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PHOTO BY RIP STELL

Fee Technology President Dan Zalta shows a screen shot of his fee-setting software.

Tulsa companies offer key to set, control profitability

Partnership plans national launch of new software

BY KIRBY LEE DAVIS
THE JOURNAL RECORD

TULSA – Even veteran business owners struggle to effectively price their services or profit from equipment maintenance and upgrades.

Two Tulsa software companies believe they hold the solution – one they hope leads to national prominence.

“It’s revolutionary accounting software,” said Dan Zalta, the Tulsa accountant and consultant who developed the still-evolving Profit Solver package. “It’s instrumental in how to show a company how to create the profit it needs.”

The patent-pending software helps professionals determine pricing for labor, services and equipment return-on-investment to reach their targeted profit level, eliminating guesswork over fees. Zalta’s three-employee firm Fee Technology created Profit Solver for a wide range of professional operations, from veterinary and medical clinics to painters, landscapers and law offices.

Through a partnership with SchoolDESx LLC of Tulsa, Fee Technology expects to roll the product out nationwide this year. SchoolDESx partner Matthew Dyer said the two firms are starting a new, yet-unnamed company to support that effort on a Web-based platform.

“I think it could have a huge impact on our revenue,” said Dyer, whose 25-year-old private company recorded more than \$2 million sales last year of school and beauty salon management software. “Especially once everybody understands what it does.”

After almost a decade as a profitability consultant, in 1998 Zalta started working on this concept to help veterinarian and friend Randy Carsch. That duo teamed up to create the Tulsa firm Fair Free Solutions in 2004, selling packages to more than 300 veterinarians across the country. One, Terry Ford of the North Dallas Veterinary Hospital, said the software helped boost annual profits at his three-doctor practice by more than \$200,000.

As he realized business professionals across a wide spectrum shared the same problems as Carsch, Zalta broadened the application.

“It was a great product and it still works, but in that one I set the profit level,” he said of the Fair Fee package. “In this pro-

gram, you (meaning the user) set the product level you wish to achieve.”

The Fee Technology software helps users do that by having them load an income statement based on labor demographics, production factors, equipment inventory and maintenance data, and product inventory stats.

From that, Profit Solver determines billable employee costs and time by employee down to the minute, equipment return on investment and other key factors. It then modifies those factors by the desired profit level to not only recommend prices, but identify loss leaders. It also shows how to correct prices due to rising wages, health care costs, and other inflationary factors.

“No other software does this,” said Zalta. “Every service is broken down by who does it, how long it takes and their labor rate. This gives you exact profit in labor, equipment and inventory.”

“Now you can lower your inventory down to cost and know your true profit comes from labor,” he said. “Now you truly have a way to be competitive.”

Released last week to Tulsa area businesses, Zalta has already lined up five customers for Profit Solver, starting at \$695.

Dyer, who is preparing plans to take SchoolDESx public, foresees packaging

the program with its school and beauty salon management programs. Since Profit Solver takes SchoolDESx into a wide variety of sectors for the first time, that firm also has the opportunity to adapt its software for new markets. Dyer thinks both could find audiences among other non-profits.

While the partnership intends to expand Profit Solver sales through trade show presentations and other traditional marketing venues, creating its Web platform promises not only simpler distribution and usage, but a worldwide audience for Profit Solver.

“As you notice, there are no dollar signs,” said Zalta, pointing to the display screens. “I created it purposely that way.”

But the biggest venue may come from packaging Profit Solver with products offered by Intuit or Microsoft. Dyer said SchoolDESx has contacted the software giants about incorporating Zalta’s software, a prospect that has the Tulsa developer almost giddy with anticipation.

Having spent about \$700,000 developing Profit Solver, Zalta remains at work creating modules for other industries. His next target: the restaurant sector.

“It’s a fascinating product to me personally,” said Dyer, an investment broker who joined SchoolDESx to help it go public. “I’m having a lot of fun with it.”