

Prabhu Patil, CEO

PROLIM Global Corporation

Supplier of the Year - Class III

D/FW MSDC

Why don't you tell me a little bit about your company, its name and what you do?

PRABHU

Our company name is PROLIM -- P-R-O-L-I-M. It stands for Product Life Information Management. We developed an enterprise software that will help to build new and innovative products. It could be an airplane. It could be a car. It could be any other form. So, as you march into the future, the product is becoming more complex. It involves hardware. It involves software, electronics and so much stuff. So, how do you put them all together and deliver value to the customer faster, cheaper and better? Our software helps to streamline the whole conceptual thinking, development and implementation so that it can be handed off to the manufacturer.

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How did you get into this?

PRABHU

I was fortunate enough after my masters of engineering studies to become a scientist in the India space program. We started applying these technologies to build a space vehicle of some size. Those technologies required a very complex system. They needed a very complex software. In those days, I started learning how to make it better. I got more fascinated in that. Then, I started working in those companies who wanted fly in space. That's how I worked in that space. Now, I have 35 years of experience in that domain. I can walk and talk that area today.

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So, some of your clients would be people like Raytheon or Lockheed?

PRABHU

Yes, we have an aerospace program. SpaceX is a client. We're very proud of working with them. And Honda Jet, which is the aircraft company in North Carolina. And then we have suppliers. In the automotive industry, we work with Honda and Ford and different supply chain large companies. We work with medical devices for Cardinal. We have developers divided into five industry verticals.

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If I ask you what makes you different, you really told me some of that. Tell me what you think makes you different from your competitors?

PRABHU

If you ask any company today, they say they got it and can deliver on it. Right? The we built our company was with four main values. I call it the four legs on the stool. Number one is knowledge. Second is confidence. Third is execution. Fourth is trust. Whatever we do with a person or a technology person, they have to get the knowledge. If the employee or the person doesn't have the knowledge, first get the knowledge through training, on the job or other learning. With knowledge, then you have confidence. If you have confidence, you can execute successfully. Doing it many times, earns trust. Doing all four is very difficult in the domain and technology we do. That makes us more different and that's how we are winning the trust of the customer and making a difference. We want a customer for life and that's what we work on.

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How does winning the E Award and being a part of the minority council work to help your business?

PRABHU

Winning the award is an endorsement and being a MBE is saying we are a legitimate business and you can trust. Then winning the award is a kind of an endorsement, like icing on the cake. It tells you this company is good. It gives us visibility with the companies that are part of the D/FW MSDC. We can do business with customers and collaborate with MBEs, which we are doing today. I have two MBEs I'm working with today that are my software vendors at DFW Airport.

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That's fantastic! If you had to pick an obstacle that you had to overcome, what would you say was one of those obstacles you had to overcome to build a successful business?

PRABHU

It is coming from India, being a minority and starting to get established in this country. You go through a lot of. We need a lot of tailwind. Being an MBE helps the tailwind to some extent. Beyond that we need to drive with the aircraft to reach the destination. So, the obstacles are many. There are a lot of headwinds. That includes how to approach the customer. Because you start from scratch, you have to decide how to find new customers, how to get the talent and retain the customers. There are a lot of challenges. Along the way, we learn and grow. To many an extent, you can talk to MBEs who are in the same boat and learn from them. Then the Council can open the door. They cannot give you a project, they cannot give you a P.O., but the MSDC will open up the door for you. Then, with your credibility you can do business with a customer. There are a lot of obstacles, but you can work on them.

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So, your good advice to MBEs is to keep working at it.

PRABHU

Yes, keep working on it. Don't lose the focus on your customer and what they want. Whether you make money or lose money, commit to develop. That's number one. And the second is don't ignore MBEs. Don't think of them as your competition; think of them as your collaboration. Work with them. You can do.

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When you're not working, what do you like to do?

PRABHU

When I'm not working, I am an entrepreneur and I love doing this. I'm a Board of Director for Dallas Business Club which is businesses here in the DFW area. We advise and try to help other entrepreneurs. I am also on the Board of Directors, a non-profit organization for the Indian community where we train youth. We talked earlier about diversity. These kids are born here. Then how do you provide a platform so that they all understand the differences and how to live with those differences. And, use those differences as your strength to grow. That is the mission I'm in. I made money, but now I want to help others to grow.

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Is there anything else you'd like people to know about PROLIM or yourself?

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For PROLIM, it's all about the customer for life. We are there to help our customers, help other MBEs or other entrepreneurs who are not MBEs to grow. As an Entrepreneur, we can hold their hands and help them. I visit the University of Texas Dallas where I was a judge for several of the competitions. I won last year the U.S. Indian Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur of the Year. And this year, I won the U.S. Administration Small Business Enterprise of the Year 2017. I had to have enough knowledge and experience, being an Master of Engineering and a MBA. For a lot of knowledge and I want to follow that with helping others and grow them. I truly believe in that.

My daughter now she's in the 11th grade. She wants to do different things. Again, I am a very encouraging of women. In my company, I want to encourage women to take the leadership roles instead

of doing clerical work. It is the same thing I am imparting to my daughter. When she was in the 10th grade, she went to New York, Columbia University and she did a business case to start up a business. Now, she won DFW area business start-up competition. They won at the state level last month, before going to the international competition. These kids have a lot of talent and all they need is a little bit of guidance and encouragement. I was surprised when she said she wanted to build a balance sheet and income statement. I said you're not learning anything about this yet. How do you do it? She read the book and she started preparing them. Finally, I graded her. Now she knows balance sheet and income statements. Kids have a lot of talent.

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