

# Alturas Analytic's organic growth, expansion

By Bill McKee, Daily News business editor | Posted: Saturday, November 28, 2015 12:00 am

Alturas Analytics Inc.'s momentum has been impressive since day one, but the company's president, Robin Woods, says it has recently hit a knee in that upward curve.

Throughout the years she said there's been a steady growth of around 15 percent to 30 percent, but this year it "just kind of shot off like a rocket," Woods said of the bioanalytical research business that has clients around the globe in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries.

It turns out it's actually been going on longer than that.

Gross sales for the company are "not quite, but close to double" what they were in 2013, said administrator Kerri Renner.

Alturas, which uses liquid chromatography and mass spectrometry to test for drugs and other metabolites in biological samples, was listed as the sixth-fastest growing company in Idaho for that year, according to the 5000 Fastest Growing Companies in the U.S. list by Inc. Magazine, which lists revenue for the business in 2013 at \$3.9 million.

The success in recent years has led to new expansion goals - both in laboratory space and staffing.

"We kind of got together employees and shareholders and partners, and we put together a growth plan. By the year 2020 we wanted to double our size and our instruments" and sales, Woods said.

To accommodate the additional lab space and new equipment, Alturas needs room to grow. For the time, growth will be a lot easier to accomplish with additional space already available within the Alturas Drive facility.

Populi, a Moscow-based college management software developer, previously leased office space within the Alturas building, but it has outgrown the location. Now those rooms are being tuned into additional lab space.

Woods said the new lab space will increase the company's capacity to test blood samples for drug concentrations for pharmaceutical and biotech companies in clinical trials. In a few years, though, she said she foresees outgrowing the current facility.

During the past year, the increase in business has also led to a slew of new hires, from chemists to



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office staff, swelling their ranks by about a third, up to about 30 total, she said.

When pressed on the recent surge in business, Woods said she couldn't put her finger on any one reason, but she suggested it might be a combination of factors, including word finally spreading about the quality of their work and a new business development position with the firm.

While Alturas has been in business since 2000, Woods said it's possible the north Idaho location - not an area not exactly known as a mecca for pharmaceuticals or biotechnology - has possibly caused it to take just a little longer than usual for its reliable reputation to spread to potential clients in San Francisco's Bay Area or New Jersey.

Image is important in the relatively close-knit bioanalytical world, she admitted, but for Woods it's really just an organic process.

"Our growth was finally representative of the reputation that we have," she said.

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