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LOCAL SPIN

Flagler County fertile ground for tech company

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Tim Hale

There was a time when cars were made in Detroit, movies filmed in Hollywood and high finance was centered in New York City.

But the information technology revolution has blurred geographic boundaries in many industries and given communities across the country a chance to compete for economic development.

Flagler County has benefited from the growth of high-tech firms and has focused a lot of time and money trying to attract that type of company to the area. Two years ago, Coastal Cloud opened in Flagler and it recently was named one of the 50 Companies to Watch by GrowFL.

For a look at how technology has changed business development, Tim Hale, co-founder of Coastal Cloud, offers the local spin.

What does being named one of the 50 Companies to Watch by GrowFL mean to Coastal Cloud?

It's a fantastic recognition for us, given how new we are. I think we are the first ones in Flagler County to win. We've been very blessed this year.

What does the recognition mean for Flagler County as a high-tech hub?

I think it is the beginning of validating our area as a destination for high tech. And I would say we are riding a high-tech wave. We often implement something called Salesforce and it is just a super-hot tech company. We're benefiting from them having an exceptional growth rate. And we are fortunate they have selected us as one of their top tier partners.

Coastal Cloud celebrated its second anniversary earlier this year. How has the company grown and how many employees are there today?

We're at 75 now, which is ahead of where we wanted to be (to reach) 100 by February. If we keep doing what we're doing, we'll be at 100 by the end of the calendar year. It is validating our business model of tech services wrapped around the cloud delivered from the beach at a reasonable price.

How competitive is the market for the type of services Coastal Cloud provides?

We're competing against offshore IT guys and then more expensive onshore IT firms in the big metro areas. We're this different idea of being somewhere in the middle. We've been blessed mostly because we've been able to acquire a super talented team. At the end of the day, it's all about the people. Having the right skilled people and understanding the technology we work with and then put that all together.

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