

JULY 26, 2019

SILICON VALLEY BUSINESS JOURNAL 24

37
YEARS
OLD

**DAVID
ERICKSON**
CEO and Co-founder,
FORWARD NETWORKS



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*Worked hard,
played hard,
loved lots.”*

VICKI THOMPSON

The objective of David Erickson’s company is fairly esoteric, but its client roster is proof that its benefits are wide-ranging.

Forward Networks – which Erickson co-founded with three fellow Stanford computer-science Ph.D. recipients in 2013 – builds a mathematical model, or so-called “digital twin” of a customer’s networks so that companies can better predict network behavior, verify accuracy, and test the impact of changes.

By reducing troubleshooting hours and preventing outages, the 45 employee-strong Forward Networks counts PayPal, Verizon and Viacom among its customers.

Outside of the office, the rangy Utah native (he stands 6’7”) spends time with his three children, plays video games and is active with his church.

Share a story that describes the moment when you realized you were an adult: When I held my newborn daughter for the first time and instantly felt the deep love and responsibility I had for her.

Your first paying job: Building and testing computers. I loved computers, so it was a dream job for a 15-year-old to see and play with all the brand-new computer equipment every day.

The business executive you would like to spend 10 minutes with: (Microsoft CEO) Satya Nadella. I’d love to hear how he transformed such a large organization.

Your six-word memoir: Worked hard, played hard, loved lots.

A book you have read recently and would recommend: “Secrets of Sand Hill Road: Venture Capital and How to Get It” by Scott Kupor

– Danny King,
Contributor