

ChapterSpot chooses New Orleans as home

July 20, 2015 8:45 AM Fran Simon

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Alumni Joe McMenemon and Brendan Finke could have chosen anywhere for their business, ChapterSpot. They stayed in New Orleans. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Tulane University alumni Joe McMenemon and Brendan Finke, who are not native New Orleanians, could have chosen anywhere in the United States for their business. But the entrepreneurs like the spirit of innovation that has emerged in the Crescent City in the nearly 10 years since Hurricane Katrina.

“Welcome to the national headquarters of [ChapterSpot](#),” says McMenemon, who earned a degree in finance and accounting in 2008, as he shows off the company's office space in downtown New Orleans.

McMenemon and Finke (class of 2010) developed an online portal called ChapterSpot to improve communication for member-based organizations such as fraternities, sororities and other large organizations. Their service helps these groups develop and customize private social networks using group communications and database management tools that support communication between members, facilitate member dues collections and organize member data.

After he graduated from Tulane, McMenemon (a Westchester County, New York, native) worked at Morgan Stanley in New York. But after the financial crisis hit, he lost his job. He and Finke continued to stay in touch, bouncing ideas back and forth.

“We both wanted to solve a market problem and this was the idea that emerged,” says Finke, a native of Eagan, Minnesota. “The part of the story that's most interesting is the execution, not the idea.”

As Finke and McMenemon hatched their company's concept, they found many people and institutions in New Orleans eager to help them succeed. Many of the people were Tulane alumni, faculty and students. ChapterSpot has participated in [Idea Village's](#) incubator program and [Goldman Sachs' 10,000 Small Businesses](#) program.

Since the startup's launch in 2010, over 6,000 organizations in the United States, Canada and England have used the ChapterSpot database management system and web applet tools.

“We have a shared vision of what success is: creating a lot of value for our customers, our employees, markets and ourselves,” McMenemon says.

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