

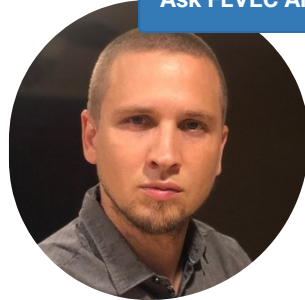


# Ricardo Funk

Leesburg, Florida

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## *Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Ricardo Funk:*

Originally from Argentina, Ricardo Funk, Owner of Dust Busters of Lake County, moved to the United States in 1998. His first stop was New York City where Funk spent approximately 14 years working in the tech sector. He started his career as a Computer Engineer before transitioning into Software Development. In search of warmer weather and less stress, Funk and his wife, who is also from Argentina, moved to Lake County in 2014. After working remotely as a Software Developer for a few years from Florida, Funk had enough. He wasn't happy with his job and neither was his wife.

"It was time to do something for ourselves," Funk said. "We were both working so hard for other people. We thought, 'why not work this hard for ourselves.' Around Christmas time 2017 is when we decided to

launch our cleaning business. Starting this type of business seemed like a great way to break into a new industry that didn't require a lot of prior knowledge."

Once Funk and his wife decided to start their own business, they focused on laying a solid business foundation. Initially, they weren't as concerned with getting clients as they were with setting up processes and putting technology in place to allow them to run the business smoother.

"We purchased a CRM and put QuickBooks in place," Funk said. "We felt like we were one step ahead of most people that start a cleaning business. We also knew that a solid business foundation would allow us to scale once we started to grow. Our first client ended up being the accountant that helped us set up the business. Aside from that business, our initial focus was on residential. In the beginning, it was easier to break into. We've since added commercial cleaning services."

Funk shared some of the early challenges they faced along with their strategy for growth. "As first time business owners, we made our fair share of mistakes," he said. "We originally relied on lead generation sites like Yelp and Home Advisor, but found them to only be effective for the short term. Looking back on that decision, I'd steer away from that and concentrate more on branding and networking."

Funk continued, "When it came to networking, neither my wife nor I was very comfortable getting out and in front of people. We're not very social, so for us to go to chamber meetings and networking events was not easy. We've since joined BNI, which helped us get more comfortable with networking and promoting our business. We also tried direct mail,

door hangers and online advertising. Out of everything we tried, online advertising and networking are what worked, and what continue to work, the best."

Dust Busters of Lake County provides award-winning residential and commercial cleaning services for all of Lake County and portions of surrounding counties. Funk describes his business as being very "customer centric" and one that places a heavy emphasis on a strong company culture. If a customer is not satisfied, his team will return and do whatever is necessary to make them happy.

Funk, who enjoys helping employees and making a difference for his clients, is focused on growing the business. He's in the process of buying two additional vehicles and will look to expand his service offerings by early next year. Additional services could include things like power washing or possibly professional carpet cleaning.

What advice does Funk have for aspiring entrepreneurs? "You can do whatever you put your mind to," he said. "Work, work, work. Educate yourself. Work some more. Also, look at the big picture and make decisions with the long-term in mind. Laying a strong business foundation before going after clients was the best decision my wife and I made."

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