

# Raisanen Family Does Business 'By The Numbers'

**Airpark contractor  
creates own CRM tool**

by David M. Brown



Ten years ago, Warren Raisanen of Airpark-based Trades Unlimited was searching for a system that would tell him which of his home-improvement company's sales reps were effective and which were not. He also wanted a robust "customer relationship management" tool to optimize his prospecting, marketing and sales, and to help retain existing clients.

"I searched hundreds of the off-the-shelf CRM software packages and found nothing that would give me the crucial data I needed, so I created my own," says Warren.

At first, he used a modified version of Microsoft Access-based software, hosted on his server, to track the processes and costs of converting leads to customers. Not for sale, the tool was for his use.

But after finding there was a market for it, he expanded the concept a few years later, contracting with a programming company to develop the final product: By The Numbers.

## Measure of Happiness

By The Numbers also gave Warren other tools he required, including the capability of gauging existing customers' satisfaction and coordinating his employees' performance and job happiness.

The new enterprise came none too soon: Warren's company would require every marketing edge as recession-strapped clients began postponing their remodeling and roofing plans.

His brother, Randy Raisanen, began using By The Numbers for his company, Noraxon U.S.A. Inc., a specialty medical-devices company he founded in the Airpark in 1994. Prior to that, in 1984, Randy had started his first Airpark company, SunVek.

Then Randy's son, Todd Raisanen, began using the application for his remodeling business, TraVek, also in the Airpark.

Todd explains that when a lead comes in, he enters all the information he can into the system—name, address, project type, where the prospect heard of TraVek, and other details. The lead is then assigned to a salesperson, who becomes responsible for converting it.

"If the lead becomes a sale, then we hand it over to the production team, who uses the system as a management tool," Todd says. "We can track the timeline, schedule, materials and warranties from the system. We also have internal tracking capabilities that allow us to measure employee performance over time."

And, he adds, the system does more than improve productivity and efficiency. "We are

able to capture definitively our successes and failures to guide us into the future."

Word began to spread about the software. Warren's sister, Susan, general manager for By The Numbers, recalls the first inquiry. Warren was working with a manufacturer on co-op advertising, and the company's marketing person asked how his advertising was working. Warren showed the amazed rep reports on his laptop. "He told her that he had the software built to give this kind of report, and she asked if he'd consider selling a copy of the software," Susan says.

The software provided strong negotiating leverage for Trades Unlimited as well as TraVek. "Marketers realized that Warren, Randy and

Warren Raisanen, owner of Trades Unlimited, couldn't find a CRM tool that met his needs so he created his own.



## By The Numbers

**Description** -Analytical lead, sales & marketing tracking CRM software

**Founder** -Warren Raisanen, owner of the home-improvement company Trades Unlimited, packaged the software in 2008. Raisanen is also host of HouseTalk on News Talk 960 KKNT, airing 8 a.m.-10 a.m. Saturdays.

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Todd were not interested in throwing money down the big black hole—and that anything bought would be measured," Susan says.

Noting the rising interest in their product, Warren, Randy and Todd profession-

ally packaged the software in 2008, as a bad economy deteriorated into the Great Recession. "The main impetus driving Warren to get something developed was that times were getting tougher, and he knew he could not stop advertising," Susan says. "He just needed to know where, what and how to advertise."

### The Right Tracking

Although there are many CRMs available, no other provides small- to medium-sized businesses with comparable analytical tools, according to the Raisanens.

"There is nothing else that brings all those numbers together to get the main numbers you need in knowing for sure whether or not your salespeople and marketing are effective, where they are effective, where they are weak," says Susan.

The typical user fee is \$25/user/month, based on a typical 10-user system, so \$250/month is the average cost. For fewer users, a company would pay a little more. The one-time cost of setup and training has typically ranged from \$500 to \$750.

Valley customer David Greer, principal of Mesa-based Northwind Mechanical, has been using By The Numbers for about six months. "It has helped us to organize our customer base and keep better track of our sales leads," says Greer. "By The Numbers is definitely an asset to our business and has paid for itself many times over."

Since bringing the product to the public, By The Numbers has grown from an initial user base of two to more than 30 nationwide. ■

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