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VOLUME II ISSUE I

# Up & Coming: Brookside Dares to be Different


[ BY : BLAKE POLLARD ]

**company:** Brookside Technology Partners, Inc. (brooksideUS.com) **founded:** In January of 2002, Mike Dance (President and CEO), Grant Dishman (VP of Technology) and Robert Rich (VP of Operations) founded Brookside Technology Partners, Inc. The three founders had similar backgrounds and experiences as IT and telecommunication experts and had been waiting for the opportunity to combine their talents and take advantage of emerging business communication technologies, such as Voice over IP, IP Telephony and Wi-Fi products. **light bulb! moment:** The market had hit rock bottom for all three founders in their perspective businesses at the end of 2001. Dance and Dishman had been let go from their previous employers and Rich was self-employed in early January of 2002. When asked how long it took for Dance, Dishman and Rich to start working together, Rich recalls vividly, “It happened in a blink of an eye.” Immediately after his layoff, Dance spoke with both Rich and Dishman to ask them if they wanted to start a new company. Dance knew that if he could combine his talents with Rich, who had a data background, and with Dishman, who had an IT background, they could “start a company that would change people’s perspectives of traditional phone companies.” They each felt the time was right and by working together they could reverse the trend of poor customer service and low quality that existed in the industry. **how are they different?** Brookside offers a “key ingredient that separates itself from other competitors,” says Dance. “We offer an extensive knowledge transfer for self-management of applications.” Brookside is not only a mastermind in system installation, the company also sets up training methods that far exceed industry norms. Dishman reasonably adds that “[Brookside] trains its clients because most of them want to be able to manage their own [business communication] systems.” Most of the time businesses only contact phone companies “when they have a problem”, “[Brookside] takes a more proactive approach with clients by keeping them informed on the latest product knowledge and industry trends,” states Dishman. **how do they make money?** “[Brookside’s] revenue is derived through professional services, installations and maintenance,” says Rich. The interesting thing about Brookside that people often don’t realize is that they truly are in the business to save companies money. “We thoroughly evaluate and examine every need of our clients, which helps us to avoid the extra expenses in mistakes,” states Dance. “We do realize that as a service company we must continue to grow our staff and our service offerings,” adds Rich. **early challenges:** Early on, the most difficult thing was “trying to impress upon clients that we truly were a different kind of phone company,” says Dishman. Most businesses had heard that same “song and dance” before. “We really had to prove ourselves one client at a time,” states Dance. This became increasingly more challenging in that Brookside was trying to “consistently deliver services and solutions that previously had not been offered,” concludes Dishman. **early success:** Because Brookside educates its entire staff on emerging technologies, the company is able to “play more of a business consultative role with clients,” states Dishman. Dance, Rich and Dishman somewhat surprised themselves early on when they successfully installed a highly complex business communication system without even being on site. “It was our first proof of concept that we could install a system anywhere in the country without actually being at the customer’s office,” concludes Rich. **namedropping:** Clients include Pervasive

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Software, Round Rock Express, Capital Metro, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Calloway Golf, Traxem Travel and numerous other local and national businesses. **why austin?** “The average business customer in Austin is more willing to take technology risks,” says Dishman. Rich adds that “being in such a hot-bed of change in business allows [Brookside] to be that much more ahead of the curve when we move into new markets.” **the competition:** It is the people that make the company so different from its competition, which may include any company that is offering the latest and greatest, state-of-the art technologies for business communications solutions. The “[Brookside] team consists of highly knowledgeable and experienced voice and data professionals, which is unique for this relatively new industry,” explains Dance. “We are not just phone technicians; we are IT professionals trained to analyze, install and service the latest in emerging communications technologies,” he says. **future growth:** Headquartered in Austin, Brookside Technology Partners has a swiftly increasing presence in San Antonio and Dallas. The company has “relationships set up so that they can offer services all over the US,” says Rich. “Our goal is to become the leader in cost-effective communications solutions for small to medium size businesses. We strive to educate our clients about technology and find the best possible solutions for their needs,” says Dance. Brookside has targeted three new markets where it will soon open new offices; Tampa, FL., Springfield, IL. and Southern California. **notable quotable:** “What we love most is when current or prospective clients tell us ‘something can’t be done’...this motivates our team even more to explore customized solutions that take advantage of new and emerging technologies.” –Mike Dance, President and CEO, Brookside Technology Partners. **number of employees:** 20 full time employees; 2 part time employees. **are they hiring?** Brookside is always on the lookout for qualified people to add to their growing staff in Austin, and nationwide. **the last word:** “We have invested and will continue to invest a tremendous amount of time in our employees to make sure they are the best of the best,” affirms Dance. In a very short amount of time, Brookside’s team has completed and passed more certification programs than most other organizations in their field in Central Texas. [Brookside] is extremely proactive in encouraging and supporting its team members’ efforts to stay abreast of the latest technology. This could have a lot to do with Brookside’s recent acknowledgement as one of the Best Places to Work in Central Texas by the ABJ. **the digits:** To learn more about Brookside Technology Partners and to see what they can do for your business, call them in Austin at (512) 692-2100 or visit their website – www.brooksideUS.com. 



[ from left to right] VP of Technology and Co-Founder Grant Dishman, President and Co-Founder Mike Dance, and VP of Operations and Co-Founder Rob Rich.