

Former PPC employee starts own software-consulting firm

By Kevin Tampone

Journal Staff

SYRACUSE — Glenn Allen was looking for more challenging work while employed in the IT department at precision-product manufacturer PPC in East Syracuse.

So last November, he quit his job and started an independent, software-consulting firm from his home in the Syracuse area. He secured his first contract in January.



Allen

Although his company, Excelsior Solutions, LLC, is currently a one-man shop, with most of the work being done on-site at his business clients' facilities, he hopes to expand his business in the future.

"This was a first big step. Some people come out of school and never have that issue. They're entrepreneurs right away," Allen says. "It wasn't exactly like that for me. I came from the background of you go to school and then you get a good job."

Allen also spent time at Health Care Data Systems and Computer Sciences Corporation, both in Syracuse, after graduating in 1992 from the State University of New York Institute of Technology in Utica. He earned a degree there in computer information sciences and master's degrees in systems and information science and engineering management from Syracuse University.

He decided to strike out on his own for several reasons. The lure of being his own boss was one of them, he says.

"As an employee, you can only do so much," he says. "You eventually start to flat line and get bored. To ultimately challenge yourself, being a consultant is the way to do that."

It's easier to acquire new skills and to find interesting projects as a consultant, Allen explains.

And while he says he is enjoying his current one-man business model, he does hope to hire employees in the future. All it would take, he says, is a contract that would be too big for him to handle on his own.

Before he starts looking at those larger jobs, however, he wants to spend more time familiarizing himself with the consulting world.

"It's a different mentality when you're a consultant," Allen says. "You're not an employee of a company so you shouldn't act like one and you shouldn't think like one."

He also wants to work on automating some of the clerical functions at his com-

pany, such as billing. Once some of those things are working in the background, he says, he will begin exploring progressively larger projects that would require additional help.

"I want to establish myself and get my name out there a little, but I definitely see myself going in an entrepreneurial direction with this," he says.

Allen declines to disclose his current or projected revenue.

Allen is currently working on a project for Rolls-Royce in Indianapolis. His first project was for Symbol Technologies in Holtsville, N.Y. He plans to focus his business on the Northeast and remain

based in Syracuse.

He currently specializes in SAP business software. SAP's products can handle every aspect of running a business, from human resources to accounting.

Allen helps firms customize SAP software for their clients' individual needs. Some companies that use SAP software include Eastman Kodak Company, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.

As Allen adds to his business he plans to expand into other information-technology areas.

SAP is one of the largest software companies in the world, which means there

are probably thousands of other people working as independent contractors, Allen says.

"There's so much competition within SAP," he says. "There [are] so many people doing this."

Allen acknowledges the competition is stiff, but believes his experience during his time as an employee will help set him apart. He says PPC sent him for extensive training at SAP. He also believes he will be able to build on those skills as he works with more consulting clients. □

Contact **Tampone** at ktampone@cnybj.com

**Business needs growing?
Add people.**

**Banking needs growing?
Add rewards.**

Introducing Key Business Reward Checking.
Select rewards most beneficial to your success.

New Key Business Reward Checking lets you select options as your business needs change. Maintain an average monthly balance of \$5,000, or a \$15,000 combined balance in qualifying business deposit accounts to waive the monthly maintenance service charge. You also get 14 discounted and fee-waiving rewards, including¹:

- Free 500 combined monthly transactions
- Online Banking with Free² Bill Pay
- Overdraft protection, no annual fee³
- Responsive Line Of Credit up to \$100,000 with 0.50% rate reduction³

Achieve anything.

Switch today and gain the full financial benefit of a Key Business Reward Checking account. Visit a KeyCenter, call 1-888-KEY4BIZ or go to Key.com/smallbiz.

KeyBank

¹ Offer valid with Key Business Reward Checking only. Minimum deposit to open, \$250.

² Normal account service charges still apply.

³ Subject to credit approval.

Key.com is a federally registered service mark of KeyCorp. **KeyBank: Member FDIC.** ©2005 KeyCorp.

Your source for local business
news and information

www.cnybj.com

BOOKMARK
US TODAY