

# Francois Leconte

Davie, Florida



Paramount Broadcasting Communication, LLC

## *Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Francois Leconte:*

As the seventh largest metropolitan area in the United States, with a population estimated at about 6.2 million people, South Florida is a prime target for broadcasting companies looking to partner with content providers. When an opportunity arose in 2006 to purchase a license to operate as a broadcaster, Francois Leconte, who immigrated from Haiti to the U.S. in 1988, didn't hesitate to take action.

"The idea started when I was living in New York City," Leconte said. "There was a low power TV station geared towards immigrants. The content and programming gave immigrants a way to communicate with and hear from members of their own ethnic group. I looked at the concept and saw an opportunity for other markets. I knew it was something I eventually wanted to pursue."

Leconte moved to Broward County at the end of 1993. Not long after, he founded a non-profit organization called Minority Development and Empowerment Inc., where he served as CEO. During this time, in addition to leading a team of individuals dedicated to providing services to the immigrant population in South Florida, Leconte started to put the wheels in motion on his idea.

“I spent a lot of time watching the markets for an opportunity to come along,” he said. “When the license went up for sale, I jumped on it. It’s not every day something like this happens.”

Leconte continued, “In the U.S., access to media that allows for information and education to be delivered to a community is one of the key factors in determining the success of that community. Not all groups have access to mainstream media. The business model allows me to sell rights to use our signal. The providers come with their own content and we provide the avenue for them to reach their audience through a local market Agreement (LMA), which is a contractual agreement whereby a station licensee makes programming time available on its stations for a monthly fee. Revenue generating from advertising sales are typically kept by the programmers. The licensee retains control of the station.”

After originally launching Paramount Broadcasting Communication in 2006, and building the business in his spare time, Leconte left Minority Development and Empowerment in 2014 to focus exclusively on his new business.

“I was excited and scared,” Leconte said about leaving his steady job to go full-time on his new business. “Not knowing whether or not it would

succeed was perhaps the scariest part. However, once I got my first contract, I knew that what I wanted to do would work.”

According to Leconte, the broadcasting business, as you might expect, is extremely capital intensive. Licenses are required to grow and broadcast in different regions and rarely are they up for sale. Growth is slow and requires patience and determination.

“A lot of our growth comes down to relationship building,” Leconte said. “I attend a lot of chamber events and I’m actively involved with the community. I also serve as a board member on the Career source Broward.”

For Leconte, who takes pride in providing a platform for Entrepreneurs, Educational Institutions and Churches to operate their own television station, the future growth of Paramount Broadcasting Communication will come from expansion into different markets. In 2018, Leconte purchased a license to broadcast in the Port Saint Lucie area. This latest acquisition provides PBC access to an additional one million viewers and solidified its position in the market as one of the largest providers of over-the-air broadcasting company in the region. He anticipates expansion in the middle part of this year, but also has his sights set on even bigger opportunities.

“As soon as I have the capital to buy licenses, I’d like to expand into Texas, Georgia and New York,” he said. “There are significant immigrant populations in these areas that would benefit from programming geared towards them.”

What advice does Leconte have for aspiring entrepreneurs? “When you

have an idea for a business, it's like having a dream where only you know what's in that dream," he said. "Only you can smell it, see it, believe it and you must be willing to take the steps to make it happen. However, you need to dream your dream to the point where you can materialize it and convince others of your idea. Until you do that, people won't understand what you're doing. Also, it's important to align yourself with people that will help you succeed. Along the way, sometimes your decision may not yield the expected outcomes. Don't ever let that matter you. Learn from them and move on. It's like a basketball game. If you make a bad shot, you don't dwell on it. You simply move on to the next play."

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