



PHOTO: RAE HUO

## Matthew Delaney, age 40

Founder and CEO, Hawaii Human Resources and The Hawaii Group

IN MID-2009, as dozens of local businesses closed, Matthew Delaney opened a new one. Twenty-one months later, Hawaii Human Resources had annual billings of \$23 million by providing HR services for 150 companies and should more than double its revenue this year.

Delaney has already had several successful careers in various fields: as a certified public accountant, a leader in the tourism industry and a real estate developer.

As CEO of Marc Hotels & Resorts, Delaney oversaw 22 resorts and 1,000 employees throughout Hawaii, and spearheaded acquisitions abroad. But, with the tourism downturn in 2008, Delaney says he switched directions by forming HiHR, then creating The Hawaii Group to unite four companies: HiHR, Hawaii Accounting, Hawaii Employment and Hawaii Marketing. Their goal is to ease the burdens of running a small business.

“Hawaii is small moms and pops. Your average company is 10 people and they’re all wearing so many hats. ... We want to bring in the expertise, take care of the headaches and let them focus on their core business.”

Delaney’s philosophy mixes his workaholic nature with the understanding that business thrives when families thrive. His family-friendly approach includes a catered daily lunch for employees and flexible policies that include welcoming children in the office.

Robert Iopa, president of WCIT Architecture, worked with Delaney for three years creating the Royal Lahaina Master Plan. “He has always impressed me as an organizer, leader and remarkable individual,” says Iopa.

Delaney is also part of the Special Olympics executive committee, and a trustee for the Queen’s Health Systems, Queen’s Medical Center and Queen Emma Land Trust.

In addition, he has faced multiple medical challenges head on. He won a 10-year battle with testicular cancer, and was diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder that attacks joints and the spine and an iron-overload disease that requires weekly blood draws.

“It makes me think about: How long are we all here for? ... And how do we balance it all? ... Maybe I can’t play tackle football with my son anymore, but we can play catch in the yard.”