

## SM Advisors helps Midwest Chemical 'prove it'

Company aids in developing business plans

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Planning is important, but Steven Van Remortel has found it doesn't happen nearly enough in the business world.

"I'd guess right now probably about seven out of 10 (businesses) do not develop a business plan," he said. "You plan a vacation, you plan your retirement, you plan your marriage, you plan your insurance, but you don't plan for your business."

Van Remortel has a passion for strategy. He founded SM Advisors in 1989 to help others plan for their businesses.

"We build a differentiated strategy and a team — a



Matt Giese, founder of Midwest Chemical & Equipment, said both he and his company have benefited from working with SM Advisors.

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skill-set-aligned team — to execute it," he said. "And that's exactly what we're doing at Midwest Chemical."

Midwest Chemical & Equipment was founded by Matt Giese and his wife,

Mary, three years ago. They've been working with SM Advisors for about a year.

The Gieses' company helps facilities overcome many of the problems that may be

present in wastewater treatment, such as high sewer surcharges, poor sludge quality, or inadequate acidity control.

"We come in and we look at their entire process and understand how they're making their products," Giese said. "(We) find the best ways to clean the water to take out the contaminants."

When they started the company, "we weren't working on the business, we were working in the business," Giese said. SM Advisors helped change that.

According to Van Remortel, SM Advisors' "No. 1 philosophy is that every company needs to have a differentiation," or core competence.

When working with a company for the first time, Van Remortel has methodologies he takes them through to find this core competence to set them apart from competi-

tors.

Determining such a competency is not enough, however.

"Once you have that competency, you have to make sure that your customers recognize the tangible value of it," Van Remortel said.

Giese has established his competency and proves it to his clients.

"They try to minimize the cost there, and that's what we help them do," he said. "We always show our customers a return on their investment."

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“...educating our customers to be self-sufficient on their wastewater treatment systems.”

## Planning/Midwest Chemical in 'growth mode'

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Giese always finds a way to make net gains for his customers and saves his existing customers more than \$250,000 a year.

SM Advisors also uses numbers to prove it gets results. According to Van Remortel, 95.2 percent of the companies he works with earn profits.

There are several advantages to making competence tangible, including fending off competition, getting customer referrals, and insuring current customers stay with the company.

"If you don't make what you do tangible for the cus-

tomers, they could easily go somewhere else," Van Remortel said.

Giese has found that communicating with customers, both current and potential, is key to success.

"Besides our business review process with our current customers, we have developed a new customer presentation that uses case studies and examples (that show) the tangible value of their service and system knowledge," he said.

For Midwest Chemical, that communication also extends to "educating our customers to be self-sufficient on their wastewater treatment systems," Giese said.

"We work with the customers on teaching them how to run their systems."

Since Giese started work-

### Midwest Chemical and Equipment

■ Phone: (920) 339-9783

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■ Web site:

www.midwestce.com

■ Owners: Matt and Mary Giese

■ Services: Helps facilities to clean out their wastewater  
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launched a new strategy, including implementing a new positioning statement "taking the waste out of wastewater." Giese plans to continue to work with SM Advisors as the company expands.

"We're in the growth mode," he said.

Van Remortel sees a bright future for the company in terms of business strategy.

"In two or three years, they'll be brilliant at tactical planning," he said.

According to Van Remortel, SM Advisors also has plans for the future.

"We're going to continue to build niche and differentiation in business plan development execution and leadership team development and become the best at it in the state," he said.

"And prove it."



Van Remortel



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