

EVERY BRICK COUNTS

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Photography by Jon Keeling

A number of ancient round towers rise from the mist on the Emerald Isle. Though there is some debate about whether they were conceived and constructed to protect valuables from pillaging Vikings, serve as watch and bell towers or built for some deeper purpose, one thing stands out – they are still standing.

The changing seasons, forces of erosion and time itself testify to the architect's principles and the skill of the builders. And it all starts with the foundation.

Since 2007, another tower has risen on the ever-changing information technology landscape. And like its namesake, RoundTower built the foundation right.

RoundTower was founded by Stephen Power and Stephen West. Kurtis Lindemann, the company's chief information/technology officer, has an ideal perspective as to why RoundTower is not only still standing,

but growing taller and stronger. He did get in on the ground floor when he was hired as the company's first employee.

"From the beginning, RoundTower has been built on the principle that we were not going to be just another transactional company eager to simply sell products," Lindemann says. "We've always focused on adding technical value to what we offer our clients so they can stay focused on their core business. Do the right thing for the customer and good things will happen."

And good things are happening

for RoundTower. It has become one of the country's fastest-growing providers of data storage and protection as well as virtualization engineering and management. RoundTower's ascent is connected to positive word of mouth as well as being selected for numerous lists, such as Forbes Most Promising Companies, Inc. 5000 America's Fastest Growing Companies and the CRN Triple Crown.

West and Power have also resisted the temptation to become everything for everyone and jump on every speeding bandwagon. Making the right choices at the right times has helped keep the company focused. Lindemann also sees how their culture of communication, collaboration and hiring the best and brightest in the industry makes a critical difference.

"We have a culture where people can ask questions and are encouraged to challenge the status quo," he says. "Lessons can be learned and applied. Our staff is committed to building relationships and providing solutions to empower our customers so they can be nimble and productive in their IT usage."

Growing fast while staying stable and solid requires a series of purposeful choices: attracting talented technicians and engineers



From left to right: René van den Bedem, Practice Manager of Cloud and DevOps; Kurtis Lindemann, Chief Information/Technology Officer; Andy Gallimore, Practice Manager of ServiceNow



and empowering them when they have joined the family. This strategic investment in hiring the industry's best illustrates another component of success.

As RoundTower has responded to IT's changing channels and opportunities by moving beyond that initial trio of data storage, protection and virtualization and into cloud computing, data analytics, DevOps, ITSM and advanced security consulting, they've brought in the kind of builders who are focused on innovating, not simply maintaining.

- Keith Odom, executive vice president of systems engineering (formerly vice president of global professional services for VCE), is tasked with continuing to build the thriving data center practices while building out the newer business units.

- René van den Bedem, practice manager of cloud and DevOps, recently attained his third VMware Certified Design Expert title, a feat that has been accomplished by just two people outside of VMware. Combined with his Nutanix Platform Expert Certification, this qualifies

him as one of the world's leading cloud architects.

- Patrick Toole, practice manager of data analytics, has previous industry experience on the vendor side from companies like MapR, Hadapt and Vertica. He brings his deep knowledge of data analytics to help expand this offering that has been identified by many CIOs as one of their top initiatives in 2017.

- Earl Gay, practice manager of end-user computing, is responsible for all things revolving around desktops, applications and mobility. He brings industry recognized leadership in the space of secure end-user experiences. He has helped multiple Fortune 500 companies solve business challenges to become true productivity enablers.

- Andy Gallimore, practice manager of ServiceNow, previously deployed the ServiceNow portfolio on the customer side as well as in the consulting space. He focuses on optimizing the growth potential of this enterprise toolbox that includes capabilities for IT Service Management, IT Business Management, IT Operations Management and automation.

This is a small sample of the commitment RoundTower is making to not only expand its physical space (they moved into a new 32,000-square-foot office in Kenwood in May 2016), but their personnel space as well. With an atypical ratio of three technical staff to every one sales rep, this keeps their engineers fresh and their customers happy.

As RoundTower approaches its 10th anniversary, Lindemann is still looking from his own watchtower. Building on his foundation of expanding expertise and curiosity while playing his part to cast the vision for where and what RoundTower will be in the next 10 years. With each new direction and new hire, the company accelerates their business and that of their growing client list.

"We're not about just the founders or the first few employees. Every one of our team members is critical. Every brick counts," he says.

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