



Houston District Success Story

Success Story Written by Valerie Nguyen, Public Information Officer

LMC Marine Center



(David & Susan Christian)

David Christian always dreamt of starting his own business and in 1995, he turned that dream into reality with the opening of Lexington Motor Company, a high end used car dealership. Being surrounded by a wealth of family entrepreneurs gave him a sense that he could do it too. While operating the used car dealership, David purchased an adjacent lot and added a small retail boat line. In 2003, David launched the boat line and discovered that the boat sales were very lucrative.

By 2004, David found himself having to decide whether to keep the cars or the boats. David saw a brighter future with the boats and ceased selling used cars. He quickly outgrew this location and found a property large enough to accommodate growth potential in an area that has a presence. David purchased an old seafood restaurant in a prime area near the Woodlands and retrofitted it for a boat dealership under the name LMC Marine Center. A 504-program loan from the Small Business Administration (SBA) helped finance the project. It offered the right rate, term, and cash injection he needed. “The SBA allowed us to acquire the facility that we probably wouldn’t have been able to without their help. This new facility has blessed us in a lot of ways we never expected”, said David.

Since their grand opening in January '07, the high traffic area of I45 and the already established retail boat market enabled them to grow by 60%. Also notable was the fact that LMC Marine Center was recognized as the number one Triton brand boat dealer in the world. “I received the award, but everyone here earned it”, said David. “It was such a huge accomplishment coming from something as small as we were; without SBA’s help we never would have been able to accomplish that,” adds wife Susan Christian. David genuinely cares about his staff of 21 employees and provides them with more than just a great place to work, but a place that provides a career. With an increase in sales, he was able to provide full health benefits, a 401K plan, and sick and vacation time. No wonder, he has such a low turnover in staff. “I have a lot of people working for me and it’s a little overwhelming, but at the same time, it’s very rewarding”, said David.

With such a huge presence in Houston and on the internet, it’s not uncommon for LMC to ship their products throughout the country. Although their focus is not international, they’ve had business from other countries including Mexico, Norway, & Greece. This larger facility has enabled them to offer customers better prices and the high quality of work has attracted many new and repeat customers. LMC Marine Center offers

everything from A to Z in the boating industry including, purchasing, servicing, rebuilding, customization, and trading.

Being an entrepreneur has its challenges and David suggest following your heart and dreams, be willing to take a risk, accept responsibility, and have a good business plan. It's also important to prepare for any obstacles or situations and be able to save to sustain slow periods. With this mindset, David applied and was approved for his second SBA expansion loan.

With a business in the boating industry, it's no surprise that David is an avid angler. He fishes on a professional circuit in various trout and redbfish tournaments, including the Red Fish Cup under team LMC, which they have placed in the top five. "His passion for fishing has lent him great credibility with his customers," says Susan.

LMC Marine Center is located at 14904 North Frwy., Houston, TX 77090. For more information about SBA loan programs and services, visit www.sba.gov.

Is your business successful? Would you like to be featured on our local webpage or newsletter?

In our efforts to assist small businesses and recognize their achievements the Houston District Office features success stories on our website. The small business success stories are selected by the district office, and represent small businesses that have received services from SBA and/or our Resource Partners.

All success stories are entered into our Washington database; some are featured in our SBA Houston e-Newsletters and are submitted to local newspapers, associations, chambers of commerce, and community newsletters for publication.

To qualify for consideration a small business must meet the following criteria:

1. Receive assistance from SBA or a Resource Partners, i.e., Lenders, SCORE, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC's)
2. Must be in business a minimum of three years
3. Owner must sign Consent Form allowing SBA to feature your business.

If you would like our district office to consider your business for a small business success story please contact our Public Information Officer at 713-773-6516 or email at Valerie.nguyen@sba.gov. Please note some small businesses may also be included in public officials' speeches.