

MicroKnowledge marks 25 years

Owner says community involvement is reason for success

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MicroKnowledge is celebrating its 25th anniversary this month and the key to its success and longevity is due to the strong brand it has created over the years, according to owner Kathleen Pingelski.

"There's always an opportunity to assist customers with making sure they're utilizing technology in the best possible way," Pingelski, of Clifton Park, said. "We service the customer. This isn't just lip service. We really care about how their training experience is and at the end of the day, they end up with the skills they need."

MicroKnowledge is a computer training and consulting company based in Colonie focusing on hands-on, instructor-led training for desktop applications such as Microsoft and Adobe products. The company also offers a service where if a company has created its own operating system, employees from MicroKnowledge will come in, learn the system and help create a manual to refer back to and offer training to new employees.



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Kathleen Pingelski

Pingelski said the hands-on training also has multiple benefits. For example, if someone needs to produce a Powerpoint presentation or an Excel file but isn't quite sure how to do it, MicroKnowledge will come in and help train the person to complete the task.

"It accomplishes two things," Pingelski said. "You're learning as a

participant and you're getting the job done because you have to complete specific tasks with the application."

Pingelski was hired to the company 18 years ago as a trainer. She was working under then-owner and founder Beth Coco, who ended up selling the company in 2000. Coco said it was during a time where the company had seen great growth but it was also while her son was about to enter high school.

"I was at a juncture where MicroKnowledge was doing well and the industry was changing into a Windows-based environment," Coco said. "I saw the future was going to change rapidly and I was looking at the balance of my family and decided I needed to focus a bit more on my family."

During the five years after the business was sold, it was introduced to the stock market and was owned by a company on the West Coast called Cal Amp, for "California Amplifier." Once there was an opportunity for the company to be bought back, Pingelski said she jumped on it.

Cocco is now an employee of the company while Pingelski and Lisa Ryan run the business. Cocco said she mainly

does a lot of the sales and works with many of the large companies, but also still serves in an advisory role to both Pingelski and Ryan.

"It's not weird for me at all," Coco said. "They do a fantastic job and bring a whole new set of challenges. I liked to walk away without any of the financial angst that comes with running a business. It's a worry I don't have to have on my back."

Coco said she never expected for the company to last this long as she said that she would usually plan just five years ahead. Now, the company is donating its service by offering classes to the Women's Employment Resource Center. It helps women that have been out of the workforce for a few years in getting back in the saddle.

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Still, Coco knows that 25 years is a long time, but she said she is excited to see what the next 25 years will hold for the company.

"I'm very appreciative to where we are," she said. "I appreciate the community."