

Former Intel Employee Discovers a Second Career In The Massage Industry



The Dunnings: Richie, Rondi, Rich and Rachel

Many Intel retirees have moved on to some unique second careers after leaving Intel. However, few have embarked on a new career as unique as Rich Dunning. After 22 years with Intel, Rich became a regional developer for Massage Envy, the premier brand in the massage industry. Now that's certainly a lot different from selling microprocessors!

Here are some things you might like to know about Rich. He was born in New York City where his father was in the radio industry. At a very early age his family relocated to Sonoma, CA and his father ran the local radio station. He attended CSU- Chico where he received a BS in Computer Science. He joined Intel in 1980 as a TSE (Technical Sales Engineer) and spent the next 22 years in the Bay Area with the Sales and Marketing Group where he eventually became a Regional Sales Manager. While at Intel, Rich met his wife, Rondi. They have two children, Rachel and Richard.

Both Rondi and Rich are big boating enthusiasts. When he decided to leave Intel, they determined that Florida provided them with much better boating opportunities than the west coast did, so they relocated to the St. Petersburg area of Florida. After about a year Rich was getting itchy to do something besides drive his boat. He then began to look around for business opportunities, which he thought interesting. It was then that a former Intel colleague made him aware of Massage Envy and the growth opportunity with that company. In 2004 he took the plunge with them and became the regional developer for the west coast of Florida. In this role he would be responsible for recruiting franchisees and establishing the Massage Envy brand in the Southeast.

Rich was tantalized with Massage Envy's business concept. Specifically the company wanted to create a national brand that would provide a professional, convenient and affordable source for massage. He believed that there was a need for such a concept and saw also that it was the first mover in its industry. Therefore he felt it had a competitive advantage in one which is populated almost exclusively by "mom and pop" operations.

Needless to say there were some significant challenges that Rich would face. First of all, he was the sole Massage Envy representative east



First clinic east of the Mississippi

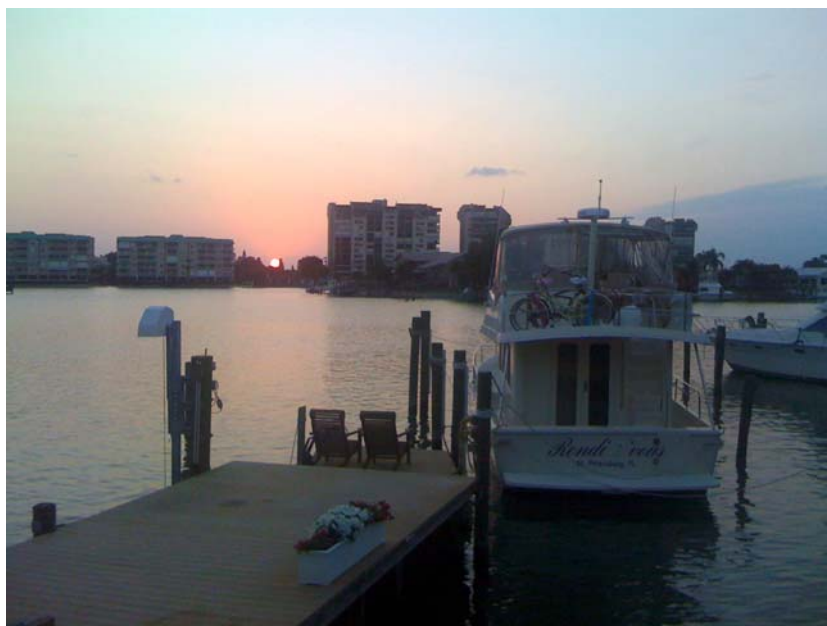
of the Mississippi River. He even established the first clinic on that side of the U.S. He quickly realized he was “chief of everything”. He was responsible for sales, marketing, architectural planning, personnel, community relations etc. As Rich said: “ Coming from Intel with its massive infrastructure you get used to having many things done for you. Now, if I wanted something done, I would have to do it myself.” Secondly, establishing credibility not only with customers but also the community with this type of business was very big.

Rich pointed out several areas that his Intel experience helped in his new career. As Massage Envy grew quickly, Rich found that he became a “coach” to his corporate executives, especially when it came to the legal ramifications of corporate and franchisee advertising. It was here that his Intel experience was very useful. He also used some Intel management processes daily. For example he employed a “clear direction” discipline and a closed loop feedback system with both franchisees and corporate management. These were skills he learned at Intel.

Rich shared some advice he would give to current or future Intel retirees who think they would like to start a new business or invest in a franchise.

1. Don't be in a hurry! There are lots of opportunities out there. Take the time to see what comes your way.
2. If you're looking at franchises, you should decide on either new (startup) or developed. Naturally the payoff can be greater with the “new”; however, the risk is greater. If you choose “new”, it's critical that you understand whether you provide unique value that can grow the business quickly and understand the value proposition of the prospective franchise. On the other hand if you choose “developed”, you obtain more structure from corporate with a template for starting a business. This is sometimes referred to as “a business in a box”. However, usually the return on investment is not as great with a developed franchisor.

Rich is available to answer questions regarding franchising in general or Massage Envy specifically at rich_dunning@yahoo.com.



Rondi and Rich's Dream View