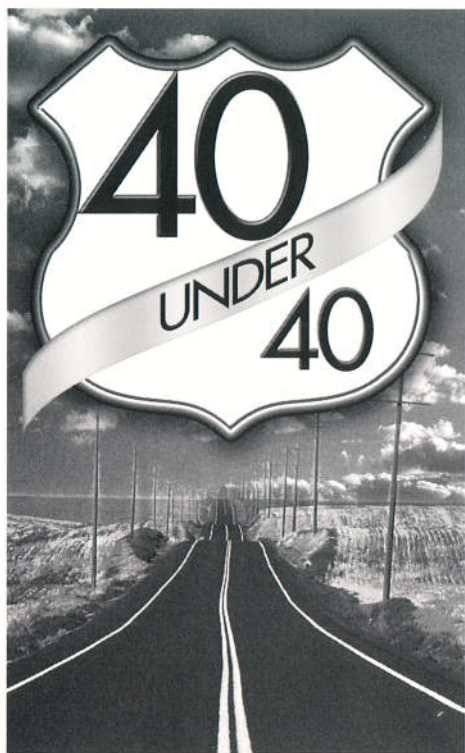


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PHIL HORSTMANN, 38

President, Ascent Corp.

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After 13 years as a paramedic firefighter, Phil Horstmann knew it was time to start his own business.

He left the Creve Coeur Fire Protection District in 1998 to form Pillar Inc. The name changed to Ascent Corp. in 2001. "I knew that I wanted to work for myself for a long time," Horstmann said. "I just really didn't know what I wanted to do. I was basically a misdirected youth."

Ascent is actually Horstmann's second entrepreneurial endeavor. In 1987, he and his brother Paul formed Horstmann Brothers landscaping. Paul Horstmann is president of the landscaping company and handles the day-to-day operations; Phil Horstmann is vice president.

Initially, Ascent made its mark as a creator of secure data hosting centers. It directed the construction of 14 facilities in nine cities in North America, including one for Savvis Communications Corp.

"Phil Horstmann and his people have an uncanny ability not only to anticipate our needs but to resolve mission-critical problems on a moment's notice," said Rob McCormick, chairman and chief executive of Savvis.

As demand for data centers waned, Ascent found new growth avenues for its information technology expertise by marketing its services to non-tech companies. Ascent will analyze a client's IT needs, identify optimal hardware and



Phil Horstman

software, install it and wrap its work up with a "knowledge transfer" by teaching clients how to use and maintain their systems.

Under its second major growth initiative, Ascent offers its technical expertise to commercial real estate developers launching new projects or redevelopments.

Ascent also provides turnkey IT relocation service, including technology

Education: Attended Meramec Community College, St. Louis Community College, St. Louis Fire Academy

Family: Wife, Karen, Sons, August, 8; William, 6; Mason, 4; and Henry, 2

Last book read: "Nothing like it in the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863-1869" by Stephen Ambrose

Resolution for 2003: To aggressively grow the company and our products and continue to give the best service in the industry

Making headlines: Ascent makes Forbes' 100 best companies to work for

infrastructure, to companies moving one office across town or 10 offices across the continent.

Since 1998, Horstmann's company has been awarded more than \$900 million in enterprise-scale IT assignments. Compared to its 1999 baseline, revenue for 2002 will be up more than 650 percent, to more than \$5 million.

In the past year, Ascent has increased its staff by 40 percent.

"We want to try to double the size of the business in the next year, which is a pretty lofty goal, but our key team has signed up to that and we think it's something that's doable," Horstmann said.

In addition to Savvis, other Ascent clients include Deloitte Consulting, Express Scripts, LPL Financial Services, Lohr Distributing, Pace Properties, Spectrum Brands and Tripos Inc.

Outside of work and family, Horstmann is active in the Young Entrepreneurs' Organization and the Regional Chamber and Growth Association.