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## Omaha-based Volano Solutions focuses on collaboration with workflow software

by Megan E. Holt

Volano Solutions, LLC partners and founders, Rod Smith and Don Stavneak have built their business around helping business clients become more effective.

The six-year-old consulting and workflow software development business services small to midsize businesses in the greater Omaha area by building custom software to help keep work organized and smoothly flowing through its processes.

“Every business has some unit of work that they push through their doors with a repeated process,” Stavneak said. “We help them track that work — who has it, how long they have had it, and where it needs to go next.”

Most of the work Volano Solutions does consists of building core workflow systems. It also builds portals and customer relationship management, or CRM, systems.

With a business model centered on being dynamic and the ability to adapt or change quickly upon customer direction, Volano Solutions, which has 12 employees headquartered at 1905 Harney St. in Omaha, aims to keep clients informed throughout the process.

The industry has broadened in the last few years, causing computer gurus to become more specialized, and most clients now understand that they need a team of professionals to deliver



**Partners and founders Rod Smith, left, and Don Stavneak ... Launch of new workflow product brings increased revenue to Omaha business consulting and software development firm.**

their information technology solutions, making communication even more important, Smith said.

This shift in industry mindset developed when people began embracing the idea that information technology services are collaborative, rather than a “one stop shop,” Smith said.

The industry has also seen a change in the way software is delivered.

At one time, companies were hiring software staff to sit in their workspace and produce product at an owner or manager’s discretion and direction.

It has since shifted to the thought of having project teams build software for them.

“That’s what we do and how our software is delivered,” Smith said. “We come in, understand what their pain and need is, build a software product for that company, and install it for them.”

Now, however, the business is seeing a need for software that companies can, essentially, rent.

Volano Solutions has an answer to that need, too — Steelwool, its new software product, which launched last June.

Steelwool, a general workflow management software, allows companies to log into their system through an Internet portal and set up their unit of work. They can then configure teams, configure specific steps in the workflow process and track paperwork.

“Steelwool is not an alternative to custom software,” Smith said. “It’s a precursor and framework. What Steelwool replaces is this young or growing company who’s using

spreadsheets and email to keep track of where their work is.”

Through one collaborative platform, Steelwool helps prevent work from “falling through the cracks,” Smith said.

The co-founders hope Volano Solutions becomes a 50 percent consulting and 50 percent product business in the future.

Currently, the product aspect is miniscule, but with Steelwool’s launch, it is seeing the largest revenue increase since beginning the business in 2007.

The company has other software products in the works.

“In some regards, (the business) is growing into what we hoped it would be,” Smith said. “We never really set out to be consultants, but that’s been our hallmark. We’re reaching the point of being able to see our own software products, which was one of our dreams.”

The business name, “Volano,” loosely translates in Italian to “momentum” or “flywheel,” a rotating mechanical device found in vehicles responsible for efficiency.

Smith, an Iowa native, holds a degree from Bellevue University in management of information systems.

Stavneak, originally from Omaha, received a business information systems degree from Bellevue University. The two men have worked together for more than 13 years.

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