



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **Lansing State Journal**. To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Published January 2, 2006

IDV co-founder Clemens maps new high-tech course

By Nora Macaluso
For the Lansing State Journal

Ian Clemens is the kind of entrepreneur Michigan business boosters want for the future.

He runs a high-tech company that is small but growing, and his business does not depend on the auto industry or manufacturing.

Grand Ledge-based IDV Solutions, founded a year ago by Clemens and partner Mark Morrison, uses mapping techniques to perform sophisticated data analysis for clients, including Microsoft Corp. and the U.S. government.

"The basic problem we're addressing is the plethora of data out there that organizations have," Clemens said. "With the Internet, they're creating more and more of it, but they're not having effective ways to collect that data and organize it."

That's where IDV comes in. By overlaying a customer's data on a map, the company is able to see patterns that might not otherwise be apparent.

"There are too many tabular views of



(Photo by Lansing State Journal file photo)
Ian Clemens is the co-founder of IDV Solutions, helped start a high-tech mapping company in Grand Ledge. It has big clients, such as Microsoft, and also has helped with post-Hurricane Katrina recover efforts.

The Clemens file

- Name: Ian Clemens
- Title: Co-founder and chief technology officer of IDV Solutions
- Age: 34
- Education: SB in math from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and master's in Christian Studies from Regent College, Vancouver, B.C.
- Size of company: 15 employees
- Corporate connection: Plans to meet with Michigan Chamber of Commerce in January; part of Central Michigan University Research Corp.; supporter of St. Vincent's
- Notable observation: "The basic problem we're addressing is the plethora of data out there that organizations have."

Related news from the Web

data, and (that's) not an effective way to gain insight," Clemens said. "We make that data alive and rich and interactive."

Clemens has a background in computer mapping and public policy. A Pennsylvania native and graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he was working for Williamston-based Universal Map when he decided to branch out on his own.

Latest headlines by topic:

- [Google, Inc.](#)
- [Media](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Search Engines](#)
- [Software](#)

Powered by [Topix.net](#)

A friend - Jim Keenan, now IDV's director of sales and marketing - "knew what I was trying to do and said, 'You should team with Mark.'

"We met. He got very excited about the idea, and from there we went out and did it on our own."

IDV has no outside investors, Clemens said.

Clemens said he likes being in the Lansing area, though customers are mostly outside of Michigan, or even outside the United States.

"We do a lot of virtual meetings," he said.

"We leverage a lot off the universities," hiring graduates of Michigan State University and Central Michigan University, Clemens said.

IDV employees generally start out as part-time workers, putting in 10 to 20 hours a week, then move on to full-time positions as the business grows.

IDV is also part of the Central Michigan University Research Corp., which creates "smart zones" for fostering high technology.

"We do a lot with visualizing assets," such as mapping out a company's global holdings and pulling out information pertinent to a particular task, Clemens said.

The company does a lot of work for companies with safety and security issues, and mapped data for the government and the Red Cross to help with recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina.

Companies, he said, are intrigued by the idea of using maps to access information and to plug security holes.

"There's a big market out there," Clemens said.

IDV works closely with software giant Microsoft - the company is a partner - and Internet search engine Google Inc., which recently rolled out the popular mapping service Google Earth.

"We're getting a lot of attention from those companies," Clemens said. "Both of them are very interested in what we're doing."

IDV is growing, Clemens said.

"We just hired a new director of operations, and we're going to be looking for additional programmers and software developers," he said.

Clemens said college graduates interested in getting into the field should have computer science skills and "some knowledge" of mapping.

With Google Earth, Microsoft Virtual Earth and other Internet options, "there are a lot of free tools out there to play with," he said.

Employees seem to like what IDV - and Clemens - offer.

"Ian is very accommodating of the employees' opinions," said John Nelson, who designs the look and feel of the company's applications.

"You get the sense that he really trusts us.

Clemens "carefully chooses who he hires, then lets us work," said Nelson, who has been with IDV for a year.

"That's something I really appreciate."

Contact Nora Macaluso at business@lsj.com

Copyright 2006 Lansing State Journal Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service (updated 12.20.02)

[\[Back\]](#)