

I'm the CEO and co-founder of Top Class Installations. I have been starting and operating small businesses since 2001. My first attempt crashed and burned and my latest, Top Class Installations, has been around since 2009 and we're still growing every year.

I was inspired to start my own business due to the people who surrounded me as I was a young man growing up on Long Island, NY. I come from an entrepreneurial family but, no one really made it. I saw many work like dogs for years just to turn out to be average in the end. Except for one man, a local car mechanic named Jerry, who eventually owned many repair shops and become super successful. So, like many, out of High School, I went to work for a few local small businesses in the Car Audio industry and kept bumping into the same issues. I thought I could do it better than my employers and I felt as if they were holding me back from reaching my true potential. I had a vision and since I was so young and inexperienced, no one wanted to hear it. I would occasionally head over to Jerry's shop and assist him and his customers. One day he pulls me aside and says, "What are you waiting for? You're not married and have no kids. THE TIME IS NOW." I wasn't truly happy at my current job so after a few days of thinking I gave my two weeks' notice. With \$300 to my name I began. The first business lasted five years before crashing and burning; leaving me \$80K in personal debt. Still to this day I don't regret one single moment spent in that shop working twenty hour days. I consider this my equal to a Master's Program as life and business taught me some very hard lessons.

Closing my first business was the toughest decision in my life to date. But it was a necessary decision that would allow me to continue my journey forward. Soon after, I went to work for an auto accessory shop on Long Island. While there, I spent three years learning about business. I now consider the owner a dear friend and mentor who has helped me grow into the person I am today.

In September of 2009 I embarked on a journey and had no idea where it would take me. I was scared and not one bit confident. Just three years prior, my first business crashed and burned hard, leaving a real sour taste behind. To top it off, I thought it was a bright idea to start this new business in the middle of "The Great Recession" and only two months after getting married. No money in the bank. I mean ZERO! But I had and still have a drive inside me that gets stronger and stronger each day. I didn't know the first thing about systems and processes, core values, profit and loss statements. I could barely operate a computer! But that didn't stop me. Like many other small business owners in my position, I was a great technician. I knew how to do my job so well that I figured it was time to be on my own.

What they don't tell you is that being a technician is about 20% of the overall responsibility that you immediately take on once incorporated. You instantly start wearing the hats of Marketer, Sales, Finance, Human Resources, IT, Technical Support, Blogger, and on and on and on. Doing the physical work was always the easiest part for me as it came naturally; I was always good with my hands. It took many years of dedication and the willingness to learn things that I had no interest in but knew would help set my business apart from the others in my platform. Like many at first, my business partner, Jimmy Gavalas and I did anything thrown at us as we

were hungry for business and willing to do whatever was necessary to succeed. From custom car audio, GPS tracking, remote starts and everything between. We soon realized that fleet installations were the most profitable thing we were doing. By 2015 we had stopped doing anything that was not fleet related. Specifically, we limited it to GPS tracking, dash and backup camera systems. Since we decided to focus only on what we deemed essential, our business and team has grown exponentially.

I'm very proud of the business, relationships and the team that we have built in our short nine years. As a business owner I'm aware that Top Class would not be where we are today without the hard working members of my team and most importantly, a vision.