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Photo by Rick Myers

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Philanthropic Tendencies

Greg Simons grows Simons Bitzer while making it his mission to give back to community and other entrepreneurs

By Nicole Davis

Starting out, Greg Simons had many aspirations and goals in life. In his nearly 18 years of owning Simons Bitzer & Associates in Indianapolis, he says he has been able to meet those goals, accomplishing things he never imagined. Still putting forth an effort to continuously better himself and his company, Simons says that owning the CPA firm has not always been easy, but he finds pride in maintaining a successful business while helping other entrepreneurs and giving back to his community.

“When I first started it was a very nice change of pace and feeling of independence,” Simons says. “I was very pleased with all the support with the contacts in the business community. As I was growing, I saw some of the difficulties you can have when growing a business. By year three or four, I myself had a sense of feeling out of control. All of us as business owners need help in growing out business and becoming a successful organization.”

Simons, who worked for two Fortune 500 companies out of college, says he always had a drive to be an entrepreneur. When he started Simons Bitzer & Associates, he was working in his home office. He has grown into a commercial office on S. Emerson Ave. in Indianapolis near Johnson County. With a staff of 16, he says he has been able to provide more service options for his clients.

“The hardest challenge is maintaining a work-life balance,” Simons says. “I am a workaholic by nature. As soon as you have one thing occurring, you have constant change. There is always the need to put in the extra time to make things better. The last couple years, through good delegation and organization, I find time to make it to every one my daughter’s (sporting) events. Probably 5 years ago, I never thought I could find the time for these kinds of things.”

Simons says he has learned a lot from organizations such as RAN ONE, which teaches accountants and advisors world-wide how to grow a successful business and help their clients grow. His current focus is on managing

client relationships, resolving common business issues and working with the firm’s tax specialists. He says as long as he has hard-working, qualified employees, the company will continue to grow.

Simons says he feels his company should share its continued success, and makes an effort to contribute to the community on a monthly basis – packing food for Kids Against Hunger, hosting Goodwill Drives, sponsoring children and families during Christmas times and also granting an annual accounting scholarship for an accounting student at Indiana School of Business, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis.

“I think a lot of people are not sure if they want to be involved in the community because they aren’t sure what they want to be involved in, how they can make a difference” Simons says. “But I think you need to think about what you’re passionate about and you can go with that. You need to make the commitment that you will allocate so much time to your community.”

Named the 2011 Outstanding CPA in Public Practice by the Indiana CPA Society, Simons says he almost didn’t even tell anyone about it because he’s not in the business to win recognition. It’s all about helping not only his community but also his customers. Simons, an active member of the Greater Greenwood Chamber of Commerce, says helping other businesses with their financial matters so that they can focus on other important items to be successful is what keeps him going.

“There is never a better feeling than when you help someone solve a problem,” Simons says. “It is the smaller businesses that are the backbone of our country. So it’s important to help them to be successful and keep our country going. I make sure I do a lot of reading to get good ideas for not only me but my customers. We want to continue to be a firm that businesses see as a resource to help them solve their everyday problems.”



Greg Simons



The List

Reasons someone would want to do business with you...

■ Many of our accountants have over 20 years of experience working for private companies as well as public accounting firms.

■ Our accountants have experience with a variety of accounting software programs allowing us to jump right in when you need us.

■ Our customers have the flexibility of working with us on an as-needed basis. We will work with you weekly, monthly or even quarterly depending on the situation.

■ We take a consultative approach to each of our engagements. We are truly passionate about our customers’ success and work diligently to look at their business in its entirety.

■ We care about the community in which we serve. We frequently coordinate and participate in community outreach projects. We offer complimentary educational seminars throughout the year and support our local business chambers.

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How Greg did it...

Best advice: Be sure you’re focusing your business on things you are most passionate about, things you’re good at doing and things you’re most profitable with.

Worst advice: Businesses that decide they don’t want to hire anyone and do it themselves. They are keeping themselves from going.

Best business decision: When I decided to get into RAN ONE and learn about consulting. It’s caused us to take a different approach in how we think about our customers and issues.

In 5 years: I want to continue to offer quality services to our customers. I only want to grow the firm and expand our reach

if I am able to hire and retain the best possible talent. That could mean significant growth in the next five years or the firm could be the same size as it is now.

Secret to success: Staying focused on what we do best rather than trying to spread ourselves too thin. We do not have the expertise to take on

every accounting challenge. When situations such as this arise, we find the best resource available and introduce our customers to them.