

# An unusual business model

## Red Dot believes impact of success should ripple outward

It started simply enough. In the summer of 2004, a group of men from Red Dot, a family-owned metal building and manufacturing company in Athens, attended a leadership conference.

It would prove to be a pivotal moment in the lives of not only members of the Bush family — who own Red Dot — but in the lives of their employees as well.

Ted Bush, who was then president of Red Dot Buildings, cast a vision of a business where the positive impact of success could be felt not only among owners and employees, but also locally and globally.

A program called Red Dot 100X was born.

Under the leadership of Director Tod Bush, Ted's brother, the multi-faceted program utilizes Red Dot's financial successes to fund humanitarian outreach projects at home and overseas. Red Dot 100X offers aid to "neighbors in crisis" in surrounding communities, provides financial support for large humanitarian projects both at home and abroad, and invests in the lives of employees.

"It was just a big blessing. I cried," recalled Gwen Burkhalter of the day this past November when a crew of Red Dot employees and their family members showed up to work on the Burkhalters' property east of Athens. That same day — an annual event known as "Transform Saturday" — other Red Dot volunteers also worked on homes in Cross Roads and Trinidad.

"It was more than just the work they did, although that was tremendous. It was the joy they had and that they showed God's love like that," explained Mrs. Burkhalter, who along with her husband Deuane, has four special-needs children.

In addition, for several years at Christmas time, Red Dot has partnered with the Henderson County

HELP Center to "adopt" around 60 area families.

"They give their employees a certain amount of money, and their employees use that amount to get food and gifts for those families," explained HELP Center Executive Director Leslie Saunders. "They make a tremendous impact on the community for good. Without Red Dot coming forward, those families may do without."

Red Dot employees also donate each year a significant number of food items (this year nearly 2,800) to the Henderson County Food Pantry.

For the first several years of the 100X program, Red Dot sent scores of employees to locations across the globe: Guatemala, Peru, Honduras, Russia, Romania, Ethiopia and Kenya. Many of these trips — funded entirely by Red Dot at no loss to an employee's vacation time — involved working in orphanages.


In addition to members of the team investing a great deal of time and emotion to shower their love on orphaned children, trips involved acts such as installing playground systems, tiling floors,

funding the construction of transitional homes, orchestrating kid carnivals and providing funds to build schools and baby homes.

When the worldwide recession hit, Red Dot was forced to tighten its belt. While the international facet of the 100X mission does remain intact (Red Dot currently sponsors a girls' transitional home in Peru), it had to be scaled back.

"We decided to use this time to focus more on our employees," explained Tod. "We call it an 'inreach.'"

As part of that inreach, Red Dot in the past year has sponsored a marriage enrichment seminar and a parenting weekend retreat for a number of employees and their spouses, and offered multiple Bible studies for their staff among other things.

"As Red Dot prospers, so do our employees, so do our neighbors, so do others around the world," said Tod. "We really do consider it a privilege to be able to multiply what we're given — and then give it back." 



BY TONI GARRARD CLAY



Red Dot employees Jessie Garcia (left) and Johnny Johnson work on the roof of a home for the Burkhalter family this past November. Red Dot encourages its employees to participate each year in Transform Saturday Volunteer Work Day as part of the company's philanthropic 100X program.

“They make a tremendous impact on the community for good.”



Toni Garrard Clay photo

This young Guatemalan girl is one of many hundreds of orphans ministered to internationally as part of Red Dot's 100X program. Red Dot undertook projects such as updating facilities, installing play equipment and funding schools and care homes. The company continues to sponsor a girls' transitional home in Peru.



A 2010 recipient of Red Dot's annual Transform Saturday Volunteer Work Day is Verna Turner (pictured). She stands with several Red Dot employees, in addition to others, on a new ramp to her house in Log Cabin.