

PHILOSOPHIES FUEL SUCCESS



Chris Kurzadkowski

LoneStar's President Chris Kurzadkowski has a simple philosophy by which he runs his firm: He never turns down a job, although he will let prospective customers know if he is unable to do it in the allotted timeframe; and he never asks anyone to do something that he wouldn't

do or hasn't done himself.

"There is hardly a thing I have asked of LoneStar that Chris has not been willing to try to do," said Todd Kelly of the Kelly Law Firm. "He will find a way."

His innovative methods are impressing and keeping customers like Kelly, who maintains, "Chris never ceases to amaze me with the innovative products that he offers, and the efforts he makes to expand his services to support the needs of his customers. He has helped me keep numerous cases in suit."

And Kurzadkowski brings that same passion to the community. An active member of three Chambers of Commerce, he is known throughout the community as someone who is always willing to do more than is necessary.

Jane Sweeney, co-owner of Minuteman Press in Clear Lake, has worked with Kurzadkowski both on a professional level and as a volunteer. "Chris has always done an excellent job for our business and is an active member of the Chamber of Commerce," she said. "He is on our Diplomat Committee and always makes an effort to attend the ribbon cuttings, always has a smile on his face and always has something nice to say."

Kurzadkowski has worked hard to achieve a balance that brings financial success, personal satisfaction and service to others.

"We try to make a difference every day," he says. "The things we do change people's lives and we have to take that seriously."



Process Server Lynda Thompson prepares to go out on a training orientation with one of the newest team members.

LoneStar: The Little Delivery Company that Could

By Mary DeLuca

Nestled in a pair of antique buildings in an old town 25 miles south of Houston, LoneStar Delivery & Process (Seabrook, Texas) appears to be a sleepy little business. But inside, the computer-lined walls are testament to the fact that this establishment is up-to-date, fast-paced and on the express track to success.

On LoneStar's first day of business – barely two years ago – the company made two deliveries and took in \$75. Today, as the staff celebrates earning its 400th customer, revenues exceed \$55,000 a month. Tomorrow, the possibilities are unlimited.

The Roots

Chris Kurzadkowski is no newcomer to the expedited delivery industry. While still in school, more than 30 years ago, he delivered flowers for Orinda Stage Lines. He harvested delivery experience from FedEx, Airborne, DHL and the U.S. Army before

starting a company named TexEx with his wife. But the marriage didn't work, and he lost the business and most everything else in the bargain. Drawing on his inner strength, he picked himself up and started again.

"You've heard people say that war is business," said Kurzadkowski. "Well, business is war." He credits the Army not only for sending him for logistics training, but for molding him, giving him direction and instilling in him basic ethics and principles. He lives, works and directs his personnel by those standards to this day.

Carving a Niche

When asked for advice on making it in the courier business, many advise, "The best thing you can get out of this business is yourself ... as soon as possible." It's a tough business to tackle, it has many competitors and unless you can find a niche or special need to fill, new businesses rarely stand a chance.

But that doesn't thwart this resolute man. His passion for the business, matched with an equal balance of ingenuity and a keen business sense, is keeping this steam engine roaring ahead.

"We're finding unique ways to go into markets that are pretty much stonewalled,"

he said. "And we've got a fourfold attack on niche markets in case one goes down."

Those tactical arenas include legal, medical, air courier and technical/professional services.

"We might be charged with picking up water or soil specimens for testing," he explained. "But we don't just pick up and deliver. We take inventory, we fill out chain of custody paperwork and ensure that these specimens and the accompanying paperwork are delivered – and that the results are returned to the place of origin – inside the very limited time parameters necessary to guarantee accuracy."

Similar specialized services are honed for medical, geotechnical, petrochemical, environmental and high-tech support. Because these extra services are performed by trained personnel and are essential, customers are willing to pay the higher rates LoneStar charges. And they are happy to spread the word.

"We've gotten a dozen specialized petro and geotechnical customers in the past year just by word of mouth," Kurzadkowski said.

While these facets of the business are thriving, the legal business is where LoneStar is creating its most lucrative niche.

Success Story

Creating a Mold

When faxes, digitized documents and signatures became a legal reality, the legal courier business plummeted for many. No longer were couriers necessary to deliver signed documents and other legal paraphernalia. Many components of courier work were dead, but Kurzadkowski managed to breathe life into the remaining ones. His First Aid included rounding up a staff of paraprofessionals who were capable of offering top-notch services to busy attorneys and government agencies.

So each member of the team can be trusted to perform knowledgeably and efficiently, training, like everything else at LoneStar, is run with military precision. Team members are encouraged to attend schools and become certified in hazardous material transportation, safety and process serving at the company's expense.

Add to the mix a proprietary technology that allows LoneStar's clients to see the progress of their job in real-time – and

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having live help available 24 hours a day – and one begins to see an unstoppable mechanism barreling toward a successful future.

“When time is of the essence and you need to know the job will be done right, there’s no one who does it better than Chris Kurzadkowski,” said longtime client Stephanie J. Proffitt of the Proffitt & de Leef Law Firm. “He has turned the delivery business into a science. He runs a tight ship and knows what’s going on with each and every client’s job at the touch of a button.”

LoneStar’s myriad services include court filings, researching court documents, walking through orders for judge’s signatures, mobile notary services, process service, delivering documents to opposing counsel, exhibit preparation, courtroom setup and support and subpoena preparation.

If a lawyer faxes notes to LoneStar, the company can even write a pleading, make copies and file the complaint. “Our services are extremely valuable because we spare the attorney from dealing with all those details,” Kurzadkowski said. “This is especially helpful to sole practitioners who don’t have a support staff.”

And for those who do, Todd Kelly of Houston’s Kelly Law Firm is a loyal client and explains why: “Chris runs a ‘fire and forget’ operation. Once I hand off a package of litigation materials to LoneStar, I rest easy, knowing that they will reach their destination.”

To provide this level of legal assistance, LoneStar has six process servers on staff along with four legal specialists and an assortment of drivers and court runners. Because the service has been so well received, the company will soon add a paralegal to the mix. And it is venturing into a previously untouched market by introducing a nationwide same-day process service, made possible by using the company’s Indirect Air Courier status with the Transportation Security Administration and a network of certified process servers.

The Future

Already covering Austin, Dallas, Corpus Christi, McAllen and El Paso, Kurzadkowski’s little engine is proving that it plans to be a locomotive in the future. He is currently in the midst of acquiring a company in Dallas and expects to be all

over the state of Texas within the next five years.

And he’ll probably make it. He has already been named a “Rising Star” by *SuperLawyer* magazine and has been asked to advertise in this invitation-only publication that reaches 60,000 readers monthly. And most recently, he was nominated for Ernst & Young’s Entrepreneur of the Year for the Gulf Coast Region.

If LoneStar can make it this far in only two years, we will all want to keep an eye on what the future holds.

About the Author

Mary DeLuca is the former editor of *Courier Magazine* and a freelance writer and PR consultant to the courier industry. You can reach her through her website: www.writestyle.biz or by e-mail: mary@writestyle.biz.



Strategically located halfway between two of the busiest legal and medical communities in the Texas, LoneStar’s office is set in a quaint section of Old Town Seabrook.

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