



**Jack Prim, CEO**  
**Jack Henry & Associates**

Monett  
[www.jackhenry.com](http://www.jackhenry.com)

*Jack Henry & Associates of Monett, Missouri was born out of an idea jotted on a dinner napkin, supported by a computer in the back of a tire store, and housed in a building designed to serve as a residence for one of the founders... just in case the business didn't take off! From these curious beginnings was born one of the most successful stories in banking automation history, and one of Missouri's most remarkable companies. Jack Prim, CEO of Jack Henry, talks about the unique niche the company serves.*

"We develop software that automates the complete operations of community banks and credit unions. We don't do systems for the Bank of Americas and the Wells Fargos of the world, but we do have some stand-alone solutions that fit for those institutions as well. Typically, our customers depend on us for all of their data processing operations.

"When the company started, we were writing software you could run on your own hardware inhouse. We still do that, but today more of our business revolves around services than the actual sale of software. A bank or credit union might come to us and say, "Look, I love the software, but I want you to run it for me." So we use our hardware, our facilities, our staff, and they just use the software. Frankly, software represents 8% of our total revenue. Services represent 86%, with the remainder being hardware. The difference in the delivery is substantially different than it originally was."

*For a business that started off — and continues to operate — out of a small town, Jack Henry has a huge footprint in the industry.*

"We're in numerous major metropolitans around the U.S. — Charlotte, Houston, Dallas, Kansas City, Minneapolis and San Diego are some of our larger locations. A lot of that is the result of acquisitions. We acquired companies and left them where they were to continue to operate. The technology today is such that we can do anything from anywhere.

"We have different products in different locations around the country. So, once a year, we get the most senior developers together for a meeting in Monett so we can all understand the corporate direction is. People who come to visit drive up over the hill and see the campus and say, 'Wow, this is not what I expected!' Once they get any idea of what things cost around here, it has a lot of appeal.

"Out of our 4,600 employees, 1,200 are in direct customer support roles, day in day out, taking calls 24/7. The other functions we perform are installation services, converting a customers' data to our data, and training their employees. We are also continually updating our software, so there's a whole software release process. We have hundreds and hundreds of developers, and a fairly significant sales force of 400-500. With the

growth of our outsourcing business, we have millions of dollars invested in hardware used to process those customers, and we have an operations staff that takes care of that.”

*Jack Henry has grown exponentially not only because of its product, but because of its focus. Prim explains how the company used its awareness of the industry to lead changes in banking automation.*

“Jack Henry came around when hardware was made available, but there was no software to run on it. So that was their niche. We were also the leader with other companies that specialized in outsourcing. There was no other company that took powerful easy-to-use software for inhouse use and offered the exact same software for outsourced. You couldn’t get the same product for both.

“Jack Henry was also first to realize that just selling that primary accounting system wasn’t enough. You had to come back and provide [community banks] with everything else they needed, too.

“Your customers are going to come to you first, because you’re the one providing them with the product. You’re the heartbeat of their institutions, and you’ll make all these things work together. Jack Henry recognized that sooner than most.”

*As Jack Henry has refined its product offerings, it has gained more recognition throughout the industry. Prim talks about his perceptions of the company before he joined it.*

“Jack Henry was a tough competitor of ours when I was in Charlotte. The company I was with at the time did community banking, but it was one of several things that they did, and it just didn’t get the attention that it got at Jack Henry.

“The thing that impressed me the most about Jack Henry the first time I came through the door was the laser-like focus they had on their business. They didn’t dabble in a bunch of things. They knew what they did, and they knew what they could do well.

“We’re very fortunate that we’ve been able to hang onto the early corporate culture. From half a dozen guys who were working in an old tire store to 4,600-plus employees today! Consultants who work with us only have to be here for a day or two before they say, ‘Gosh, you guys have really got something special here. And you need to do whatever you can to protect it.’

“For a company of our size — a publicly traded company with thousands of employees and 50 locations – to still have as loose and informal a feel as we do is highly unusual. I can tell you that, compared to anywhere else I’ve ever been, we don’t have the political games. There’s very much a team attitude. The entire management team has been together for many years and works well together. It’s a very unusual culture and one I feel fortunate to have been a part of. But I also feel a lot of responsibility to perpetuate it going forward.”

*Prim talks about his move from Charlotte, N.C. to the town of Monett, Missouri.*

“I’d been with Jack Henry for 15 years and I’d had a number of promotions that didn’t require a move, but I’d come to Monett a lot, and every time I’d leave, I’d say, ‘I couldn’t imagine living there. The place is so small.’

“So when I got the opportunity, there was trepidation, wondering, ‘Are we going to make that adjustment?’ But we have loved it here. Life is easier here, the cost of living is ridiculously low, the people are great. We have gotten involved with a lot of things, made a lot of friends. Coming in as an outsider, I wasn’t sure how we’d be accepted, but it’s never been an issue.

“The work ethic here is really good. People come in and work hard. They’re used to working hard before we hire them.

“Before moving here, it would have been inconceivable to imagine that at some point I’d consider retiring in Monett, Missouri. But that’s not a far-fetched idea for me now, based on the experiences we’ve had. We really have had good luck in southwest Missouri.”