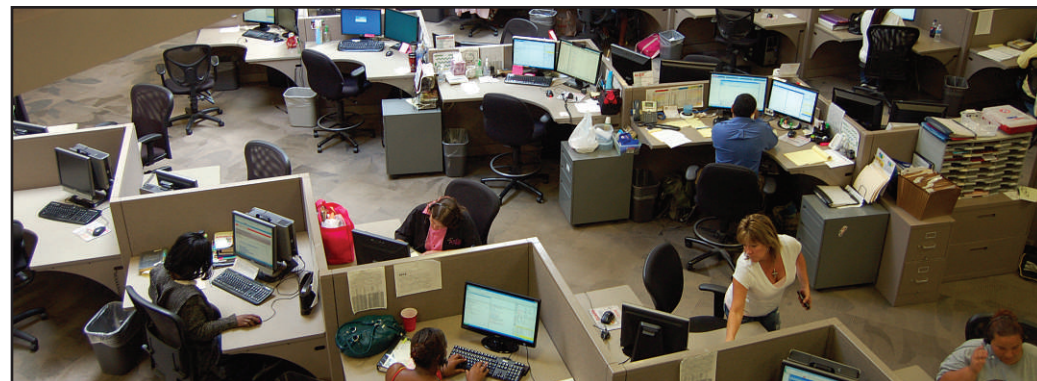


Jeff Zindel, owner of Accurate Communications

Under Zindel's ownership, Accurate Communications has expanded beyond its original Omaha location at 2615 Harney to 2215 Harney Street, through acquisitions in Lincoln, Sioux Falls, Atlanta and Houston. The company's workforce has also increased more than fivefold to more than 150 full and part-time employees.

During that growth period, the company's business profile has evolved into a "boutique" of specialized services, such as telephone answering for numerous business sectors, including the legal and dental professions, emergency utility providers, animal control agencies and limousine companies, to name a few. Accurate telephone agents must be knowledgeable about the businesses they work with and available 24/7.

The company's Medical Answering Service specialists process phone calls for more than 2,000 physicians across the country. The service also employs registered nurses licensed in all 50 states, managing nurse triage and other medical call management. Accurate provides customized services such as appointment setting and order entry, and partners with many major companies to provide their outsourced call center solutions.



Employees working at Accurate Communications' Omaha location

One thing that has remained unchanged over the years is the company's commitment to its employees and to the communities where they live. When an agent comes to work for Accurate Communications, Zindel wants them to stay, which is why the company subsidizes many employee programs and offers them individual assistance when they need it. In addition, Accurate partners with Sacred Heart Ministry Center for financial and legal guidance for its employees.

On a community level, the company supports various non-profit organizations, such as the annual Children's Miracle Network's telethon, with donated telephone answering services, which involve accepting pledges from across the U.S. The company also donates answering services for the Shaken Baby Hotline.

Zindel encountered challenges with his previous bank 18 months ago. "After a 20-year banking relationship, it is hard for any small business to make a change," he said.

"However, when the integrity and trust I had relied upon were no longer evident, I needed to move and move quickly."

With the holidays just around the corner, he reached out to First National Bank and told them what he needed with a deadline of December 31st. "First National's Kevin Thompson and Doug Sutko told me they thought they could make it happen," Zindel said. "And they did."

Zindel appreciated the quick turnaround. He can identify with the culture he's found at First National Bank with its tenured employees, subsidized child care and involvement in the community. "First National Bank took the time to understand my business," Zindel noted.

"I can't say enough good things about them," he added. "Like us, they're focused on the community. I can tell they understand small business."

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