ROB DAVIS

Founder and CEO, **CRITICAL START**

EY
2020

GROWING UP, ROB DAVIS always had a creative, entrepreneurial mindset. Case in point: In middle school, his family had an old computer that needed more storage, so he created a cassette tape to back up the programs. Every summer, Davis would challenge himself to learn or create something different.

Today, Davis has applied this early mindset to business. During his stint as an executive with RSA Security, Davis recognized a fundamental conflict between what organizations needed to address their security challenges and what the industry was telling them they needed. "Historically, organizations believed that investing in more technology would solve their security challenges," says Davis. "Yet in reality, most companies weren't spending enough time on security fundamentals. Companies seeking solutions to cyberattacks were focused on products only. Simply adding more technology on top of faulty security practices does not solve security issues."

Recognizing that there's a better way to deliver cybersecurity solutions, Davis started Critical Start in 2012, bringing to market a concept that emphasizes people, process and configuration. "Our solution changed the conversation within the industry to consider how information technology (IT) impacts business, risk tolerance, and specific threats of concern," says Davis.

Critical Start's managed security services, including Managed Detection and Response (MDR), incident response, professional services, and product fulfillment, helps organizations prepare for, respond to, and resolve breaches. The company's goal is to build the easiest-to-use, quickest-to-deploy, and most effective MDR platform in the cybersecurity industry. Today, the company is experiencing tremendous growth, as firms seek help combatting today's complex and rapidly evolving security threats including a 101% year-over-year revenue increase in 2019, an employee count that has nearly doubled in the last 12 months to more than 200 employees, and a move to a new 33,000-square-foot headquarters to support this continued growth. A key part of the company's growth is a culture that puts both customers and employees first.

"When I launched Critical Start, I wanted to create a culture based on three core principles: do what's right for the customer, don't do things that suck, and do what's right for our employees," Davis says. In addition, most important is the culture of caring that starts with Davis. This great culture is important for retention. Critical Start has an employee retention rate of 98.6% – an amazing statistic in the cybersecurity industry. "We're doing everything we can to create meaningful work experiences for our employees," Davis says. "Implementing a great culture is key to business, as well as keeping our customers safe against cyberattacks and other malicious activity."

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