

*“Technology is not a playground for people to have fun in. It has to support the business. ... I’m very pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the success of MinnWest Technology. ... IT as an island is not going to contribute as much value as it could unless it’s part of an integrated plan.”*

— Jay Bosch



# BLUE SKIES IS THE LIMIT

Tribune photo by Ron Adams

Jay Bosch, president and chief executive officer of Blue Skies Unlimited, stands Friday inside one of the buildings at the MinnWest Technology Campus, which is the future home of Life-Science Innovations. Blue Skies was formed as a means of bolstering technology jobs across the local area. Bosch is a native of rural Atwater.

**By Cari Quam**  
Staff Writer

## Atwater native returns home to bolster area tech jobs through Blue Skies Unlimited

ATWATER — Jay Bosch hopes to help bolster technology jobs in west central Minnesota with the growth of his business.

Bosch of Atwater started Blue Skies Unlimited almost two years ago after moving back to his family farmhouse in rural Atwater.

He works from the house, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and enjoys an office with a “tremendous view.” He seems happy to be back where he grew up and catching up with friends he hasn’t seen in more than 20 years.

But in his professional life, Bosch looks to the future.

Bosch’s company provides information technology solutions for businesses. As the sole employee, Bosch works with Carlson Companies of Minnetonka and a company that owns half of the MinnWest Technology Campus, formerly the Willmar Regional Treatment Center.

Blue Skies helps companies create ways to align business and information technology to perform at the highest level possible.

“Technology is not a playground for people to have fun in,” Bosch said. “It has to support the business.”

Some of the services he provides are creating disaster recovery plans to use if information systems go down and assessing and developing effective business and information technology processes. He also develops information technology architecture, infrastructure, systems and applications for companies.

That’s what he will be doing for Life-Science Innovations, which owns 50 percent of the MinnWest Technology Campus. The company, an outgrowth of Willmar Poultry Co. and affiliates, will provide services, such as human resources and information technology, for the current companies on the campus as well as new ones, according to Willmar Poultry.

Last year, two companies affiliated with Willmar Poultry, Nova-Tech Engineering and Epitopix, proposed purchasing the treatment center

campus to relocate their businesses and create an attractive location for other technology companies.

Bosch will be working on establishing Life-Science’s information technology system, including a data center, network and wireless infrastructure.

“I’m very pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the success of MinnWest Technology,” Bosch said.

Scott Holmgren, Life-Science information technology director, said setting up that system would take 100 percent of his and his staff’s time if it weren’t for Blue Skies’ work.

Blue Skies tries to make sure a company’s investment in technology is being used in the most reliable and cost-effective way, Bosch said. Every business is founded with an idea, strategy and organizational structure and the company’s technology has to align with that, he said.

Bosch tries to help create a business-technology environ-

ment so that everyone sees the value the company’s investment in technology.

“IT as an island is not going to contribute as much value as it could unless it’s part of an integrated plan,” he said.

Bosch graduated from Atwater High School in 1975 and then attended the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, majoring in electrical engineering. In 1990, he obtained his master’s degree in electrical engineering and in 2000 he earned his master’s in business administration from the University of Minnesota’s Carlson School of Management. He and his wife, Linnae, also an Atwater native, have lived in several areas of the state, most recently in Duluth. There, he was laid off from his job as vice president of engineering at a software development company.

They decided to return to Atwater almost two years ago when Bosch’s father’s health declined.

He thinks Willmar is at an

unique advantage because it’s near the Twin Cities, but has a lower cost of living. That could be attractive to companies who are considering outsourcing, he said.

Because of the costs to do business overseas, Bosch thinks companies could look to west central Minnesota to relocate some types of jobs that would otherwise go overseas. He calls the concept “near-home” outsourcing.

He hopes his work will eventually increase the need for technology-related jobs in the area.

When he works with a business, he tries to increase the effectiveness of their information technology system. Once the business sees it gets a good return from its technology investment, it’s more likely to invest more in those systems, he said. That will create more opportunities for technology-related jobs that would attract more people to the area, he said.

“I’m working to make technology successful here,” Bosch said.

For more information on Blue Skies Unlimited, go to [www.blueskiesunlimitedinc.com](http://www.blueskiesunlimitedinc.com). Jay Bosch can be reached at (320) 974-0909.