

Reuben D'Souza, CEO

RD Data Solutions

Supplier of the Year – Class II

D/FW MSDC:

Tell us what RD Data Solutions is all about.

REUBEN:

We started the business in 2003 on a part-time basis when a client asked us to do some consulting work for them. Then, seven years ago in 2010, I took on the company on a full-time basis. I used to travel globally a lot, and decided it was just too much. The company was a small company, but we were able to increase the business six-fold in seven years.

I come from a technology background where I worked for Accenture for a number a few years, before working for other companies in the SAP world. I had a great opportunity to partner with SAP, itself, to write the global implementation best practices for BP and Johnson & Johnson. This was a multi-year project. So, that is a little on my technology experience.

What I realized right off the bat in working with RD Data Solutions was to keep the administrative costs very low. A lot of businesses (technology and others) gets too complicated and costly. When I took over I was the sales guy; I was the accountant; I was the operations; I was everything. So, slowly over a period of time, I hired two sales people – one in Florida and one in Chicago. From the client perspective, I still review everything to make sure we get the right people with the right skill sets to fulfill the client's needs. I make sure we can do the job on time and within budget.

RD Data Solutions (RDDS) is a technology firm providing Information Technology Solutions and Professional Managed Services and Resources throughout the USA. RDDS was founded in 2003 in response to the growing demand for IT professionals and services. RD Data Solutions is based out of Dallas, TX and is a Certified Small Business Enterprise as well as a Certified Minority Business by DFWMSDC.

RDDS started as a provider of high level Information Technology Staffing Resources & Solutions in the SAP discipline. Over a period of years, the company has matured into a full-service technology Sslutions and professional managed services organization, while still providing quality resources in the SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, Big Data, Networks, JAVA, .NET and Cloud space. RDDS also has solutions capabilities including full lifecycle implementation, system migrations, system upgrades, risk assessment and governance compliance models, etc.

D/FW MSDC:

What would you say is the biggest differentiator between you and your competitors? (Why should someone employ your company?)

REUBEN:

What makes us different is our people, processes, methodology and our leadership. We are very people focused and we make sure we understand the client's requirements very well. We have an excellent staff dedicated to being the best with complete focus on customer success. We realize that the client success is our success. Listening and understanding our client's pain points, challenges and ongoing issues allows us to provide quality resources for their projects at the right price.

All candidates are technically qualified through rigorous technical and functional interviews by SME's, their backgrounds checked through various social media and other networks. We check their references, double check their experience and check their communication skills. We go over and beyond interviewing the people It's important to make sure we put the right person to do the job. We compete in the same pool as other consulting firms, including the big ones.

While on the projects, we provide Managed Services free of cost to ensure that our consultants are able to execute their work successfully without any issues, are able to meet their deadlines as set forth by the project plan, and within the allocated budget. RDDS understands that budgets are very sensitive subject these days and are prone to a lot of criticism. As we operate with minimal administrative staff and over heads, we have been able to pass on substantial savings back to our clients by keeping our rates very low without compromising the quality of consultants. This in turn has helped clients manage their budgets and execute their projects within budget and on time. And, because we save the client money, that helps us to get more work. We are self-funded with zero debt, also.

Lastly, because we come from a development background, when the client has questions, we try to get them answers within 24 hours. Sometimes it is complex design questions or they need a conference call. We identify our subject matter experts meet with them and try and help answer their questions to make the right decisions and right design. We do a lot more than just staffing, and that is what makes the difference.

D/F MSDC:

What is the best decision you have made in growing your company?

REUBEN:

Right from the beginning, we have kept our administrative expenses very thin. This has helped us navigate our business during down times and successfully grow over a period of time. We are now 15 years into it, with excellent credit rating, a good name in the market and very excited about our future as we grow towards our goal of \$10 Million.

D/FW MSDC:

How has the D/FW MSDC helped your business?

REUBEN:

The Council created a new awareness amongst us and has given us the confidence that no company is too big to go after to grow our business. It has helped us to stay focused with the right messaging, branding and has also given us multiple opportunities to network, train and seek mentorship from the leadership team. Under Margo Posey's leadership, D/FW MSDC is always an email or a phone call away. The Council is always welcoming and there to answer questions and help. You have to know your product, but the Council helps you in understanding how to communicate your value and compete in the market successfully.

D/FW MSDC:

What do you think about winning the E Awards?

REUBEN:

It's funny, my wife has won a number of awards back in India and she has been to many of these events like E Awards. But this is my first one. It felt like a dream come true. We didn't expect it. It was so exciting. And now, once we won the E Awards, our clients look at us a little bit different. They know we are special, we are dedicated and we have been successful in the past. That helps our client managers award more work to us and diversify their spend with a smaller company. That is the biggest advantage of the E Awards and being recognized by so many people.

D/FW MSDC:

What has been the major obstacle you have overcome in growing your business?

REUBEN:

Competition! The perception that we are still a small business consulting services firm is a constant challenge. We are self-funded with zero debt, an excellent credit rating, we carry all the insurance requirements that our clients need, though we all (the big and small) hire from the same pool of candidates that are available in the market, our rates for the same candidates are a lot cheaper (often a savings of 25% to 30%). We have very good customer references and success stories but the fact that we are a small business firm hurts us in winning bigger multimillion dollar long term projects.

D/FW MSDC:

What advice would you give to other MBEs about growing their business?

REUBEN:

Get involved with the Council and be proactive. You have to put in your effort and participate. Once you put in your effort, you will see some difference. The D/FW MSDC under Margo Posey's leadership has some of the greatest tools, training opportunities, mentoring, etc. By getting involved in all the meetings, quarterly luncheons as well as the ACCESS Expo, you will definitely enhance your capabilities and confidence to network and market your products. We are the co-sponsor of the ACCESS Expo and we think it is time to give back. The Council also helps you with your messaging, branding, networking, and go-to-market strategies. They will help you identify your strengths, what value you bring to the table, your differentiators, etc. and how to successfully network and win.

D/FW MSDC:

What do you enjoy doing outside of your work?

REUBEN:

I wish there were 48 hours in a day. Outside of work, I spend a lot of time researching and reading about Cancer Research. I haven't had anyone impacted in my immediate family, but there is so much research going on. I am also a heavy investor in biotech stock market, too. I am very active in the stock market and spend a lot of time on research and analytics. Outdoors, I like to play volleyball against a lot of youngsters. I think I am pretty good. I also like to go for walks and spend time volunteering with non-profit organizations.

D/FW MSDC:

So, if you could say one more thing about your company or you, what would you like people to know?

REUBEN:

Having run the business and grown it to this level so far. It has grown tremendously. So, now I must consider next steps for growing the business to the next level. I am developing an action plan going forward as it grows in to a more significant enterprise. I am also looking at how to bring in one of my son's, who is interested in joining the company and all the ways to eventually transition the company to the next generation. I know the Council did a session on succession planning and these kinds of seminars are very helpful to me for planning and executing within my company.

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