

## ROCHESTER TOP 100

## Empowered employees herald new era

Focus on employee well-being creates culture of success

By NATE DOUGHERTY

The last six years have brought quite a transformation to Mirror Show Management Inc.

The Webster-based trade show design company has weathered the recession to reach its highest revenue mark ever and instituted a new employee stock ownership program that leaders credit with helping the company reach new levels of success.

### Mirror Show Management Inc.

Trade show exhibit and event management

**Year founded:** 1993

**2014 ranking:** 29

**Top executive:** Donna Shultz, president and CEO

**Employee total:** 80

**Headquarters:** Webster

**Website:** mirrorshow.com

Growth has been steady in recent years for Mirror Show Management. After some retraction in 2011—when revenues dropped some 21 percent—and the lingering effects of the recession, the company grew by 10 percent in 2012, 26 percent in 2013 and 78 percent in 2014.

Mirror Show Management has done this while focusing on the well-being of its employees, creating a work atmosphere honored as a trailblazer in employee wellness.

For Donna Shultz, president and CEO, the growth has come largely through an emphasis on employees. Mirror Show Management empowers its employees by giving them a direct stake in the company's success, which also improves the experience for clients, Shultz said.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

"The solidarity that our employees feel as part owners shines through in everything they do for our clients," said Donna Shultz, president and CEO of Mirror Show Management, which became an employee stock ownership plan company in January 2012.

"Mirror Show Management has experienced explosive growth over the last few years," she said. "We attribute this to the fact that we became an employee stock ownership plan company in January 2012. The solidarity that our employees feel as part owners shines through in everything they do for our clients."

The company has 80 employees, up from 72 in 2013 and 49 in 2012.

It offers programs for event marketing and regional programs. It also manages close to 1,000 trade shows each year, offering strategic guidance as well as design and in-house fabrication of displays and other materials.

Culture is important at Mirror Show Management, and employee health is a big part of it.

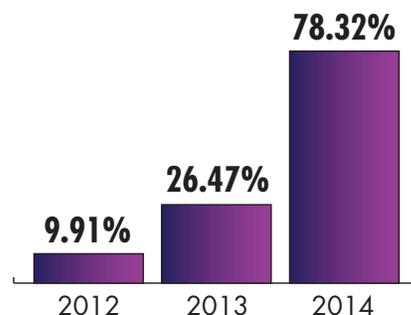
The company has encouraged employees to quit smoking cold turkey, for example, by giving them frozen turkeys for Thanksgiving along with Nicorette gum

and lozenges.

Employees who take part in the wellness program receive healthy treats as well as water bottles and gift cards to Dick's Sporting Goods Inc. The company has of-

### By the numbers

The firm's revenues have accelerated the past three years, including 78 percent growth in 2014.



ferred lunchtime learning sessions about topics ranging from heart health to homeopathic medicine.

“We are a driven, dedicated and passionate group of professionals who really love the business,” Shultz said. “But we know how to play hard, too, like our holiday week that lasts for five straight days of fun activities. We provide a great on-site company gym and incentives to stay in shape and be healthy.”

Also important is the company’s tradition of charitable giving, primarily to local causes benefiting women and children, Shultz said.

She said the company has been growing both in terms of employees and revenue, making a solid recovery from the economic downturn in 2009.

“Mirror Show Management also had its

challenges during that period, but we re-trenched, fought back and are proud to say that today our revenues are at an all-time high,” she said.

There are plenty of opportunities ahead as well, Shultz said. The company has grown its reputation and prominence to the point that it receives requests for information and proposals continually.

“Our challenge isn’t in finding opportunities. It’s in expanding our workforce and skill sets to stay ahead of the growth we have been experiencing,” she said.

Mirror Show Management has instituted a new training program, the Learn Great Academy. This consists of process documentation, trainer certification and employee skill mastery as well as culture training, said Tammy Wilkes, vice president of human resources.

“This will provide incentives, rewards, certifications and ‘degrees,’” Wilkes said. “We are very excited to incorporate this new offering.”

With the focus on employee development and a solid core of clients, Shultz is optimistic about the future for Mirror Show Management.

“Our opportunities are unlimited,” she said.

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*The Rochester Top 100 program is presented by the Rochester Business Alliance Inc. and KPMG LLP. Launched in 1987, it recognizes the fastest-growing private companies in Greater Rochester. The 2015 Rochester Top 100 event will be held Nov. 4. For more information, go to [rochester-businessalliance.com](http://rochester-businessalliance.com).*