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Can you really run a business out of coffee shops? Brian DeLong (green sweater) founded Ideavise as a design and marketing firm; it has since branched out into mobile apps. Ideavise is a company without an office, so its staff of seven get together wherever they can, such as here at Pikes Perk on North Academy Boulevard. With DeLong, from left, are Tom Maloney (database/analytics) and Del Kahre (programmer/developer).

Everything about Ideavise is 'mobile'

By Monica Mendoza

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Brian DeLong and his six employees at Ideavise, Inc. are always on the move.

They don't have an office so they hold staff meetings in cafes and coffee houses in Colorado Springs and work anywhere they can catch a ride on free Wi-Fi. It's a running joke that a couple of Ideavise employees are scarcely ever seen. But that's what Ideavise is all about: mobility.

DeLong started Ideavise in 2008 and the company specializes in design, marketing, branding and technological services for clients in Colorado, California and New York. Last year, the company made a move into the mobile application world — fitting for a team that has adopted the virtual-business lifestyle.

"We definitely understand working remotely," DeLong said. "Which is part of the reason we understand the mobile aspect of it."

While the Ideavise team has been mobile for some time, it seems the business community is now catching up. DeLong declined to give annual revenue, but said that from 2009 to 2010, Ideavise revenue increased by 400 percent, mostly from businesses wanting to build up their web, social media and mobile presence.

"For a lot of companies, the time is right,"

DeLong said.

DeLong has a background in information technology and project management. He started Ideavise as a side business but it turned into a full-time gig by 2009. He recruited designers, graphics technology experts and programmers — all colleagues he had worked with over the years and who enjoy the flexibility of working from their laptops and smart phones. They understand the mindset of being mobile, DeLong said.

"We don't get isolated into thinking our own thing," he said.

Mobility and flexibility is what the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency was looking for last fall when it wanted to leave behind the stack of paperwork it collects on more than 3,000 Olympic athletes. Ideavise developed a paperless sample collection mobile app for the organization, which is responsible for testing athletes for prohibited substances. This year, the 70 anti-doping field agents will simply input data directly into their mobile devices and transmit back to USADA, to the athletes or to testing labs.

USADA is the first anti-doping agency in the world to go mobile and it's a move gaining traction in other countries, said John Frothingham, USADA chief of operations. USADA expects the technology to save the agency time and money.

"This process is efficient and repeatable," he said. "It makes the process very consistent."

Frothingham said the agency's six-figure investment is expected to have seven-month payback period. The Swiss anti-doping agency took interest in the mobile app and split the cost with USADA, he said. Canada is another country showing interest.

"It is a cool thing, but it had to be functional. We've proven that," Frothingham said. "We are out in the forefront on this."

The mobile app development industry is expected to be worth \$17.5 billion by 2012, according to Washington-based Chetan Sharma, a technology and strategy consulting firm. While much attention has been placed on mobile apps designed for iPhones that can't be used on other devices, Ideavise is banking on the development of web apps like the one his company developed for USADA. Web applications offer more flexibility in software and hardware, DeLong said.

"For us, it is taking the long-term view and seeing how it has played out and kind of moving to where the ball is going to be rather than going to where the ball is," DeLong said.

For now, DeLong and the Ideavise team will keep moving. They cannot see themselves settling into an office anytime soon.

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