

He's not your father's entrepreneur. For one thing, Steven Heintz started Adia Information Management Corp. when he was still an undergraduate at the University of Michigan with \$10,000 and no outside financing. After working for Microsoft in Redmond, Washington, Heintz opted to establish his company in Ann Arbor in 1997. Since then, the Detroit Regional Chamber has called him one of the "100 Emerging Leaders of Southeast Michigan" and *Crain's Detroit Business* named him a "Top Technology Leader of Michigan." In 2003 he was named "Young Entrepreneur of the Year" at the Michigan IT Summit. This state has been a pretty good home for Adia, but as CEO, he could have gone anywhere.

Heintz: "I started the company as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, so that kind of made Ann Arbor a good default choice. Although right before I started the company, I actually went out to Redmond, Washington and worked at Microsoft for about six months. It was kind of an internship-type program that the school had done. I really liked the Washington area, but I came back here to really finish the degree and it was just sort of a natural kind of progression, starting the company. That's what really made us start here in Ann Arbor."

As an application service provider (ASP), Adia hit pay dirt with CareNet, which connects managed health

care providers and insurers securely over the Net. Opportunity knocked on two other occasions with NetPOS, a Web-based restaurant point-of-sale system, and ManagePoint, a powerful Web-based customer relationship management (CRM) toolkit.

Heintz: "We really stumbled into the three markets. Managed health care was never something that I sat around as an undergraduate trying to figure out how to conquer. It's really been opportunities that came across that we were able to capitalize on..."

Heintz realizes that Michigan is putting an emphasis on urban areas, but that renewed commitment has to cascade down the local level if the state is going to be successful

in creating vibrant, attractive cities. He cited the theories of economist Richard Florida, author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, who says that "members of the creative class come in all shapes, sizes, colors and lifestyles; and to be truly successful, cities and regions have to offer something for them all."

Heintz: "Attention is actually being brought to making the cities cooler to live in. Really trying to retain this age group of people, and the fact that there's attention being spent on that, I really like. But I think that's got to come down to the local levels. It all comes down to, at least for a lot of the young people I see leaving, it all comes down to social things that they

like to do. It comes down to bars and clubs and social scenes. These are single people, who always have a lot to do with it. So the local people need to buy into this too. When new developments want to go into a town, you know they need to approve these. They need to be conscious of this. These are really talented people that we want to keep."

Never forgetting his roots, the young CEO strives to give back to the entrepreneurial community. In 2002, he started Adia's Aspiring Entrepreneur Program to incubate start-up tech companies. The program provides office space and infrastructure to promising young entrepreneurs.

To find out more about Steven Heintz and Adia Information Management Corp., visit <http://www.adiaim.com>.