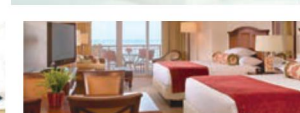


Florida Trend's 2017 **BEST** **COMPANIES** TO WORK FOR IN FLORIDA





Bowling For Dollars

Even as bowling alleys struggle to attract new customers, an equipment manufacturer in Lake Wales outperforms the industry.

By Amy Martinez

Kegel

No. 30 / Midsized

Headquarters: Lake Wales

Founded: 1981

CEO: Chris Chartrand

Business: Makes bowling lane maintenance machines, parts and chemicals; also operates a bowling training center in Lake Wales and five retail bowling pro shops throughout Florida

Quote: "We try to make bowling better because we all love it so much. If you go around the building, most people will tell you they spend a lot of time bowling," Chartrand says.



John Davis grew up in a bowling family as the sport's popularity peaked in the 1950s and 1960s. His dad, who worked at a hat factory, ran a local bowling league in his spare time in St. Joe, Mo. His mom, a volunteer youth bowling coach, regularly took Davis and his four younger brothers to the lanes. An injury during his teen years left Davis unable to extend his bowling arm completely, and of the five boys, he was the only one to never bowl a perfect 300 game.

Davis enlisted in the Air Force in 1967 and spent time at MacDill AFB in Tampa. After serving in Vietnam, he eventually returned to Florida, where he found a job as a mechanic for a bowling alley in Sebring. One of his daily tasks was to clean the lanes —

which at the time meant getting on his hands and knees to remove oil and dirt, sometimes using harsh chemicals. "It was some nasty stuff," he once told the *Lakeland Ledger*.

In 1981, Davis created a hand-operated lane-cleaning tool called the Key. He quit his job and spent the next year traveling throughout the Midwest in a Chevrolet Malibu station wagon demonstrating the \$350 apparatus to bowling alley proprietors.

Typically, the owners would claim their lanes were clean, but then would recoil after Davis ran his machine down a lane and the machine's contact surface came back black with grime. "People's jaws would drop," says his middle brother, Mark, 59. "He usually sold every tool on the spot."



Kegel, which employs about 100, sells \$20 million a year in bowling lane maintenance equipment, parts and chemicals. Almost half of its sales are overseas.

Kegel's Flex machine cleans and conditions lanes at the company's 12-lane bowling training center in Lake Wales. An all-day session at the center costs \$600. The company holds more than 30 patents.

In 1982, Davis got a big break when Brunswick, a major manufacturer of bowling equipment, ordered 700 units to sell in its catalog. Davis got a patent and named his company Kegel, an adaptation of *kegeln*, the German word for bowling. He, his wife, Linda, and family friend David Jennings invested their savings to start the company. Mark, his brother, came on board as well.

A year later, after learning that the Sebring bowling alley where he had worked was in financial trouble, Davis bought it. Over time, the alley provided steady income as Davis continued to think up new lane products.

"We're kind of lazy mechanics," Mark says. "We want to be able to do the job better, faster and easier."

In the late-1980s, Kegel came out



John Davis, who worked in a bowling alley at a young age, founded the company. He died in 2013. Brother Mark is executive vice president of mechanical product development and support, and Chris Chartrand, hired at age 23, is now CEO. Jonathan Mitchell bought a 49.5% stake in Kegel in 2003 and now owns 100% of the company. "The company does a lot of research and development, and that's important to me," Mitchell says. "If you don't put a lot of money into R&D, you'll soon find yourself very behind."



John Davis



Mark Davis



Chris Chartrand

Jonathan
Mitchell

with a machine called Sanction, which used a laboratory-grade pump to precisely apply oil onto lanes in ways that had never been done before. Oil patterns change the difficulty of a bowling lane by affecting how the ball moves — oil can be applied to make the lane pro-level difficult or nearly gutter-ball-proof.

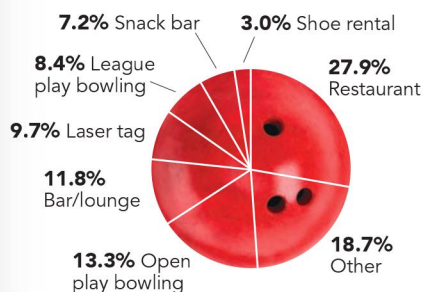
Kegel later introduced the Walker, a robotic oiling machine that could move from lane to lane on its own at programmed settings. The company initially manufactured the machines for DBA Products, which sold them under its own name until DBA was acquired by Brunswick.

In the late 1990s, Davis decided to build Kegel as its own brand rather than continue as a contract manufacturer. He hired a salesman named Chris Chartrand, a

Bowling Alley Sales

Non-bowling activities, such as eating and drinking, account for a majority of the estimated \$3.8 billion in annual sales generated by bowling centers nationwide.

Bowling and shoe rentals account for a quarter of total industry sales.



Source: IBISWorld

West Palm Beach native who had competed on Florida State University's bowling team with one of Davis' sons. Chartrand, then 23, began setting up a global distributor network for Kegel. "I spent a lot of time in Europe and Asia," he says.

In 2003, Davis looked for outside funding to grow the company and sold a 49.5% stake to private investor Jonathan Mitchell, who lives in Sarasota. A novice bowler, Mitchell says, "If I break 100, it's champagne all around." He explains he got involved because he liked and admired Davis and thought Kegel could find "opportunities outside the bowling industry, which I thought would be interesting to capitalize on."

Today, for example, Kegel makes Fizzion, a brand of dissolving tablets used to clean bowling lanes that can also remove pet stains and odors from other surfaces. Fizzion is sold in Publix and PetSmart.

Since 2003, Kegel has operated from more than 100,000 square feet in a Lake Wales business park. With Davis as his mentor, Chartrand became president in 2010 and is now CEO. In 2013, John Davis died of a heart attack at 64. Two years ago, Linda Davis sold her stake in the company to Mitchell, making him sole owner.

Mark Davis, now Kegel's executive vice president of mechanical product development and support, says John Davis always wanted to be a good employer — stemming from his days working in Sebring for bosses he didn't like. "For the most part," says Mark, "we want people to enjoy working for us."

With about 100 employees, Kegel offers a range of benefits, including on-site biweekly chiropractic care, paid time off for a child's first day of school and subsidized meals at the company's deli-style canteen.

Bowling, since the height of its popularity in John Davis' youth, has struggled to retain participants. Nationwide, the number of people who bowl in a league is less than a fourth of what it was in 1980.

As league play has declined, bowling alleys have added arcades, restaurants and laser tag in attempts to court casual bowlers. Chartrand says Kegel is sticking to core bowling products, however. "We've stayed true to what we care about, which is the competitive side of





bowling,” he says.

For the moment, the firm is outperforming its industry. Kegel sells about \$20 million a year in lane maintenance machines, parts and chemicals. About 40% of its sales are overseas. “Outside the U.S., the two healthiest markets are Japan and Korea,” Chartrand says. “Korea right now is absolutely on fire. Of all the lane machines we ship this year, just under 20% will go to Korea.” Kegel’s sales overall are on track to grow 10% for the year, he says.

Kegel also operates a training center for competitive bowlers in Lake Wales, with 12 adjustable lanes that can be made depressed or crowned to represent some bowling alley flaws. An all-day training session costs \$600.

Kegel continues to introduce new products, including a sensor-enabled ball tracking system called Specto that it sells to bowling alleys for \$13,500. Each Specto sensor covers six lanes and measures ball motion in 6-inch increments from the foul line to the pin deck; bowl-

“I don’t care how good the widget is. If you don’t have good people running the company, you can’t make money,” owner Jonathan Mitchell says.

ers then get detailed information about each shot via a mobile app, helping them improve their accuracy and consistency.

“While some of our competitors are talking about selling you laser tag in a bowling center, we’re talking about how fast your ball is going with an app,” Chartrand says. “It’s all about bowling.”

On a recent weekday morning, Lucy Sandelin, a Hall of Fame

bowler from Tampa, practiced at the Kegel training center next to a young family from Ohio. “We just had groups here from Puerto Rico and Singapore,” Chartrand says.

Chartrand believes the number of league bowlers in the U.S. will stabilize during the next few years because “bowling as a competitive activity is just very unique,” he says. “It’s something people can do at 5 or at 80.” **FT**

Bowling in the U.S.

69 million - Number of people who bowl at least once a year

1.49 million - Number of people who bowl in a league

48,964 - Number of bowling leagues

4,466 - Number of bowling alleys

94,985 - Number of bowling lanes

2.5% - Annualized growth rate in sales for U.S. bowling centers between 2012 and 2017. Sales are expected to be roughly flat during the next five years.

Sources: U.S. Bowling Congress





Full-time employees get equity compensation and are free to take as much time off as they choose as long as they get their work done.

Everybody's Watching

Forcura

No. 13 / *Small*

Headquarters: Jacksonville

Founded: 2012

CEO: Craig Mandeville

Business: Develops software that provides paperless document workflow and secure mobile communications to in-home and hospice health care organizations

Quote: "We invite local entrepreneurs into our offices on Friday afternoons. They have access to our entire team, from product development to sales and marketing to implementation. We'll allow them to present where they are, and we'll provide resources and guidance to help get them to the next step. That's how much we're invested in the city. I think it speaks volumes about our culture," Mandeville says.

Employees at a Jacksonville software company know exactly how their company is doing — in real time.

By Amy Martinez

Mounted on the wall of Forcura's office lobby are three large video screens displaying charts and graphs. The Jacksonville-based health-care technology company uses the TV dashboards to share real-time information with employees about how it's doing. If customer satisfaction levels drop or there's a delay in releasing a new software update, everyone knows about it.

"It presents a level of accountability across the company," says Craig Mandev-



Company founder Craig Mandeville says he looks for employees who are bold, innovative, passionate, transparent and fun.

ille, Forcura's founding CEO. The firm's 23 employees know "not only how they're performing, but also how their peers and other departments are doing. We're a goal-driven organization."

Forcura develops and manages workflow automation software for in-home and hospice health-care providers, enabling them to cut paper out of their business processes and communicate securely via mobile devices.

Mandeville, a Texas native, was working for financial software company Intuit in Jacksonville when he had a “lightbulb moment” and decided to create Forcura.

At the time, his wife, Heather, was doing marketing work for a local home-health agency. “I was blown away by how technologically underserved the industry was,” Mandeville recalls. “The agency had to go through a lot of paper and manual processes just do its job and serve its patients.”

In 2012, Mandeville used his savings and a “small amount of money” from angel investors to launch Forcura. “I’m a big proponent of bootstrapping,” he says. At his first industry conference, he signed four customers to contracts. “We’ve been growing rapidly ever since,” he says.

Forcura charges in-home and hospice health-care providers a monthly, per-patient subscription fee and has a daily



Forcura offers weekly on-site personal training sessions for employees.

active user count of about 20,000. One goal in displaying company information for all to see is that it gets employees talking about what may or may not be work-

ing in their jobs, says Charlie Flynn, the company’s marketing manager. “It keeps us honest,” he says.

In hiring, Forcura looks for employees who will fit the company’s culture. It takes its time with interviews. Mandeville says he looks for employees who are bold, innovative, passionate, transparent and fun.

“Unfortunately, you’ll stick out like a sore thumb if you’re not aligned with those core values,” he says. “The culture here is a living and breathing entity. We don’t want to bring in people who’ll disrupt that and change the energy of the company.”

Forcura gives all full-time employees equity compensation. Employees are free to take as much time off as they choose, as long as they get their work done. The Jacksonville offices include a “fun room” with putt-putt golf and basketball. There also are weekly on-site personal training sessions and monthly social outings to places like Top Golf or the local go-kart racing track.

“We’re extremely flexible,” Mandeville says. “We have kind of a work-hard, play-hard atmosphere.” 



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PREMIER EXPERTISE. PREMIER SERVICE.



New hires start with 19 or more days of vacation, in addition to paid holidays. The company places a premium on teamwork.

Higher Ed, Online

A company in Maitland helps colleges and universities with online degree programs.

By Amy Martinez

Wiley Education Services

(formerly Deltak)

NO. 18 / Large

Headquarters:

Hoboken, N.J.

Founded: 1996

Managing director:

Greg Finkelstein

Business: Develops and manages online degree programs for traditional colleges and universities.

In 1996, the company that would become Wiley Education Services was founded as Eduprise, drawing on work from a think tank at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill that focused on distance learning.

During the 2000s, amid a series of reorganizations, Wiley's precursor capitalized on demand for online college courses, initially as part of Collegis, a Maitland-based provider of IT services to the higher education sector, and later as Deltak.

In 2012, New Jersey-based John Wiley & Sons, publisher of the "For Dummies" book series and other educational publications, bought Deltak for \$220 million, renaming it Wiley

Education Services.

With about 210 employees in Maitland, Wiley develops, launches and markets online courses for colleges and universities. It now counts about 40 schools as partners and has students across the country enrolled in 250 degree programs.

Wiley also works with schools to identify prospective students and then assists the students in applying for admission and in choosing programs. The schools decide which applicants to accept. Wiley is paid a percentage of revenue generated from tuition paid by the students it refers, so it has an incentive to find qualified applicants.

"It doesn't matter if I find 5,000



"I learned a long time ago that value is created by your team who's closest to your customer. You need to cherish and treasure those people, foster their learning and development and ultimately position them for success within your organization," Greg Finkelstein says.



"You get to help people through their educational journeys as part of your job. That feels pretty good," says Matt Hillman, vice president of national operations. "We also get to interact with leading faculty who are doing amazing research at top-ranked schools across the country."

Wiley employees acknowledge co-workers on a company kudos board.

students" who want to go to a prestigious university, says managing director Greg Finkelstein. "If they don't have the right backgrounds and credentials, the schools will turn them down."

Wiley has student service coordinators who ensure that students are supported throughout the programs, as well as technical support specialists available 24/7.

It also markets to companies that are likely to offer education assistance to their employees, relying heavily on online advertising and social media.

As part of its workplace benefits package, Wiley covers most of the costs of an online degree




at partner schools for its own employees and their spouses.

"We're believers in education, obviously. You kind of have to eat what you cook, so to speak," Finkelstein says. "Over the past decade, we've provided somewhere between \$6 million and \$8 million in tuition scholarships."

Wiley also reimburses up to \$5,250 a year to employees pursuing other education programs and provides a full range of health, dental, vision and retirement benefits, including dollar-

for-dollar 401(k) matches, up to 4% of pay. New hires start with 19 or more days of vacation, in addition to paid holidays.

Wiley refers to employees as "colleagues" and places a premium on collaboration. If, during a job interview, a candidate comes across as having trouble collaborating or receiving feedback, "that would probably be a deal-breaker," says Amy Black, a senior human resources specialist. "It's very much a team-oriented culture." 

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40,000+ *Alumni*

2,000+ *Employees*

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Learn more about our school at UltimateMedical.edu

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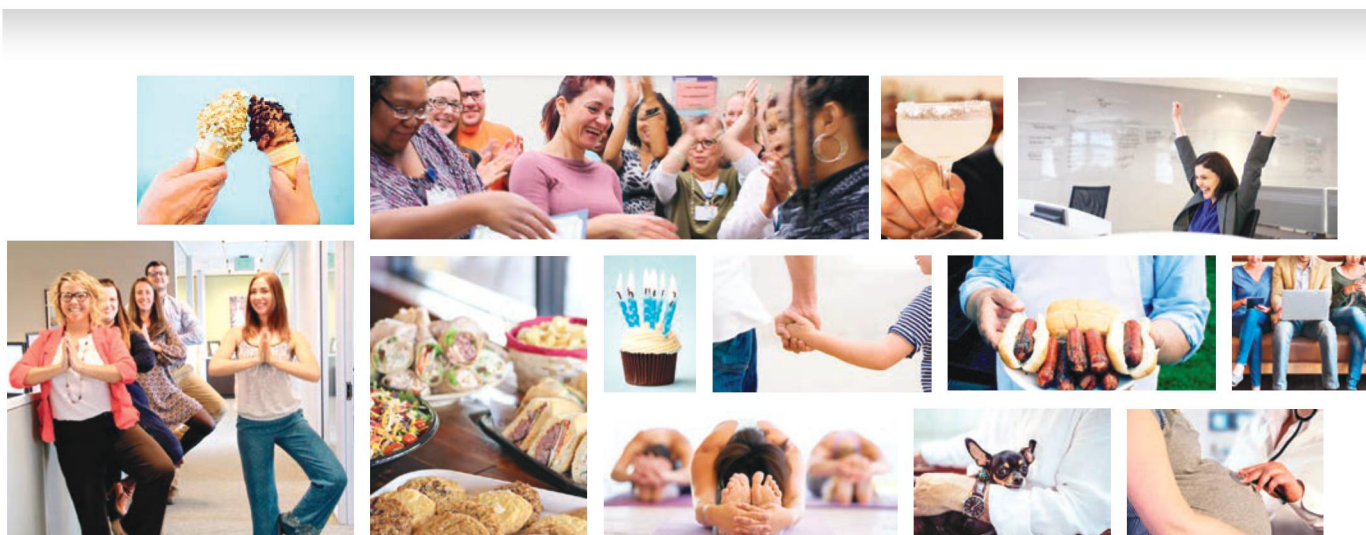


→ Best Large Companies (250 or more employees)

Rank	Company / Headquarters / Industry	Notable
1	HFF / Dallas / Real Estate	Biometric screenings for all employees with prizes, snacks and massages
2	The Beck Group / Dallas / Design, Construction, Technology	Rooftop garden with a low-maintenance vegetated roof system
3	DPR Construction / Redwood City, Calif. / Construction	Additional 10 days of time off after every five years
4	Hunton & Williams / Washington / Legal	Subsidized emergency child and adult care; subsidized concierge service
5	Edward Jones / St. Louis, Mo. / Financial Services	63% of advisers earned at least one all-expenses-paid trip by serving their clients well
6	Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa / Chicago / Hospitality, Hotels	Discounted and complimentary room nights at Hyatt hotels
7	UniFirst / Wilmington, Mass. / Services	Quarterly contest to win a week's paid vacation for getting a physical
8	PCL Construction Services / Denver / Construction	Ice cream truck celebrations; gifts to celebrate achievements
9	Duke Realty / Indianapolis / Real Estate	Educational scholarships for employee dependents
10	North Highland / Atlanta / Consulting	Unlimited personal leave time
11	Hanson Professional Services / Springfield, Ill. / Engineering	\$1,000 for employee referrals
12	Gunster / West Palm Beach / Legal	12 days of Christmas breakfasts, holiday party, cookie exchange
13	Infinite Energy / Gainesville / Energy Supplier	Holiday party with \$100,000 cash giveaway
14	Busey / Champaign, Ill. / Financial Services	Wellness center, onsite coach, group and one-on-one coaching, health screenings
15	RCI / Parsippany, N.J. / Travel, Hospitality	Free resort vacations with a travel allowance
16	Marriott Vacations Worldwide / Orlando / Hospitality	Discounted rates at resorts, properties and hotels
17	Goldberg Segalla LLP / Buffalo, N.Y. / Legal	Free breakfast every Friday
18	Wiley Education Services / Hoboken, N.J. / Services	College tuition aid for employees and their spouses
19	Meridian Technologies / Jacksonville / Technology	Game days; ice cream socials
20	The Execu/Search Group / New York / Staffing	Field days; ice cream socials
21	Memorial Healthcare System / Hollywood / Health Care	Nationally recognized safety record
22	American Strategic Insurance / St. Petersburg / Insurance	Among the 15 largest residential property insurers in the U.S.
23	Roth Staffing Cos. / Orange, Calif. / Staffing	9/80 flex schedule; option to work 80 hours over nine days instead of 10
24	CBIZ MHM LLC-Tampa Bay / Cleveland / Accounting	Annual overnight summer party for workers, families and friends
25	FCCI Insurance Group / Sarasota / Insurance	Free Thanksgiving turkeys for employees
26	Capital City Bank / Tallahassee / Banking	10 paid holidays; \$20 bonus at Thanksgiving

→ Best **Midsized** Companies (50 to 249 employees)

Rank	Company / Headquarters / Industry	Notable
1	Elite SEM / New York / Advertising, PR, Marketing	Internet stipend, snack stipend, chance to fly to an office to attend office holiday parties
2	HomeBanc / Tampa / Banking	Unlimited incentive compensation for all employees; annual stock awards
3	Coastal Cloud / Palm Coast / IT and Business Consulting	Unlimited vacation
4	Atlantic Coast Bank / Jacksonville / Banking	Birthday off
5	Baldwin Krystyn Sherman Partners / Tampa / Insurance	Colleague recognition days
6	The Lord's Place / West Palm Beach / Non-Profit, Health & Human Services	Massages and yoga at work
7	CTI Resource Management Services / Jacksonville / Contractor	Themed parties and potlucks
8	Financial Design Associates / Springfield, Mass. / Insurance	Unlimited earning potential with bonuses and raises
9	Apollo Bank / Miami / Banking	Quarterly wellness activities
10	Cole Engineering Services / Orlando / Technology	Unlimited beverages
11	Premier Eye Care / Tampa / Health Care, Insurance and Services	Valentine's Day gift bags; bi-weekly catered lunches
12	KAST Construction / West Palm Beach / Construction	Rolex watch after 10 years of service
13	Newman-Dailey Resort Properties / Miramar Beach / Real Estate, Vacation Rentals	Holiday party at CEO's home
14	Lanier Upshaw / Lakeland / Insurance	Employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) company
15	AgileThought / Tampa / Technology	Fun committee for planning social outings and get-togethers
16	Pearson Bitman / Maitland / Legal	Bring children to work on any day
17	First Florida Credit Union / Jacksonville / Banking	Monthly breakfast at staff meetings
18	Cequint / Seattle / Telecommunications	13 paid holidays a year
19	Momentum Consulting / Miami Lakes / Technology	Bowling event at an upscale venue
20	Convergence Consulting Group / Tampa / Consulting	Happy hours and tournaments Fridays
21	iVenture Solutions / Jacksonville / Technology	100% paid paternity and maternity leave for six weeks
22	Daszkal Bolton / Boca Raton / Accounting	After-season celebration
23	MCCi / Tallahassee / Technology	Quarterly and Christmas bonuses
24	New Horizons Computer Learning Centers of South Florida / Plantation / Education	Franchise Fridays with margaritas, beers and cocktails
25	Gregory, Sharer & Stuart CPAs / St. Petersburg / Accounting	Wellness bucks to pay for healthy activities
26	Berkowitz Pollack Brant Advisors and Accountants / Miami / Accounting	No dress code year-round, summer work hours



BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR IN FLORIDA

Rank	Company / Headquarters / Industry	Notable
27	Revcontent / Sarasota / Technology	Green building with automatic, motion sensor lights to conserve energy
28	Bouchard Insurance / Clearwater / Insurance	"Casual for a Cause" jeans day every month; employees pay \$5, with the funds donated to a charity
29	Security First Managers / Ormond Beach / Insurance	Annual employee/family activities (baseball game, ice cream social, etc.)
30	Kegel / Lake Wales / Manufacturing	Bring your pet to work day
31	Novation Settlement Solutions / West Palm Beach / Financial Services	Indoor Olympics during the Olympics
32	PowerDMS / Orlando / Technology	Unlimited personal time off with annual \$500 vacation bonus
33	Allen & Company of Florida , Lakeland / Financial Services	Fully funded off-site Family Fun Day, Men's and Women's Weekend
34	KNOWBE4 / Clearwater / Technology	Cash bonuses
35	DynaFire / Casselberry / Fire and Life Safety	Picnic field day
36	Examsoft Worldwide / Delray Beach / Technology	100% paid employee benefits (medical, dental, vision, life, LTD)
37	Dufry America / Doral / Retail	\$10 a month toward a weight loss program or gym membership



→ Best Small Companies (15 to 49 employees)

Rank	Company / Headquarters / Industry	Notable
1	Jill S. Schwartz & Associates / Winter Park / Legal	Movie nights
2	CAREERXCHANGE / Miami / Staffing	Superior work rewarded with two hours off on any day
3	Bit-Wizards / Fort Walton Beach / Technology	Free beverages, dart board, flex time, monthly social events
4	Atlas Professional Services / Tampa / Technology	Weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual awards and contests
5	Patel, Greene & Associates / Bartow / Engineering	100% company-paid health, dental and vision insurance premiums (for employee/spouse/family)
6	Alltrust Insurance / Palm Harbor / Health Insurance	Catered lunches weekly; appreciation gatherings monthly
7	Clickbooth.com / Sarasota / Advertising, PR, Marketing	Free gym access; beer cart Friday
8	Meenan P.A. / Tallahassee / Legal	Year-end bonuses
9	Uproar PR / Orlando / Advertising, PR, Marketing	Half-day Fridays
10	Clearview Land Design / Tampa / Civil Engineering	Annual oyster roast
11	CPS Investment Advisors / Lakeland / Financial Services	Building equipped with solar panels to reduce electricity consumption



Rank	Company / Headquarters / Industry	Notable
12	Diverse Computing / Tallahassee / Technology	Free lunch every day
13	Forcura / Jacksonville / Technology	Friday happy hours with beverages and games
14	ISGF / Orlando / Staffing	Mid-year cruise to the Bahamas
15	Partners in Association Management / Tallahassee / Association Management	Financial transparency policy and quarterly review of company financials
16	Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Co. / Fort Myers / Accounting	Fun committee for planning parties and activities to encourage friendships and productivity
17	Jimerson & Cobb P.A. / Jacksonville / Legal	Competitions to boost morale, such as office mini golf and pumpkin bowling
18	Centauri Insurance / Sarasota / Insurance	Fully stocked kitchen with healthy meal options for breakfast and lunch
19	Foundation Art Services / Deerfield Beach / Manufacturing	Company pays half of gym fee up to \$180 per month
20	Vaco Orlando / Orlando / Staffing	Weekly massages
21	Cardinal Management Group of Florida / Naples / Services	Summer hours
22	Net Conversion / Orlando / Advertising, PR, Marketing	Rap Fridays and Snuggies for the staff
23	JWB Real Estate Capital / Jacksonville / Real Estate	Catered lunch daily
24	Rogers, Gunter, Vaughn Insurance / Tallahassee / Insurance	On-site gym and shower
25	Worksite Employee Leasing / North Port / Services	Free lunch every Wednesday
26	Squaremouth / St. Petersburg / Insurance	Quarterly bonuses based on profit
27	Moore Communications Group / Tallahassee / Advertising, PR, Marketing	100% of employee's health care premiums paid by company
28	Ennis, Pellum & Associates / Jacksonville / Accounting	Employees can leave at 1 p.m. on Fridays during the summer
29	CNP / Winter Haven / Advertising, PR, Marketing	Unlimited vacation/sick time
30	One Park Financial / Miami / Financial Services	Company happy hours and employee potlucks
31	Integrity Employee Leasing / Punta Gorda / Services	4:30 Friday staff socials
32	Beck Partners / Pensacola / Real Estate	Office closes for leadership seminars as a team
33	Horizon Innovations / Jacksonville / Advertising, PR, Marketing	Cash bonus, prizes, vacation getaways
34	Management Specialists Services / Gainesville / Association Management	14 paid holidays a year
35	UberOps / Tallahassee / Technology	Flexibility to work from a co-working space or from home
36	Florida Skin Center / Fort Myers / Health Care Provider	Two staff appreciation events a year
37	Crippen & Co. / Ocala / Accounting	Half-day Fridays outside of busy season; food brought in on Fridays during busy season

- **To identify Florida's best employers**, FLORIDA TREND partners with the Best Companies Group, which surveyed firms that chose to participate. Any firm with at least 15 employees in Florida, including firms based outside the state, could participate at no cost.
- **The first part of the survey** involved a questionnaire about company policies, practices and demographics. The second part went to a randomly selected group of each firm's employees, who responded — anonymously — to 72 statements on a five-point agreement scale.
- **The survey also included** two open-ended questions and seven demographic questions. The questions focused on eight themes: Leadership and planning; corporate culture and communications; role satisfaction; work environment; relationship with supervisor; training and development; pay and benefits; and overall engagement.
- **Contract employees** were not included in employee surveys and not added to employee counts.
- **To sign up for next year's Best Companies rankings**, go to FloridaTrend.com/BestCompanies.

Florida Trend **BEST** **COMPANIES** TO WORK FOR IN FLORIDA™



Notably Successful

What are some common qualities of success in this year's list of 100 Best Companies To Work For In Florida?

First, it seems that most of these companies operate on the idea that people truly are their greatest asset. And almost all of them share a sense of purpose in their work and a commitment to their communities.

Read on to see what else makes these companies "best."



COMPANY	PAGE #
The Beck Group	82
Bouchard Insurance	87
Clearview Land Design	86
Coastal Cloud	80
FCCI Insurance Group	81
Financial Design Associates	87
Hanson Professional Services	87
HomeBanc	86
Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa	87
Jill S. Schwartz & Associates, P.A.	86
Management Specialists Services	88
Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Company	87
Meenan P.A.	82
Meridian Technologies	88
North Highland	83
One Park Financial	88
Partners in Association Management	88
Security First Insurance	84
UniFirst Corporation	84
Vaco Orlando	85
Worksite Employee Leasing	88

Coastal Cloud



#3
MIDSIZED
company

coastalcloud.us
Palm Coast

FIRST-TIME WINNER

“Live at the Beach. Work in the Cloud.”

Coastal Cloud is the largest IT consulting company in Florida that specializes in the Salesforce.com technology platform. In only four years, Coastal Cloud has grown to become one of the top cloud technology consulting firms in North America and serves over 250 clients across the globe. The woman-owned company has a growing team of 130 certified consultants and has completed more than 750 projects and built industry-specific solutions for health care, communications, media, education, high tech, manufacturing, energy, professional services, real estate, retail, non-profits, economic and workforce development organizations and state and local government.

“Our consultants enjoy a rare balance of engaging technology consulting work coupled with time to share with friends and families.”

— Sara Hale

The technology consulting business is highly competitive, and the “war for talent” is relentless. Coastal Cloud was designed to disrupt this battle by offering a very different environment for employees to live, work and play. Sara and Tim Hale,

founders of Coastal Cloud, spent long careers working for global IT consulting firms. They experienced first hand the rewarding work but unbalanced lifestyles such firms demand. They sought to design a new type of IT consulting firm that leveraged the latest and greatest cloud technology platforms and offered rewarding client projects while enabling a work-life balance that other firms could not match. They set up a technology Solution Center on the beautiful, unspoiled beaches of Flagler County and recruited a world-class team of technology consultants who wanted to escape the perils of constant travel and congested metropolitan areas.

A visit to Coastal Cloud’s headquarters in Palm Coast reveals a team of skilled, hard working, friendly professionals who collaborate all day long with teammates and clients to deliver some of the most innovative projects in the world. Those professionals can often be seen wearing shorts, flip flops and aloha shirts. They enjoy flexible schedules, generous time off, professional growth and short commutes via car, bicycle and

even golf carts! But the relaxed atmosphere belies the team’s intense focus on client solutions and delivering high value outcomes.

“Our consultants enjoy a rare balance of engaging technology consulting work coupled with time to share with friends and families,” says Sara Hale. “In essence, we created the type of consulting firm we always wanted to work for.”

“But we are also designed to provide an exceptional level of client service,” says Tim Hale. “We have our Palm Coast Solution Center to provide best practices and industry expertise coupled with local, certified Salesforce.com consultants in every major metro market across Florida, including Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, Tallahassee and South Florida.”

Coastal Cloud’s model is working as the company enjoys some of the lowest attrition in the industry and extremely high client satisfaction levels. Their model is expanding nationwide offering additional high quality of life options for employees with new Solutions Centers in Louisville, Ky., and Steamboat Springs, Colo.

FCCI Insurance Group

Success Based on Innovative Ideas

FCCI Insurance Group is more than an insurance company.

It's a place where people who work a little harder and care a little more fit right in. It's a supportive, collaborative culture where people — the independent insurance agents who represent FCCI, the policyholders who purchase coverage and FCCI's teammates — are regarded as the greatest assets. With such a focus on people and relationships at FCCI, teammate development is as much about personal well-being as it is about career growth.

"It's not just about career development, it's about financial wellness, stress reduction, life balance and much more — everything that goes into making the entire individual stronger, more resilient and more inclined to be successful," says Lisa Krouse, board member, EVP, chief HR and corporate communications officer.

It all started with a group of contractors in 1959 who had an idea to reduce the cost of workers' compensation insurance by banding together. From that humble beginning, FCCI has grown into a \$2-billion property and casualty insurance company operating in 18 states and providing comprehensive property and casualty insurance to more than 18,000 businesses.

As a company built on innovative ideas by enterprising individuals, FCCI has always valued learning and development as part of its culture. "Employee development has become important for companies today as we see five generations in the workplace, but it's something we've always done," says Krouse. "It's about expanding our skills, knowledge and experience to be the best individuals we can be, and that makes us the best company we can be.

FCCI's School of Excellence is an internal "college" of training

classes available to all teammates. Combined with strong internship and trainee programs and a focus on continuous education and development, the FCCI School of Excellence fosters a culture of lifelong growth and achievement as well as visionary leadership.

Also contributing to FCCI's emphasis on well-rounded teammates is the culture of volunteerism. FCCI teammates are given four hours of company-paid time each year to volunteer at the community organization of their choice. In 2016, more than 2,600 hours were donated

teammates, FCCI offers more than a job. It offers a workplace where individual contributors and leaders are challenged to do and be their best, to give back and pay it forward, and to always offer exceptional service. FCCI has been honored as one of FLORIDA TREND's "Best Companies To Work For In Florida" every year since the program began in 2009 and has been recognized with a number of other awards, including Great Place to Work® for Millennials by *Fortune* magazine, American Heart Association Fit Friendly Company (platinum level),

#25
LARGE
company

fcci-group.com
Sarasota

9-TIME WINNER



FCCI 2017 Leadership Development Program cohort volunteers with Habitat for Humanity Sarasota. This is the third home FCCI has sponsored through the Community Contribution Tax Credit Program. In addition to financial sponsorship, FCCI has pledged a minimum of 200 volunteer employee hours for each home and exceeded that goal each time!

through the program, proving that the motivation to help others and support the community extends throughout the organization.

To insurance agents and policyholders, FCCI offers "More than a policy. A promise." To

Best's Review Top 200 U.S. Property/Casualty Writers, and *Insurance Journal's* 2016 Super Regional P/C Insurers list.

For more information on FCCI Insurance Group, visit www.fcci-group.com.

The Beck Group

**#2
LARGE
company**

beckgroup.com

Tampa

2-TIME WINNER

More than Architects and Contractors

A strong sense of community spills over into The Beck Group's day-to-day working environment.

The Beck Group's history in Florida dates back to 1961 when they built the first launch facility at Cape Canaveral. With a Florida headquarters established in Tampa over 30 years ago, Beck delivers projects that touch every aspect of life in Tampa Bay, from travelers passing through Tampa

International Airport's Airsides 'C' and 'F' to visitors exploring the renowned Dali Museum; from students living and studying at The University of Tampa to physicians practicing cutting edge technology at USF's Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation; from diners enjoying a meal at Ulele to the thousands of employees working at the Sykes Building. While Beck has contributed to Tampa's skyline, their focus continues to be statewide.

Beck has taken the concept of design-build to a new level by merging construction and design under one roof. Because

they are builders, they are more knowledgeable architects. Because they are architects, they are contractors who better understand design. In addition, their sustainability and technology practices innovate to solve problems and their program management practice allows busy owners to focus on what they do best.

Beck's sense of community spills over into their working environment, making them a "Best Place to Work" by the Tampa Bay Business Journal and Tampa Bay Times. Beck is committed to continuing to serve Florida for decades to come!



Beck participating in the 2017 Tampa Bay International Dragon Boat Races to promote health and wellness throughout the local community.



Beck volunteers at Habitat for Humanity.

Meenan P.A.

Creative Solutions to Government and Regulatory Challenges

Based in Tallahassee with national impact, Meenan P.A.'s lawyers use their extensive regulatory, legislative and litigation experience to help clients formulate innovative and effective solutions to difficult challenges, generally with government agencies.

Their professional team includes former government leaders who have previously served as an administrative law judge, as state regulators, and as a Florida legislator.

Meenan P.A. helps Florida businesses succeed in solving problems in Tallahassee by finding the lowest cost and most effective method of resolving a dispute with state government. The firm's goal

is to work with regulators and state agency leaders and lawyers to resolve problems without resorting to litigation. If necessary, the firm's former judge and lawyers will litigate against an agency, but often find it a better and lower-cost option to change the law and avoid litigation altogether.

Involvement with the community is a vital function of the firm, and the firm has focused its efforts on several key local and national charitable organizations. Meenan P.A. lawyers proudly give of their time, their dedication and their financial backing, with a particular emphasis on programs helping children.

Visit www.MeenanLawFirm.com.

MeenanLawFirm.com

Tallahassee

FIRST-TIME WINNER

**#8
SMALL
company**



North Highland

Solving Challenges, Generating Solutions

North Highland, the No. 10 ranked large company on *FLORIDA TREND'S* Best Companies To Work For In Florida list for 2017, is an employee-owned management consulting firm. The Florida office is led by Market Lead and Managing Director, Barbara Ray.

"At North Highland we work together differently — with our clients, each other and our communities. We embrace diversity of thought and foster collaboration and caring. I can honestly say I've never worked with a group of individuals as talented, smart and caring as North Highlanders are," says Ray.

North Highland is a local-first model, growing its footprint in the

Florida market since the late '90s. Orlando was the firm's first office location in Florida, following the opening of headquarters in Atlanta. The local-first approach allows North Highland to establish and create strong roots in its local communities and apply a global reach by tapping into the deep expertise that resides across the firm.

The majority of North Highland's work is with repeat clients. The firm works with more than 100 Florida businesses and organizations, including Fortune 500 companies, state government and leading nonprofits. With a bias for action and a human-centered approach, North Highland works with its clients to solve challenges and

generate innovative solutions across the spectrum of consulting.

"We solve problems, and we make a real impact. We all want to do right by each other and our clients," says Ray. "The people I work alongside are highly motivated people of integrity, and when we come together, we can do amazing things."

In addition to the Orlando office, North Highland also goes to market in Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Tampa and South Florida. Industry expertise spans entertainment, government, health care, hospitality and vacation ownership, nonprofits, retail, transportation and utilities.

#10
LARGE
company

northhighland.com

Jacksonville,
Orlando,
Tallahassee,
Tampa

7-TIME WINNER



Top: Members of the North Highland Orlando office.

Bottom: Members of the North Highland Tallahassee office volunteering for Day of Giving Back

Security First Insurance

Innovation Drives Business Growth

Security First Insurance is a Florida-based, data-driven technology company that offers home insurance to Floridians. More than a traditional homeowner's insurance company, Security First Insurance is recognized for developing award-winning mobile and video technology designed to provide an unparalleled customer experience.

Security First Insurance was the first homeowner's insurance specialist in the nation to develop a mobile app. The Security First Mobile app includes an interactive storm tracker that allows users to plot their location and share their custom map in social media. In 2013, the company was given the IBM Smarter Commerce-

Service award for developing the nation's first social media disaster response communications technology. Security First Insurance recently received the Celent Model Insurer award for developing a personalized policyholder video sent to new customers.

In early 2019, the company is planning to move into a new 100,000-square-foot corporate headquarters located in Ormond Beach. The new building will be equipped with a fitness center, collaboration areas and plenty of room for expansion. Security

First Insurance is projected to create at least 258 more jobs over the next five years. Please visit SecurityFirstFlorida.com/Careers for a list of opportunities. Insurance experience isn't required for all positions. Now is a great time to join the Security First Team.

#29
MIDSIZED
company

securityfirstflorida.com
Ormond Beach

3-TIME WINNER



UniFirst Corporation

#7
LARGE
company

UniFirst.com
10 Florida locations
4-TIME WINNER

The Real Working Man's Uniform Company

In addition to outfitting nearly 12 million workers in clean uniforms each workday, we also have a hand in keeping their businesses clean, safe and healthy through our Facility Service programs, allowing us to be a single-source solution for a variety of needs and the real working man's uniform company.

We built our company from the ground up based on our founding Core Values (which remain in place today): a Customer Focus, a Respect for Others and a Commitment to Quality. Serving local business customers via 240 service centers throughout the United States, Canada and Europe,

our flexible rental, lease and purchase programs are accessible, scalable and economical. Whether your organization is national, regional or local in scope, you'll always receive the highest quality products and services as a UniFirst customer.

Our mission is to be recognized as the leading provider of quality uniform and facility service programs. We guarantee total customer satisfaction. Our continuous customer focus enables us to grow, to provide an equitable return on investment and to create ongoing career opportunities for our employees. We are committed to conducting our business in a fair, honest and responsible manner in accordance with all environmental and

government regulations. We want you to become a customer for life!

Our service commitment to you begins long before any program deliveries are made. Our consultative and award-winning Total Cost of Ownership and Needs Analysis helps determine if you are in the most efficient and cost effective program. We make recommendations on how to best maintain, improve or establish a new business image for your company in the most economical manner. We also thoroughly review all aspects of your new managed program prior to our seamless program installation.

Find out how the UniFirst difference can help your image, service levels and bottom line today!



Vaco Orlando

Helping People Achieve Their Dreams

Florida's population is growing by leaps and bounds and that means a need for more roads, housing, schools and jobs. And jobs are where Vaco comes in.

Vaco locations in Florida — focused on accounting and finance, technology, operations and office professionals — provide the foundation for a staffing and business consulting firm that serves both individuals and companies. Helping clients and candidates fulfill their employment goals is why the Vaco team says it is the best place to work in Florida.

People are at the center of Vaco's corporate culture — the team, clients and candidates. As the largest full-service firm in Central Florida, if not all Florida, Vaco is in the people business, explains Stephen F. Smith, partner and director of financial recruiting. "We are emotionally invested in the people. What separates us from other companies is that we actually do care about each other and their development."

"Everyone on the team helps everyone else, from the CEO all the way down the line," explains Cynthia Garces, managing partner of Vaco South Florida. "Resources are available every step of the way to help grow the business, and management provides the tools and guidance to succeed with our clients."

Vaco's professional diversity and flexibility are other valuable assets that contribute to the company's success.

"We have a very diverse group of people and backgrounds — some with lots of experience and some just starting out — and we learn things from each other," says Brian Yankelevitz, director of operations. "We get to help candidates fulfill their professional dreams, while helping our clients run efficiently and effectively."

"What really sets us apart from other staffing agencies is that we care," says Beau McGlamery, partner and director of technology. "And if you put that out into the marketplace, you not only attract internal talent but you also attract great candidates."

"What really sets us apart from other staffing agencies is that we care. And if you put that out into the marketplace, you not only attract internal talent but you also attract great candidates."

— Beau McGlamery

"We attract people who can leverage their natural talents and experience. We customize solutions for our clients. They tell us what they want and we make it happen," adds Denise Bennett-Walls, managing partner, Vaco Orlando.

Each team member sets up his or her own management objectives, business, personal and community goals. "Yes, we care about their personal goals. Our job is to help people achieve their dreams. Because that is our main focus every day, Vaco naturally maintains the best place to work," Bennett-Walls adds.

"It's a privilege to help clients meet their future employees," says Nakita Broussard, manager of Vaco Staffing. "And I love how our professional objectives and goals tie into the community. We try to make Florida a great place to live. Our clients expect us to help them build best-in-class teams. And that helps us create the community we live in."

"We take pride in the relationships we build with our clients," says Bennett-Walls. "That's the fulfilling aspect of our careers. Our role in the business cycle is to provide talent; I also view it as building lifelong relationships."

For the Vaco team, it is those meaningful lifetime relationships that make it a best place to work in Florida.

vacoorlando.com
Orlando

4-TIME WINNER



Clearview Land Design

#10
SMALL
company

ClearviewLand.com
Tampa
2-TIME WINNER



Invested in Its Employees and Clients

Clearview Land Design is a civil engineering and land planning firm located in historic Ybor City. Clearview partners, Toxey Hall, Jordan Schrader and Mike Smirch, focus the firm around providing engineering services to master planned communities. Clearview also provides engineering, land planning, landscape architecture, environmental, GIS, construction inspection, entitlement and platting services for commercial, industrial and urban infill land development.

Clearview's company culture is respected among clients and peers, but most importantly, its 40 employees. The partners encourage community involvement and philanthropy. The team rallies annually to provide school supplies and other basic needs to local schools. Team-building events such as these promote the collaboration necessary for overall success.

In 2016 alone, Clearview performed engineering and planning services in more than 25 master planned communities. The leadership group invests in their employees, and that philosophy is definitely passed along to their clients. This team does whatever it takes to get the job done!

HomeBanc

#2
MID-SIZED
company

homebanc.com
Tampa
6-TIME WINNER

A Great Place to Work and A Great Place to Bank!

HomeBanc is proud of its top-notch team!

With outstanding employees throughout 14 offices in Florida, we specialize in providing distinctive personal service and relationship banking that exceeds expectations.

HomeBanc offers SBA, USDA and commercial lending products and retail banking through personal bankers assigned to each customer. We also offer The Pacesetters Club, a unique social club for customers at least 50 years of age who enjoy travel, merchant discounts and much more.

HomeBanc was named to *American Banker* magazine's 2016 Best Banks to Work For list and ranked #2 bank to work for out of 50 banks. The bank was recognized as a Top Workplace by the *Tampa Bay Times* for five consecutive years and was selected as the 2016 North Florida District Top Community Bank Lender by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

HomeBanc is an AA/EEO employer and currently hiring experienced commercial and SBA/USDA lenders throughout Florida.

It's an honor to be recognized for the sixth year in a row.



HomeBanc team members in the St. Patrick's Day decorating contest at the Tampa Headquarters

Jill S. Schwartz & Associates, P.A.

#1
SMALL
company

schwartzlawfirm.net
Winter Park
7-TIME 1ST PLACE WINNER

Your Work Is Our Priority

Jill S. Schwartz & Associates, P.A., is a leading employment law firm in the state of Florida, earning the highest rating, AV, by the *Martindale-Hubbell National Lawyers Registry*. We are active in the litigation of employment cases in state and federal courts. Our attorneys have extensive experience representing both employees and employers with regard to employment discrimination, harassment and retaliation claims based upon age, race, religion, gender, pregnancy, disability and national origin. We litigate claims involving unpaid wages and overtime compensation, retaliation against whistleblowers (including actions for fraudulent use of government funds), non-compete agreements, employment contracts and severance agreements. We also advise companies regarding day-to-day workplace matters, handbooks and training.

Our firm is committed to providing proactive and aggressive legal services to all of our clients, and to meaningfully impacting the quality of the workplace. We could not accomplish this without the enthusiasm, energy and dedication of our employees. We maintain an environment that fosters the physical, spiritual and emotional well-being of our invaluable team.



**Markham Norton Mosteller
Wright & Company****#16**
SMALL
company**markham-norton.com**
Fort Myers • Naples
7-TIME WINNER**Focused on Future
Success**

At MNMW, our team is what fuels our business and success – team members constantly strive to exceed client and peer expectations and rally in support and celebration of each other's achievements. We are a family away from family. The entire team at MNMW is proud and honored to be recognized as one of Florida Trend's "Best Companies to Work For in Florida" for the seventh consecutive year.

The firm, which opened in 1979, offers a wide range of services including business consulting, human resources consulting, technology consulting and support, tax planning and preparation, litigation support, mediation, forensic accounting, and elder services. Our experienced mix of team members allows us to provide a wide range of expert services to clientele. To learn more about our exciting career opportunities, visit www.markham-norton.com.



The culture of MNMW is due in large part to this dedicated team.

**Markham Norton
Mosteller Wright
& Company, P.A.**
Certified Public Accountants / Consultants

Bouchard Insurance**#28**
MIDSIZE
company**bouchardinsurance.com**
Clearwater, Tampa, Orlando,
Fort Myers, Kissimmee,
Sarasota
8-TIME WINNER

Our employees make us a consistent Best Company To Work For in Florida! Thank you, Team Bouchard, for embracing our core values that enhance our culture — B Engaged, B Focused, B Involved and B Happy. Your positive energy translates into a "Client First" experience for our customers and drives our continued success.

Bouchard
Insurance
Client First

**Financial Design
Associates****#8**
MIDSIZE
company**fn-design.com**
Jacksonville, Tallahassee,
Locations in GA and AL
4-TIME WINNER

Financial Design Associates, a general agency of the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual), provides a full spectrum of specialized financial consulting services and products to individuals, businesses and organizations. Our primary objective is to help achieve financial freedom by designing strategies to help achieve what is most important to you. We pledge our knowledge, expertise, resources and dedication in all we do.

MassMutual
FINANCIAL GROUP®

Financial Design Associates

**Hanson Professional
Services****#11**
LARGE
company**hanson-inc.com**
Bonifay, Jacksonville,
Sarasota, Orlando,
Miami, West Palm Beach
7-TIME WINNER

Hanson Professional Services Inc. provides engineering, planning and allied services from six offices in Florida and around the U.S. Hanson's dedicated employees are vested in their work — the company is owned by them. They take pride in their work, which has made Hanson successful. Hanson's employees bring the company's hands-on approach to clients on local, state, national and international levels.

HANSON
Engineering | Planning | Allied Services

**Hyatt Regency Coconut
Point Resort & Spa****#6**
LARGE
company**coconutpoint.
regency.hyatt.com**
Bonita Springs
2-TIME WINNER

Since 2001, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa has welcomed business and leisure travelers to Southwest Florida. Offering genuine hospitality and award winning service is our hallmark. More than 400 associates live Hyatt's core values every day by truly caring for our guests so that they can be their best. We are honored to receive this award once again.

**HYATT
REGENCY®**
COCONUT POINT
RESORT & SPA

Management Specialists Services

#34
SMALL
company

MSSgainesville.com
Gainesville
5-TIME WINNER

A company's passion for what they do shines through in the culture of the organization and its quality in the performance of their team. Our team is second to none, and we believe in them wholeheartedly. At MSS, we are honored that this passion has been recognized for the fifth straight year as one of the "Best Companies To Work For In Florida." We are extremely proud of our team and humbled to be one of few companies with this consecutive distinction.



Meridian Technologies

#19
LARGE
company

meridiantechnologies.net
Jacksonville, Charlotte NC,
Washington DC, Princeton NJ
2-TIME WINNER

We are an innovative technology, staffing and consulting company with nearly 20 years of experience identifying and solving tough IT problems for leading national organizations. We are a results-driven organization that strives to be the very best in our industry. We know that our employees are at the heart of our success, and that is why we work hard to make Meridian a place where our staff is rewarded, recognized and celebrated. We are honored to be recognized as one the Best Companies to Work For in Florida.



One Park Financial

#30
SMALL
company

oneparkfinancial.com
Coconut Grove
FIRST-TIME WINNER

Since 2010, One Park Financial has been a leading provider of Business Financing. With more than 50 years of combined experience in financial services, the founders of One Park Financial understand that small businesses need easy access to working capital. Unlike a bank loan, that requires a lengthy approval process, our services are simple and fast.

We are constantly striving to provide businesses with best-in-class service as we support their business needs. We win when our merchants win!



Partners in Association Management

#15
SMALL
company

yoursearchisdone.com
Tallahassee
6-TIME WINNER

Partners in Association Management is an accredited professional services firm that serves as the headquarters of over twenty state, regional and national not-for-profit organizations.

Our culture is driven by a passionate group of team members who rally around our mission of delivering strategic and operational management for our clients.



Worksite Employee Leasing

#25
SMALL
company

WorksiteEmployee.com
North Port, Miami
FIRST-TIME WINNER

Worksite provides clients with a simple, fully-integrated solution to the increasingly complex problem of maintaining employees. Worksite is a professional employer organization (PEO) providing payroll, workers' comp, HR support and benefits to restaurants, hotels, construction companies, healthcare providers and many others.

Exceptional customer service with ZERO hidden fees!



**MEET THE BEST
ONLINE**



FloridaTrend.com/best-companies

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