

## PHASE 2

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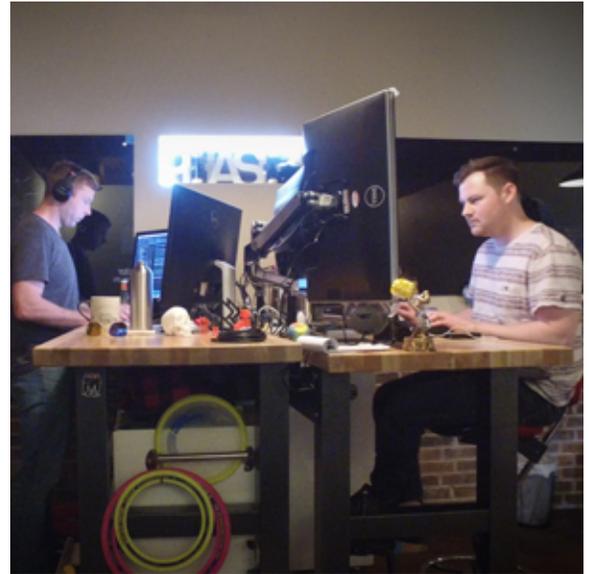
### At OKC's Phase 2, Big Data leads to big opportunity

There is more than oil and gas or oceans of saltwater that modern day energy exploration companies bring to the surface when they drill deep into the earth's core.

They are also drilling for terabytes of data that reveal how well their drilling rigs are performing, the types of rock encountered below the surface, the flow of salt water to the surface and much more.

There's a name for all that information, says Mark Towler, founder and CEO of Oklahoma City's Phase 2: Big Data.

And Big Data represents a huge business opportunity for Phase 2. The custom software application developer incubated, then spun out a separate company in 2014 called Drakewell to help directional drilling companies mine the flood of data that is flowing upward from their wells.



"It's a great case study, because they are gathering a lot of data about what type of motor configuration through what kind of strata and what are the conditions that the rate of penetration is maximized," Towler said. "All that data provides for business intelligence."

Phase 2 began almost 20 years ago as a customer software and website development business. Along the way, it sold off its website development operation and began focusing on custom software applications.

The evolution continued when it began doing custom programming work for a couple of directional drilling companies, one in Texas and one in Canada.

"We found they had very similar problems that we were solving with our custom programming," Towler said. "So, we retained the intellectual property rights and market it as a separate property." That's where Drakewell comes in.

Phase 2 president Heath Clinton is chief executive officer of the spinout company, while Shane Kempton, Phase 2's chief technology officer holds the same role with Drakewell.

"Drakewell is an enterprise, cloud-based operations platform for directional drillers, measurement-while-drilling and motor rental companies," Clinton said. "We have developed really complex math and algorithms to assist the drillers to follow their prepared well path, and when they steer off plan, Drakewell helps them get on plan and to the payzone quickly and, most importantly, all in one software platform."

Added Kempton: "We have clients working on wells all over the world. The majority of our customers' work is in North America, though some have an international presence. By using Phase 2 as an incubator, we've been able to nurture Drakewell into a healthy and growing business without the normal pains associated with a startup company."

Phase 2 continues to provide its custom programming services to a variety of industries, Towler said. The company employs 25 mostly software engineers and developers who specialize in helping client companies find ways to improve their operations.

Towler cites a large Oklahoma City-based fast-food franchise operator as an example of how the company's technology benefits clients. The franchise operator rolls out new menu signage annually in a process that required up to seven weeks to complete.

"We worked to allow the franchise, the franchisees from across the country and the printing company to all share that information," he said. "We took that rollout time from six to seven weeks to less than two. They are able to more effectively use the information they gather, do it in a more efficient way and provide a whole lot less errors in the output."

Meanwhile, the evolution continues for Phase 2. Towler sees opportunities to spin out more standalone ventures from its custom application business. The company is seeking software engineers, architects and developers to facilitate the expansion.

"Ideally, we are going to find other opportunities to take some of the custom programming from Phase 2 and turn it into another spinoff company," he said. "That's kind of the model that we have in our heads. Over the next 10 years, we think we can do that successfully several times."

And that is mining the Big Data.

[See the story in the 3-24-17 Oklahoman](#)

[Watch the video](#)

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