

Louisville company says goodbye to office space, goes to a 4-day work week after pandemic

Madden Elevator Company has decided to make the business remote, due to the success of work-from-home imposed by Covid-19.

LISA MADDEN

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If anyone understands changing business due to Covid-19, it's Sean Madden, owner of Madden Elevator Co.

That's because Madden and his 22 employees decided since working from home has gone so well, they won't be returning to their office at 4201 Produce Rd. And they'll only be working four 10-hour days a week now as well.

Madden said the shift has a lot to do with technology. In fact, when he was first starting the company more than 10 years ago, he tried the no-office approach but found it didn't fit with the world we lived in. But now that's changed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

He said the decision was not made lightly and was actually the result of his employees pushing the question of an indefinite work from home situation. After internal conversations on how managing the business, employees and expectations would work digitally, Madden said the company decided it would go digital in May.

The elevator company will still maintain a warehouse and Madden said he had his eye on a promising new facility. But without the office space, he said the company would be saving \$40,000-50,000 a year.

"When Covid[-19] hit, we were working virtually and the team said: 'What do you think about just continually doing this?' and I said, 'Well, don't tempt me, I'm all about it. I've always been about it,'" Madden said in an interview. "If everyone feels confident in being able to work from home successfully, I would love to head that route."

Now, Madden Elevator Co. meets on Microsoft Teams and Zoom, and utilizes Bamboo HR, a digital human resources service provider. For running day-to-day business, Madden uses the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS), a digital service developed to help entrepreneurs and business leaders run successful companies.

Madden said the company generally makes calls out to clients for meetings, but if a staff member needs conference space, he's negotiated with the legal and accounting firms the company works with to use meeting rooms at those firms for free.

For other business leaders considering the same transition away from the office, Madden said the best advice he can give is to listen to employees so you can identify challenges and attitudes around going back. And, to have open, transparent conversations in order to find creative ways to deal with both the pros and cons of the change.

"Our team understands we embrace technology, we believe in using technology to augment the services we provide our customers, not to replace people's jobs," Madden said. "I think that's why our team was so receptive; we are a technology-driven company and the world is driven by technology and it was easier for them to say, 'Yeah, let's embrace technology so we can figure out how to do other things.'"