

Systema cures insurance industry's headaches

BY JEFF HUGHES

San Francisco Business Times

Jose Tribuzio is laying claim to a niche with Systema Software, and that claim is beginning to pay out.

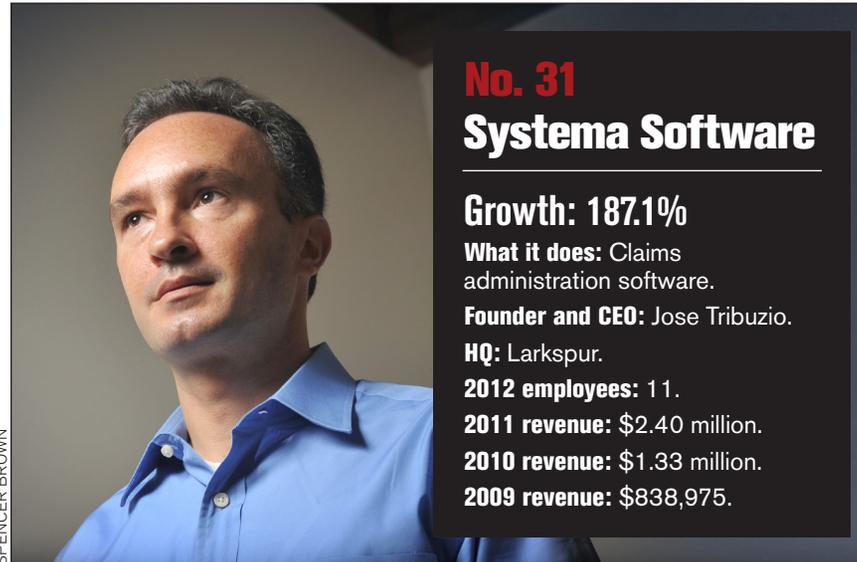
The Larkspur-based company develops software that focuses on insurance claims administration. Systema is dedicated to one industry, and one type of software within that industry, and it partners with other vendors that offer policy administration or billing solutions.

The product, dubbed SIMS Claims, is a web browser-based system that can be hosted at a client's facilities or use Systema's cloud hosting.

"When I was looking at different solutions in the industry, there were two main types: legacy systems that were feature-rich, but not flexible, and more of a toolkit really, which were modern and flexible but with not much functionality," said Tribuzio. "I saw an opportunity for balance."

That opportunity has resulted in a 187 percent growth in revenue over the past three years. The company added another office in March — in San Ramon. While Systema's offices are staffed by 11 full-time employees, that headcount will "at least" double in the next year. Tribuzio said finding the right people has been tough, and the company is looking for developers, project managers and support staff.

The key challenge in Systema's niche



SPENCER BROWN

No. 31
Systema Software

Growth: 187.1%

What it does: Claims administration software.

Founder and CEO: Jose Tribuzio.

HQ: Larkspur.

2012 employees: 11.

2011 revenue: \$2.40 million.

2010 revenue: \$1.33 million.

2009 revenue: \$838,975.

"Competition is going to make this industry stronger," says Jose Tribuzio.

was the product itself. The company had to design a system that was architecturally sound, but not cumbersome to use. Many insurance companies work with 10- to 30-year-old systems, and Tribuzio wanted to make a product that was easy for these companies to migrate to. The first client, BHHC (Berkshire Hathaway Homestate Cos.), acted as a trial to see if Systema could meet its goals.

"I was doing consulting with them and I knew they weren't happy with the legacy systems," said Tribuzio. "We had a year to come up with a system. It had to work; I knew, if we did well with them, it would open doors."

Systema was charged with replacing a workers compensation system in 2007 for 150 examiners. The BHHC legacy system would often be down for hours at times. Systema did the SIMS Claims conversion over a weekend, and Tribuzio said they've never had a system crash since.

The success with their early client has indeed opened doors for Systema, which became profitable in 2008. It was able to grow revenue due to word-of-mouth, and references from clients like BHHC and Baldwin & Lyons Inc.

Systema began to heavily market in late 2009, and hired sales and marketing Vice President Brian Mack in 2011.

Mack, who has been in the insurance software industry for 20 years, said that he joined the company because of the team and the product.

"Our primary goal is to be in the top handful of choices of providers that people choose from," he said.

Tribuzio founded the company in 2006, backed by executives and companies from the insurance industry. He grew up in Buenos Aires and graduated with a bachelor's in computer science and worked at Anderson Consulting (now Accenture), Proxicom and his own consulting company.

Tribuzio worked with clients in the financial, telecom and transportation industries. The goal with Systema Software, Tribuzio said, was to bring the best practices from these industries to its SIMS Claims product.

Plans involve more investment in the product and marketing. Systema will also work on more integration with Outlook and a new dashboard concept, allowing managers to easily level out workloads among examiners with a drag and drop feature.

Tribuzio also has an eye to expanding the company beyond California, including possibly to the East Coast.

"One of our competitors approached me at a trade show and told me we were the new kids on the block," said Tribuzio. "But at the end of the day, competition is going to make (this industry) stronger."

jhughes@bizjournals.com / (415) 288-4953 ■