

TRENDSETTERS

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CHAD PATTON

Making transportation glamorous

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PHOTOS BY CARL SCHULTZ

As with so many Arizonans, golf brought Chad Patton to the state. The Kansas native headed to Florida to attend college, and then jumped at a chance to pursue a golf career in the Phoenix area. He never could have imagined, however, that in two decades he would be a leader in the transportation and logistics industry.

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up close

Creating a Winning Model

Patton left his hometown in Kansas and headed for Florida Southern College to pursue his love of golf. When he was offered an opportunity to leave college for a position in Arizona, he jumped at it.

"College just wasn't right for me," explains Patton. "It's just not right for everyone."

Over the years, Patton pursued a lot of interests, most of them involving sales. He credits his father for his work ethic.

"I grew up on a ranch in Kansas. Early on my father told me, 'One thing I'm going to teach you is how to work hard! And that's what I learned from him,'" he explains.

Patton says he didn't appreciate it so much as a teenager, especially when his friends quit coming around for fear the elder Patton would put them all to work checking fences. But today he is grateful, and hard work has definitely paid off for him.

Today, Patton's career in the transportation industry has turned into a gold mine. "Transportation isn't really sexy," laughs Patton. "Freight might not be the most glamorous profession, but the transportation world has its finger on the pulse of the world's economy."

In May 2012, Patton and his business partner, Carson Holmquist, founded Stream Logistics. The concept is unique

in the transportation industry.

"It's a boutique-style company," explains Patton. "We want quality over quantity. We focus on customer service. We hire people, not paper. We actually prefer to hire young people without experience so we can mold them."

Stream Logistics, which started inauspiciously enough in Patton's kitchen ("Every company has to start somewhere," jokes Patton), focuses on high-end manufacturing companies.

"We ship the alphabet," he says, laughing, "but not every customer is a fit for us."

Stream Logistics is what is known in the industry as a 3PL—a third-party logistics firm. They sell knowledge. They know the equipment providers. They know the best suppliers. Patton and his company focus on the logistics so that a manufacturing company can specialize in what it does best—creating a product. It's up to Patton to make certain the product gets where it needs to go.

It's All About the People

Stream Logistics (www.streamlogistics.com) started out small with just three employees and, by focusing on the people, grew rapidly. Just three years later, the multi-million dollar company employs about 20, has more than 100 clients, and

makes more than 60 shipments every day.

"It's all about the people," Patton explains. "The relationships are key. We take care of the people we hire. I truly believe you are who you hire."

Patton says it is important for all Stream Logistics employees to be polished. "They have to interface with people all day." To ensure this goes smoothly, Patton works with his employees to master phone, email, and face-to-face communications.

Success Comes Fast

Since those first days back in 2012, Patton has watched the company expand exponentially. The company recently moved into new headquarters in Optima Sonoran Village near Camelback and Scottsdale roads.

"Sometimes we don't get a chance to sit back and watch the growth," laments Patton.

But he doesn't forget to give back. Stream Logistics launched a partnership on Jan. 1, 2015 with Phoenix Children's Hospital. They donate dollars for every load they book.

"It has been a life-changing experience," Patton says. "We cut them a check every month."

Time for Fun

Patton works a lot of hours—so many that he no longer plays the golf that brought him to the Valley—but he does find time to enjoy Arizona and embrace his love of the outdoors.

"I'm a huge fitness fanatic," he explains. "Fitness and health are still an important part of my life."

While he loves living in Arizona—being outside 365 days a year, feeling the great energy of the sun, and savoring all the amazing new restaurants—he also has a passion for exploring the world.

"I love to travel," he says. "I've been to Maui and Spain this year, and am heading to Australia this fall."

And for the future of Stream Logistics and his vision of a boutique-style transportation company? "We're going to keep ramping it up, continuing to expand, and hiring good people."

