

# James Pinard

Clermont, Florida



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## *Learn about Florida Entrepreneur James Pinard:*

James Pinard, founder and owner of Studio Pinard, originally studied music at Michigan State University. After a year or so, he had a change of heart. The coursework wasn't challenging enough and he felt himself being pulled in a different direction. He transferred to the University of Michigan and, with the help of a vocational counselor, discovered a new major with greater possibilities. After switching to Communication with an emphasis in Video Production, Pinard found his sweet spot. He went on to take classes in Art and Creative Writing and, along with a background in Composition, Music Theory and Two-Dimensional Design, Pinard's well-rounded skill set helped to launch his career.

"After college, I worked in Hollywood for about six years," he said. "I was a Visual Effects Producer for a post production company, primarily in

charge of running the Compositing Department. That's where you use green screen technology to produce complex layered effects. I ended up moving back to Michigan to be closer to a woman I had a long-distance relationship with. We got married and moved back to Los Angeles. We were only there for about 8 months before moving back to Michigan. My wife wanted to go back to college and the company I was with at the time had been acquired and consolidations were inevitable."

Pinard continued, "Back in Michigan, I went back to work for the production company I had previously worked for. When the economy tanked, a large client of ours, that represented nearly 70% of our business, had a spending freeze. As a result, I decided to go freelance.

In a sense, I kind of fell into entrepreneurship."

Pinard shared that the transition was somewhat seamless. He enjoyed having direct contact with his clients and the ability to control the entire creative process was something he coveted. From 2011 to 2017, Pinard grew the business in Michigan offering an array of services including, video, web design, marketing, graphic design and photography. His wife had been chronically ill for years and by 2016, doctors recommend they move south to warmer weather.

"My wife and I took that advice to heart," he said. "We spent some time in Venice and investigated other parts of Florida, before ultimately deciding on the Orlando area. What really did it for me was a meeting I had with a guy at the Orlando Chamber. I asked about the partnership and participation between the chamber and the EDC. To me, that's a good thermometer of how healthy the business environment is. When he said they have plans to combine, I knew this was the right spot. Also,

learning about the great collaboration between the colleges and universities and the business community helped me make up my mind. I was, and still am, so impressed with the collaborative business climate here."

After relocating to Central Florida, Pinard joined the Orlando Regional Chamber and started networking as much as possible. He made a great connection with GrowFL, Florida's economic development program focusing on assisting second-stage growth companies, and agreed to produce videos for GrowFL's Companies to Watch program. Through that partnership, Pinard has met other entrepreneurs and picked up additional business along the way.

Pinard shared some words of wisdom and what he enjoys most about his line of work. "Being able to change hearts is extremely rewarding," he said. "As media composers, we have a responsibility and a privileged to change people's minds about how they feel about a product, issue, company or mission. We have the power to change their hearts and minds by giving our clients an effective communication tool that accurately represents their brand. Remember, it's an audience only if you have their attention. My job is to make my clients 'attention worthy' and attractive to prospects."

Looking ahead, Pinard would like to eventually scale the company and be able to offer different size packages for different types of businesses. He wants to give smaller businesses an opportunity to "enter the door" without spending a fortune. Pinard is also very fond of the arts. Along those lines, he's working, with a handful of other visionaries in the artistic space, to create the first ever global networked

learning academy for musicians. Local kids would have opportunities to get involved and potentially go on to compete on a global stage. As the Marketing Director for this project, Pinard will have his hands full doing videos while still focusing on the continued growth of his own business.

What advice does Pinard have for aspiring entrepreneurs? "Start small," he said. "Also, have a backup plan and a job you can rely on. It's just like job hunting. It's easier to hunt for a job when you already have one. You also need to be solid in your idea enough to grow quickly yet remain humble enough to embrace advice from others. Get over your fear of networking. It's important to get out there, talk to others and ask for help. Find a mentor and learn the business side of your craft. Creativity alone is not enough."

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