

Sean Dotson

Bradenton, Florida



RND Automation

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Sean Dotson:

In early 2005, Sean Dotson, a Tampa native, purchased the custom automation division of Sidel after its Bradenton facility closed. A new company, RND Automation, was then created. Entering new waters, Sean adjusted his sails to stay afloat, allowing him to follow his passion and to carve out his niche in the market.

“Studying mechanical engineering in college, I had always been involved in machine, packaging and equipment design. After college, I was managing a division of a large custom automation and packaging machinery company when they shut it down. I realized that I would always be at the mercy of the markets unless I took matters into my own hands. I purchased a portion of the Sidel company and started RND in late 2005.”

RND Automation designs and manufactures custom assembly machinery, robotic workcells and full packaging line integration. Their expertise in consumer goods, aerospace, automotive, defense and medical device assembly, inspection, testing and validation, coupled with their line of MDC Packaging Machinery, world-class horizontal form, fill and seal technologies, allows them to offer fully vertically integrated lines from raw materials to palletized cases.

Determination, hard work and work experience proved to be the successful combination for Dotson. Fourteen years ago, Dotson says they were one of the smallest automation and packaging companies in the south east. Now, they've grown to be one of the largest teams with over 40 employees, but it wasn't always easy.

"We were a young company when the recession hit so we ended up plateauing for about three years while other competitors were going out of business. There were five companies in our area and now there are two, and we survived that. After the recession ended, we knew it was time to put our foot on the gas and keep growing."

After overcoming the recession and always keeping quality as their top priority, RND Automation has been able to gain a competitive edge over other companies in their market. With over 20 years of experience in industrial machinery design, the RND team comes to work each day with the belief that no job is too small.

"We use cutting edge technology such as robots and servo, that may, at time cost more than other, less complex methods, such as pneumatics.

However, the longevity and long-term ROI of these devices are far superior to the "down and dirty" methods. We believe that you should

never sacrifice quality for cost.”

What it Means to be a Florida Companies to Watch Honoree

“I believe we exhibit qualities that Florida wants to see in manufacturing. High tech, clean, smart manufacturing. We also help other companies to achieve this same goal by making their processes more streamlined.”

“I’m proud of what my team has accomplished. It’s amazing to walk down the aisles in a store and see things like a Tervis Tumbler on the shelf and know we’ve had a hand in making that product. Every Ford we see and even contact lenses, it’s really rewarding knowing we helped touch that at some point in the process.”

Notable Community Support

For RND, growth isn’t only limited to their company but overflows into the community around them. Each year they choose at least one school to support their TSA, STEM or Robotics club. Hosting tours of their facility, gifting used or obsolete parts and donating both money and time, RND is committed to getting children immersed in the world of manufacturing and robotics.

Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

Quoting Mark Twain’s, “Find a job you enjoy doing, and you will never have to work a day in your life,’ Dotson’s biggest piece of advice was whatever you’re doing, make sure you have a passion for it.

“You have to have passion for what you’re doing every day. If you’re

doing something hoping to get rich or to serve another purpose, it's probably not going to work out. You've got to put your heart and soul into your business and if you have don't has a passion for what you're doing, there's a strong change it's going to fail. Ask yourself, is this something I can do for the rest of my life even if it only means I'm living comfortably? If you believe that to be true, then you are going to be more successful than you thought."

Awards and Recognition

