



Sanvictores of Yardi Systems: Keeping customer service personal in a fast-growing company

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In 11 years with Yardi Systems, Becky Sanvictores has seen the company grow from fewer than 200 employees to more than 1,200. Its global client base expanded correspondingly and now numbers around 15,000. But through all the transformations the Santa Barbara, Calif.-based asset and property management software producer has undergone, what Sanvictores values most are those things that remain unchanged: Yardi's entrepreneurial spirit and the company's dedication to delivering top-level customer service.

As vice president of Client Services, Sanvictores is responsible for making sure Yardi fulfills its promises. She focuses on the delivery, implementation and ongoing support of Yardi's suite of fully integrated products. The 400-member client service team ensures product implementation milestones are met and tackles training and operational issues. "Providing exceptional customer service is a collaborative effort between the management team and support staff in each office. Every Yardi function—development, sales, quality assurance, Applications Service Provider hosting service, you name it—is committed to delivering quality products and services," she said.

Satisfaction for Sanvictores comes from seeing the tangible results that attentive customer service produces. "I've always been attracted to how software can help a company grow, and also improve its internal structure, operations and bottom line," she said.

Sanvictores' engineering and problem-solving bent was instilled early. "As a child I shadowed my dad when he worked on cars in the garage, so I was always inclined to find out how things work," she recalled.

Sanvictores followed a career progression that started at ground level—literally. One of her early jobs was in the Facilities Management and Planning department at the University of Nebraska. "I discovered we did not have a strong preventive maintenance program for the HVAC equipment, so I implemented a work-order and preventive maintenance software program that linked it all. I had to crawl through and under 50 year old buildings to see how the heating and cooling systems interacted," she recalled.

Joining Yardi in 1997, Sanvictores rose in a steady progression from account manager to team leader. Then came a Client Services directorship, and, in 2007, her appointment as vice president. She operates in a fast-paced, consistently changing and growing environment. "When I joined the company we could get all of Client Services in one room. Now we have 400 people all over the world," she observed.

In this milieu, Sanvictores spends much of her time making sure the company retains the client-centrism that characterized its start-up days. "We can't reach out to every client each day like we want to, but we follow a very carefully planned program of regular contact," she said. "Our customer satisfaction team contacts clients at both the executive and operations levels. As part of

our goal to identify needs and continue improving our products and services, we'll ask, 'Is client services meeting your needs? Is sales meeting your needs? Our software? How satisfied were you with our most recent interaction? How satisfied are you overall? What can we improve?' For our Application Service Provider hosting service clients, we'll make sure ASP is satisfying their expectations," she noted. The Yardi management team examines all feedback and follows up with clients as needed.

While relying heavily on her far-flung team, Sanvictores herself hits the road about twice a month for client visits. "Maintaining strong relationships ensures a solid foundation for growth for Yardi and our clients. The opportunity to meet with clients and their teams provides insight into better satisfying their current and anticipated future needs," she said.

A key part of Sanvictores' domain is Yardi's 50-member team in Pune, India. This group of programmers specializes in resolving complex technical issues for all Yardi offices in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Pune's distance from many Yardi offices is actually an asset: "If something comes up at 5 p.m. Pacific time in the U.S., they can get right on it, then have a solution for us when we arrive in the morning," Sanvictores said, adding that it's a dedicated troubleshooting team, so resolving issues now takes days or less rather than weeks.

While enjoying the customer-facing aspects of her job, Sanvictores also relishes the challenges her responsibilities as a manager of employees. "We have high expectations for our people, and I enjoy seeing them grow in their role. They must have exceptional customer service, project management, technical, and industry skills. Their persistence and commitment to clients will determine their success, and I enjoy watching the light bulbs go off as they learn," she said.

New business opportunities beckon, such as vendor interfaces, business intelligence, portal capabilities, and an expanding global presence, but Yardi's core values have not changed through the years: "Take care of our clients, take care of our employees, stay focused, and grow," Sanvictores said.