

Entrepreneurship: What's it like to start a Company?

What is the name of your company?

Bayfront Glass LLC

What does this company do?

Bayfront Glass is a glass recycling company. We provide color sorted collection and processing of glass for recycling. These services are available for municipalities, businesses, and residential use.

What is the size of your company?

We are small. At this point I am the only employee. I run the company by myself; however, I am lucky to have volunteers. Having volunteers support Bayfront Glass as a new company has been very important to establishing the business.

How long has the company been established?

When you start a business, there are a lot of steps that need to be taken for tax and insurance purposes. Attorneys help you sort through this and properly establish your business. For Bayfront Glass, this paperwork was filed in June of 2019. The first real function of the business was in August of 2019.

You started this company, which makes you an entrepreneur. What made you decide to do this?

I saw a void in the market and a public need that was not being filled. There were no glass recycling options in Erie. I saw an opportunity to offer glass recycling. Aside from daily consumption, there is a lot of glass thrown in the garbage at the larger, public events and this seemed to be such a waste to me.

In my observation, most startups either make a product that people are not aware they need or find a way to do something better than the process that currently exists.

What have been the challenges starting and owning your own business?

Fund raising is the first big challenge. It costs money to start and run a business. There are costs associated with everything -the paperwork I mentioned earlier, equipment, advertising – it all adds up. Another challenge is finding business participants. I am always looking for new businesses that want to recycle the glass they consume, or the glass consumed by their customers.

What have been the advantages?

Owning a business is very freeing while also being very demanding. I am my own boss. I am in charge and I like that.

Describe your day-to-day.

Each day, I have to travel to the various locations where glass is being recycled, retrieve the collection that has built up and replace the receptacle with an empty for more collection. This collection is based around a schedule that is not set in stone. I try to get a solid look at how the collection stations are doing on Monday and build the week off of that. I have clients with different self-determined pickup schedules and that can change the flow of the day. Other day-to-day responsibilities include sorting and crushing the glass to prepare it for its next step in the recycling process.

What is your educational background?

I have a masters in Manufacturing Management, and a Bachelors in Electrical Computer Engineering Technology as well as a minor in Technical Sales.

How did your education prepare you to start your own business?

My education gave a basis to gain more knowledge. It reinforced my ability to learn and think creatively while acting on my goals.

What qualities are important for you to hold the position you have?

I am very dedicated and willing to hold the line and keep pushing in the face of adversity. Tenacity is necessary when you are starting a company. I remind myself that there are and have been people in my situation who have gotten through it. It is also important to try new things and ask questions when you can't find the answer on your own. I also think you need to know your limits.

What would people be surprised to know about starting or owning your own business?

A big surprise is the support of individuals in the community and the lack of support from organizations. I have people



John Nowakoski



who want to give me money and support but large and/or established organizations are harder to connect with.



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