

Stratom Inc.

Stratom Inc., founded by Mark Gordon in 2001, is a Boulder-based strategic solutions and unmanned robotics engineering and manufacturing firm. Prior to founding Stratom, Mark worked in senior management for various high tech companies. There he witnessed the volatility of the high tech industry and its move to outsource many of its products and services to foreign markets. Mark decided that he wanted to build a company for growth and stability. Early on, Stratom focused on consulting, new product development, product launches, and product transfer services for clients like Advanced Energy Corp, University of Colorado Denver (UCD,) and the National Veterans Training Institute. Mark recalls that it is was through UCD that they were introduced to government contracting opportunities.

Seeing government markets as being less volatile, offering long term contract opportunities and having greater long run stability, Mark decided to take the company in a new strategic direction. In the 2007-08 timeframe, Stratom shifted its focus to robotics and R&D. Bootstrapping the business, winning research dollars and government contract awards as well as increasing product sales, the company grew. Today, Stratom has set itself apart with a strong mix of subject experts and engineers who understand their target customers' needs. They develop products and design services that have an identified need and market. Stratom engineers have a strong background in commercial products and they know how to bring Stratom's products to market.

When asked what factors have been critical to Stratom's growth, Mark says that the SBDC, his strong Advisory Board and AUVSI (Association of Unmanned Vehicles Systems International), where he now serves as the Executive Vice Chairmen on the Board of Directors, that have been instrumental to his company's growth and success.

"As an early stage company, before setting up my Advisory Board, the SBDC team of consultants was a great sounding board for me," Mark recounts. As the company began to grow, Mark took advantage of SBDC classes around Sales and Marketing and HR topics like Workman's Compensation. He sent his staff to SBDC classes for training. As an advanced technology company, Mark has taken advantage of the Colorado Emerging Ventures (CEV) programming and its team of specialized consultants. The CEV team has provided market research and analysis around commercial applications for Stratom's products and services.

"Now that we've moved on to become a second stage company we've become involved with the SBDC Advanced - Economic Gardening program with one-on-one consulting, looking at some new markets that we're trying to engage in" says Mark. "These would be new national and international commercial markets where we are trying to use our robotics systems across new applications. With this new full year program we get a lot of strategic consulting advice, research and one-on-one services to help us focus on these new markets and grow the company."

In describing his experience over the years with the SBDC, Mark says, "I have been so impressed with the professionalism and passion of everyone working with the SBDC. They are not only willing to help, but they know how to help. There is a vast level of experience that I can

tap into to help my business succeed.” It was through networking at Colorado Emerging Ventures workshops and Chamber (SBDC host) events that he also found his invaluable extended team of professionals and mentors. As a result, Mark has been a tremendous supporter of and advocate for the SBDC. He has been a keynote lunch presenter at SBDC’s full-day Contract Opportunities Fair and Emerging Ventures Event and participated in SBDC workshops, sharing his vast business expertise and advice with other Boulder County businesses.