

From Holiday Helper to Parcel Plus Owner



Steve Marinich, owner of Parcel Plus in Sterling, Virginia, was just 20 years old when he stumbled onto his future. In just four short years he went from part-time pack and ship holiday helper to center owner, and in the process discovered his natural talent as an entrepreneur.

“I wanted to buy the store where I first began working as holiday help,” said Steve, “but it was going out of business and the building lease wasn’t being renewed. A [well-known] pack and ship chain contacted me to work for them, which I did for a year, and then I bought a Parcel Plus corporate store when I was 24.”

Since the Parcel Plus purchase in 1995, Steve has been involved in an ICED focus group, served on the advertising committee, and made operational visits in Texas and Maryland to help other owners evaluate their centers for greater profitability. “I usually can find changes they can make that will save money,” he said.

Over the years, Steve has developed processes in his own center that trim down the lengthy lines that typically form during the holiday rush. “It’s not as complicated as it used to be to prepare for the holidays,” he said. For instance, he uses large plastic totes he buys from Home Depot as well as UPS and USPS bins to help in the sorting of packages. While the customer is still in the center, the CSR fills out the packaging instruction card and clips it to the mailing label with a binder clip before it goes in the bin. The next employee who comes along to perform the next step knows how to package it. “Since we generate the label while the customer waits, we can give her the tracking number before she leaves,” said Steve.

He also sees that employees rotate jobs during the holiday rush to help keep them fresh and friendly. “We allot one day for training procedures for the Christmas holiday,” said Steve. “During the rush I may bring in a couple of extra people to



Steve Marinich and Assistant Manager Megan Johnston at the center in Sterling, Virginia

help the regular staff. One person stays at the register, one is packaging in the back and a floater is available to lend a hand wherever one is needed.”

Starting his business at age 24 has helped the now 35-year-old dad to spend more time with his children who are 15, 6 and 3 years old. As he has refined his workflow techniques, like those he employs during the holiday rush, the more time he has to spend with those he loves most. And as fast as children grow up, who doesn’t want more family time? ♦