

# Scale Computing

By Tom Schuman

## Going All Out ... and Doing It Together

It's not unusual for team members at a Best Places to Work company to indicate that they "work hard and play hard."

At Scale Computing, it doesn't take long to see that mentality in action. A couple of examples:

**Business:** Brent Patrick, senior marketing manager, says the company has a "cult following" among its customers. "People love an underdog. That's kind of who we are in the market. We just try to take our fair share" ... with Blake Dickmeyer, director of sales, quickly chiming in with "and theirs" in the quest to grow the operation.

**Fun with a purpose:** Asked about their favorite company perks, five team members gathered around the table in the R2-D2 conference room quickly – and passionately – launch into some of their top activities.

Exhibit one is the HandleBar Hot Laps competition on Monument Circle in downtown Indianapolis. Team t-shirts and a pep rally are precursors to two straight Spirit Awards, which includes collecting new clothing items. The ensuing donation for the award was provided to Horizon House to support its efforts in helping the homeless.

Kellie Howe, Tier 2 technical support engineer, proudly states, "We come in and blow them (bigger companies) out of the water."

Next up: Donations and subsequent shopping so 50-plus area youth would have presents to open during the holidays. For Joe Knight, an account-based marketing strategist who joined Scale in late 2018, "For that to happen the first month I was here, that was awesome."

Patrick summarizes it this way. "When we rally behind a cause, we rally hard. We have some of the best people in the world working in this building every day."

Dickmeyer ties the play and work aspects together. "It all goes in tandem. We are a small fish against whales. We've got to bring our 'A' game into the marketplace all the time. With that mentality, it bleeds over into all aspects."

### Computing it all

Jeff Ready, CEO of Scale, and partners founded the company in 2007 with a focus on information technology (IT) infrastructure



The Scale Computing team takes pride in its efforts to support Horizon House, including collecting new clothing as part of the HandleBar Hot Laps competition in downtown Indianapolis.



solutions for small- and medium-sized businesses with minimal IT expertise. It is now, pun intended, on the leading edge of a change that is bringing computer services to the "edge" – not in the cloud and not within a company's own data center.

"We now find ourselves at the tip of the spear in edge computing," offers Ready, who started and successfully exited several companies in Silicon Valley before returning home to Indiana. "I wanted to build something here. Why people like working here – it's having a significant technology, a radical innovation-type company, combined with a midwestern or Indiana culture."

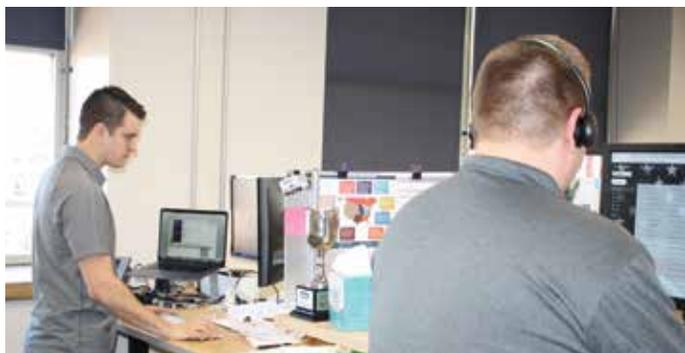
Ready and the executive team established four core values: integrity, innovation, collaboration and fun. But he credits associates for taking the ball and running, even in a time of explosive growth. The company added approximately 40 employees between October 2018 and February of this year and aims to double its head count to 280 in the next 18 months.

On the day of this conversation with staff,

Ready was in Barcelona officially unveiling a partnership with Hong Kong-based personal computer firm Lenovo. In late 2018, the company announced an infusion of \$34.8 million in venture capital from a variety of investors.

"One of the things I am so – proud is not even the right word – impressed with is that the culture does not come from the top down," he affirms. Citing the Horizon House support, holiday shopping for kids – "it started with probably enough for half a dozen" – and other initiatives, "Not a single one of those things was decided by myself or the executives. I love that we do these things as a company."

And while growth sometimes brings internal challenges, Ready contends that "over time, the culture actually has, on its own, gotten stronger. By hiring folks who embrace a similar approach, you then have that much more of a concentration among the team. Thus, as the company has gotten bigger, it's counterintuitive, (but) it's seemed easier to maintain that culture."



“Scalers” say a singular focus on the customer brings them together and helps drive company success.

### Home base

Scale has called the Union 525 tech center in downtown Indianapolis home since 2017. The co-location with other tech-related companies delivers a new energy, according to the team. The open format within the recently expanded Scale office leads to natural collaboration. Ready and other executives are in the mix with their corner desks – no individual enclosed offices.

“We hired a new vice president of marketing who asked what channels I would go through to share a new idea with Jeff,” Dickmeyer shares. “I said I’d probably just walk over to his desk and say, ‘Here’s what we’re doing; what do you think?’ That’s not the norm, but it’s the norm here.”

Patrick relays that he meets with his team members one-on-one every week. “The first half hour is what they need from me. The second half is about their personal career trajectory.”

Knight, one of those on Patrick’s team, was surprised in one of his early meetings when his supervisor said, “Just to let you know, I work for you; you don’t work for me. That’s not just our department, but across the entire company. People want to see other people succeed.”

### Special times

Patrick calls the Dip-Off Contest, in which the actual prize for the best homemade dip is a dipstick for your car, the “best day of the year.” Howe chimes in with pet dogs in the office on Thursdays as the “best day of the week.”

Scale Computer clothing and promotional swag are in abundance. The team credits Lynanne “LG” Gibel, director of support services, for being the house mom/cheerleader and driver of the “Scaler” mentality.

Aly Sander, operations specialist, says people “have a strong determination to be here. Everybody believes in the product.”

Howe puts it this way, describing January’s “all hands” meeting that includes team members from other U.S. and international offices. “It wasn’t, ‘We’ve done that and pat yourselves on the back.’ It was, ‘Now let’s get going, let’s keep pushing forward.’ To have the leaders of your company get up there and inspire everyone, that was really awesome.”

Ready terms it a “privilege” for him to be engaged with this team. “We’ve got each other’s back when someone needs help. Being a great place to work is a competitive advantage and it does help us attract and keep the right people. It makes it fun for me to be a part of it.”

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