

Spotlight:

Spotlight: NLA Operator Member



The NP Team: (left to right) Tony Mehdiol, Frank Diaz, Victor Alvarado, Preston Baldwin, Shalaya Morissette, Charze Jones, Ebony Belcher, Dan Myer, William Brown, Yolanda Dawson, Moe Mehdiol (not pictured Debbi Upthegrove and Chris Tagu)

FAST FACTS

Company: North Point Transportation Group
Atlanta, Ga.

Web Site: www.nplimo.com

Chief Operating Officer: Tony Mehdiol

Company Size: 28 vehicles, 42 employees

Company Founded: 2001

NLA Member Since: 2001

HOW DID NORTH POINT GET ITS START?

North Point represents our comeback to the chauffeured car industry and, what a comeback it was, since we opened the company's doors on September 1, 2001! Needless to say, given that timing, our experience with First Corporate Limousine, a company we had sold a few years earlier, really made a big difference.

We zeroed right in on what we knew – the corporate market – and expanded as business permitted. We had just a couple of vehicles to start and increased to 15 within six months. Our reputation in the industry certainly was instrumental in our being able to grow this quickly. Now we're at 28 vehicles and 42 employees including chauffeurs and, because we think we have been missing some opportunities, we're actually in the process of re-branding to offer retail services in addition to our corporate services.

WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF YOUR BUSINESS?

We focus on three things: 1) retaining our existing clients by providing superb service; 2) keeping costs in check while not sacrificing service; and 3) exploring every avenue to reward our team members and improve their lives.

WHAT ARE THE COMPANY'S BIGGEST MILESTONES?

There are two I'd like to mention: 1) Purchasing our own facility and becoming our own landlord has been critical. We now have flexibility for expansion as we need and want it. 2) Being able to increasingly support Feed the Children, the non-profit organization that transports food to the starving in Africa. From day 1 we pledged a small percentage of our revenue to this cause and we've been able to increase the amount year after year. We know that we have helped thousands so far. Our goal is to make that hundreds of thousands.

YOUR MARKETING KNOW-HOW IS APPARENT. WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR NEWBIES?

Identify the market segment in which you want to specialize. This will tell you what type of fleet you should have. Create a budget that includes what's needed to reach your target market and then use it to get your name "out there" any which way you can. Above all, ALWAYS deliver flawless service.

We optimize North Point's service by treating every customer as if they are the only one we have. Everyone has VIP status. To ensure this doesn't falter, our dispatch checks every detail for each and every trip two hours before the trip is scheduled. We do not take it for granted that the chauffeur has the correct information for the trip...we double-check it – without fail.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR AFFILIATE WORK.

About 60% of our business comes from affiliate work, including the major national organizations and many smaller companies. We have set up our operations to make this work well – and we keep getting the business because of this.

WHAT ARE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO OTHERS WHO WANT TO LAUNCH OR INCREASE AFFILIATE BUSINESS?.

Fully train your staff – especially your chauffeurs – how to handle affiliate work. Never promise what you can't deliver. Remember who owns the customer. Never solicit passengers sent to you by an affiliate organization for your own company. Network managers talk to each other. Make sure what they say about your service is everything you want to hear and the business will be yours to keep.