

[ENTREPRENEUR PROFILE]

A conversation with Greg Trahan of Safety Management Systems



Greg Trahan, president,
Safety Management Systems.

Greg Trahan and his team at Safety Management Systems in Lafayette, La., are experiencing some exciting times thanks to the company's growth. First, there was a merger that created one of the largest providers of health, safety and environment management services in the southern region. Next, the company unveiled a world-class training facility.

BIC recently visited with Trahan to learn more about his company's growth and its future.

Q: What led to your position at your company?

A: I've always had a tremendous passion for the safety and environmental industry. As an HS&E manager, I recognized the need for a safety company that could be diversified in all of the disciplines within the HS&E industry. Oftentimes I found myself looking for support that didn't exist. This inspired me to create my own company in 2000, Safety Management Systems (SMS). Not in my wildest dreams did I envision SMS becoming the globally known com-

pany it is today. In 2006, SMS merged with Acadian Integrated Solutions (AIS), and we retained the name. SMS is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Acadian Ambulance Service.

Q: What is the biggest news in your company right now?

A: We recently held our ribbon cutting ceremony for the dedication of our world-class training facility that includes customized classes on an on-site 30-ton pedestal crane, indoor pool for sea survival training also equipped with METS Model 30 (Modular Egress Training Simulator) and on-site fire field.

Secondly, by merging the two companies AIS and SMS together, we've really opened up markets and disciplines that we weren't able to service as separate companies. We are now diversified in industry and disciplines and can offer services in the safety, environmental, medical and training industry.

We are currently putting a business plan together that will help us not only

to continue to grow globally but allow us to diversify into untouched markets. This will allow us to compete nationally and internationally with existing and new customers. We intend to explore these opportunities and new geographic areas.

Q: What is the most important part of your position?

A: As president of SMS, the most important part of my position is staying in touch with the field realities, and keeping all of the components operationally in check in order to be successful. You can't assume anything — you must stay in touch and available to your people's needs.

My most important goal outside of being successful is to create a culture within this company that people want to work in.

Q: What's the most important thing a person should know before taking a career path similar to yours?

A: First and foremost, you need to clearly understand your industry and the expectations expected of you. You have to clearly understand what you want and have a plan and passion that will drive you to get there.

In my career, I have surrounded myself with some great people. I have been blessed to align myself with great customers. And, I really believe that we have a service and disciplines that add value to our industry.

Q: How do you maintain a good work/home life balance?

A: That's a great question. I have a ranch in South Texas that I visit frequently that allows me to disconnect from the day-to-day stresses of running a business. Also, my wife is a very supportive partner and wonderfully handles things at home, so I don't have these additional stressors. □

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2916 N. University Avenue | Lafayette, LA 70507 | 1.800.252.5522