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Austin tech firm on fast growth track snags global engineering boss from SolarWinds



Lee McClendon, WP Engine Inc.'s new senior vice president of global engineering.
COURTESY OF WP ENGINE INC.



By [Mike Cronin](#) – Staff Writer, Austin Business Journal
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Lee McClendon is WP Engine Inc.'s new senior vice president of global engineering, the WordPress hosting company announced on Thursday.

He brings to the Austin startup more than 20 years of experience leading engineering and software development teams and building large-scale global cloud infrastructure.

The company's "relentless focus on customers and solving problems for customers" was one of the top draws for McClendon, 48, who previously led the global engineering team of more than 600 employees at Austin-based SolarWinds Worldwide LLC, which develops information-technology management software.

A large market opportunity, the reputation of the engineering team and the chance to create solid products at WP Engine were also appealing, McClendon said.

"We're so excited to have Lee," said Heather Brunner, WP Engine's CEO said. "As we continue to grow our customer base, it's crucial to have a world-class leader like Lee to oversee our innovation in engineering. We're making our platform enterprise-grade and Lee has tremendous experience doing exactly that and scaling the operation globally."

McClendon said he's overcome growth challenges at other companies and welcomes the chance to do again. WP Engine employs 450 people worldwide, 390 of whom are in Austin. It has offices in San Antonio, San Francisco, London and Limerick, Ireland.

McClendon will oversee teams responsible for ensuring WP Engine's WordPress platform runs more securely and efficiently.

He replaces Beth Weeks, who left WP Engine for a job as president of cloud operations and chief information officer at Planview Inc., an Austin company that makes resource management software allowing companies to track the projects that employees are working on.

Andy North, a WP Engine spokesman, declined to say whether the company is profitable or provide annual revenue figures. The company is looking to hire people specifically in the customer support, engineering, sales and product and design areas, he said.