

Local logistics company keeps on truckin' as revenue soars

** Grandview-based Zipline Logistics has been recognized as one of the fastest-growing companies in the country.*

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Zipline Logistics Inc. partners (from left) are Edward Williams, John Rodeheffer and Andrew Lynch. The company moved this year from German Village to Grandview Heights.



Andrew Lynch and J.J. Rodeheffer were sitting in Chicago bar following a 2006 Cubs-Reds game when they developed an idea for their own company.

"A year almost to the date after that, we opened our doors," Lynch said. "It's been onward and upward from there."

In June 2007, Lynch, Rodeheffer and partner Edward Williams started Zipline Logistics, a third-party logistics company that operates nationwide. Today, the three Miami University graduates have 14 employees and plan to have 17 by the end of the year. They contract with 4,700 trucking companies and project revenue exceeding \$10 million in 2011.

Recently, the company was named No. 1,315 on the Inc. 500/5000, a list of the fastest-growing private companies in America. From 2007-10, the company grew in revenue from \$1.4 million to \$4.4 million, a 220 percent growth over three years, making it the 14th fastest-growing company in the Columbus area and the 28th fastest-growing company in the logistics and transportation industry.

"It's watching the machine you built work," Lynch said.

In 2011, the company relocated from space above the Happy Dragon restaurant in German Village to offices at 781 Northwest Blvd. in Grandview Heights.

"This place represents a lot for us, and we put in a lot to make it a home," Lynch said. "We'll fill this place probably faster than we thought we would."

As a third-party logistics company, Zipline coordinates manufacturers and trucking company to move freight all over the country, whether it be food and beverages, consumer products or raw materials.

"There's almost nothing in the broad economy of the United States that does not affect trucking," Lynch said. "Anything that is anywhere was brought there by a truck."

Lynch said the goal of the company is to be the "Ritz-Carlton" model of transportation, recruiting the best trucking companies with the best safety ratings that meet the company's qualifications.

"We focus on limiting our clients' liabilities," he said. "We like to think of ourselves almost as a manufacturer's representative. ... That's more important than finding trucks at the cheapest rates."

That core philosophy, Lynch said, stems from his and Rodeheffer's experiences working for another transportation company.

Business was booming, but both were unhappy with the ethical environment. Rodeheffer was required to make promises to clients but ultimately had no control over the outcome of deliveries, and Lynch had to contract with the carriers for the cheapest rates, regardless of quality.

"We both knew it was wrong, and there was a better way to do it," Lynch said. "We just knew we wanted a new service model. ... We already had this identity we wanted to be."