

Making Their Mark

The bar code is as ubiquitous as it is underappreciated, but a Lakes Region company sees it as a growth market. **PaladinID** in Laconia is a reseller of bar code technology that allows businesses to customize their own barcodes to automate processes. Manufacturers that want to individually bar code their inventory in a warehouse to make it easier to locate and track product or parts can do so using the technology that PaladinID provides. That technology includes software and handheld devices that track individual bar codes and automate the picking process as well as printers to produce the labels.

Dana Ritchie started the company 10 years ago as Northeast Bar Code Solutions in Massachusetts. Three years ago, Ritchie moved himself and the business to Laconia and brought in industry veteran Toby Burrell as a sales partner in early 2007 to help take the company to the next level. That included changing the name of the company this past summer to PaladinID as part of its rebranding effort. Most of the company's business is in New England

and the partners say they are setting the stage to expanding the company's reach nationally.

The hope is companies will see PaladinID as the hero that rides into town to save the day,



Dana Ritchie and Toby Burrell lead PaladinID in Laconia.

Burrell says of selecting a heroic archetype for the company's new name. PaladinID has five employees, about 130 customers primarily in New England, and generates annual revenues of approximately \$1 million, but the partners have

plans to expand the company in a number of ways. While the bread and butter of their business is selling to companies that print individual labels for shipping and warehouse purposes, they see other industries as expansion markets. One of those is the health care industry, which can use bar codes to track patients and medications.

"There's a big market to make people more efficient. Ninety-eight percent of hospitals don't use bar codes for patient identification. We feel there is a huge market there," Ritchie says.

"We have 50 years of experience in the automation ID industry," Burrell says of Paladin's differentiating factor, adding that Paladin's customers range from small businesses to Fortune 100 companies. The partners are seeking to franchise the company, creating a model that will be reproduced and

sustained as they expand into a national presence. "Within the next three years, we feel we can easily double the size of the company, if not more," Burrell says. For more information, visit www.paladinid.com