

E2 Optics not getting lost in the clouds

No. 2 - Flight II

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[Kristi Alford](#) of E2 Optics LLC comes from a Texas family that worked in the energy business, and she has used the entrepreneurial passion she learned growing up to help her business expand. E2 Optics provides data-center services from audiovisual solutions to structured cabling installation.

“I come from an entrepreneurial family,” said Alford, E2 Optics president and CEO. “My dad was in the oil business, and my uncles. ... We have a family-first culture at E2 Optics; we all wear many hats ... We’re free thinkers and entrepreneurial.”



KATHLEEN LAVINE / DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL

E2 Optics, whose headquarters is in Arapahoe County's Inverness business park, also attributes its growth in recent years to the proliferation of the cloud — a network of remote computer servers hosted on the internet, used to manage and store data.

“We’re building the cloud; that’s the foundation of our company and still a big part of our business,” Alford said.

The company achieves that aim by providing services for the data centers of clients such as businesses and governments.

A data center is the “brain” of an organization, a facility that houses computer systems and associated components such as telecommunications and storage systems.

E2 Optics’ initially provided structured cabling for such centers, which involves building telecommunications cabling infrastructure for uses such as telephone service and data transmission. In recent years, the company has added services — security, audiovisual and wireless/distributed antenna system (DAS).

“Those three additional divisions are very highly specialized. ... They give us a lot of tools in our toolbox,” Alford said.

Alford grew up in the Houston area, and got a communications and business degree from Texas Tech University in Lubbock. After school, she returned to Houston and worked in sales for cabling manufacturer Kent Electronics Corp., traveling around the country —including to Colorado, where Kent worked with clients such as Level 3 Communications LLC.

“I came to Colorado and fell in love the first time I saw the mountains,” Alford said.

Colorado’s E2 Optics, a woman-owned and SBA-certified business, was launched during the Great Recession to be a new type of structured cabling services company providing top-quality service and customer care, according to the company.

“I started my business in a down economy, but I didn’t look at that,” said Alford. “I looked at my vision for what I wanted to do. A lot of my customers followed me.”

At first, the company couldn’t work with large clients because it didn’t have the capital. But this year, Alford expects to do \$65 million in revenue.

The company's employee ranks have grown to some 230 people total, 50 to 60 in Colorado. E2 Optics has U.S. offices from Ashburn, Virginia, and Dallas and Houston in Texas to Seattle and Portland, Oregon, on the West Coast.

The company also has international subsidiaries in Montreal, Canada, and Dublin, Ireland, and plans to expand to Germany, England and Australia because of customer demand.

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209.37% - Revenue growth: From \$16.3 million in 2013 to \$50.42 million in 2015

E2 Optics LLC

President/CEO: [Kristi Alford](#)

Location: Arapahoe County

Industry: Telecommunications

Website: e2optics.com

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No. of employees: 230 total, 50-60 in Colorado



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