

Charlie DePari

Kissimmee, Florida



Ace Solves It All

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Charlie DePari:

Originally from Dedham, Massachusetts, Charlie DePari, Owner and President of Ace Solves It All, was a licensed electrical contractor before most kids knew what they wanted to be when they grew up. After four years of trade school, DePari was licensed at the age of 18 and, after working for a contractor for a few years, he was ready to do his own thing.

"At the time, I had no fears," DePari said. "Probably because I didn't really know about the dangers. After saving up enough money, I bought a truck and started my own business."

While still in Massachusetts, DePari worked mostly in the commercial, industrial and government sectors. He grew the business, then under his own name, until 1992 when he decided to move the Sunshine State.

"I took the kids to Disney one February and it was 80 degrees when we left Orlando and snowing when we got back home," DePari said. "That's what did it. It was the weather."

After the move, DePari spent two years flying back and forth between Florida and Massachusetts to transition out of and sell the business.

Once his feet were firmly planted in Central Florida, DePari had to reestablish his reputation and presence. He invested in marketing and other forms of traditional advertising. He also worked to get all new licensing. Once everything was in place, DePari grew the business by answering the phone, standing by his work and following through with commitments. Over time, he added additional services such as plumbing, A/C and solar and business grew through word of mouth.

"We've always been well known in the market for electrical work," he said. "In order to do more volume, we decided to add plumbing and A/C services. I had to go to school and sat for those licenses. I then got my General Contractors license as well. What we created was a one-stop-shop for our customers."

Ace Solves It All is unique in several ways. As DePari shared, one call does it all and customers spend less time dealing with multiple service companies. All of DePari's technicians are specifically trained in the trade and, through the generosity of DePari, many go on to become master certified. The company runs rigorous background checks, pre-employment screenings and drug tests for all of its employees. Unlike many other service companies, Ace Solves It All takes it a step further by investing in their employees. They provide excellent compensation,

benefits, paid time off, vacation days and opportunities to save for retirement. DePari places a heavy emphasis on taking care of his team.

As DePari shared, he also takes care of and gives advice to other tradespeople throughout the country. "I speak at trade schools and meet with various groups of students and apprentices," he said. "I really enjoy helping younger people and getting them interested in the trades. I'll look at resumes and talk about various opportunities. I also do a 'one truck' breakdown of what it costs to operate a truck and turn a profit. I go over expenses, insurance, licensing and other factors to help them establish an hourly rate. Businesses are run on numbers. My work as a coach and mentor is very rewarding."

Looking ahead, DePari would eventually like to turn over the day-to-day operations to his son. He's looking at a five year plan with intentions of going part-time during that time frame. With the systems, procedures and excellent management team DePari has put in place, he's confident Ace Solves It All will continue to provide exceptional electrical, plumbing, HVAC and solar service and maintain its reputable position in the community.

What advice does DePari have for aspiring entrepreneurs? "I've had guys leave me to go do their own thing," he said. "Many were seeking more freedom and time off. What I tell them is that you're going to work more than just 40 hours per week. In fact, you're always working on your business. It's also important to have enough capital and to understand where the money goes. These young guys will see a job worth \$5,000 and think they scored. However, there are a lot of things eating up that \$5,000. Other advice I give is to get a signature on every job. Don't

assume you'll get paid. Get it in writing. Lastly, charge the right price.

This isn't a hobby. This is how you'll make your living. Your time is valuable. Understand and sell your value."

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