

Tawni and Andrew Wollard

New Smyrna Beach, Florida



Sunrise Beverage Service

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Tawni and Andrew Wollard:

Tawni and Andrew Wollard, husband and wife and Owners of Sunrise Beverage Service, never expected to own a business in Florida. However, when a co-worker told them about a business for sale in New Smyrna Beach, they booked a flight for the Sunshine State and spent several days evaluating the opportunity.

"We were living in Denver at the time," Tawni said. "We both worked for the same office coffee service company. I managed the delivery drivers and the warehouse and Andrew managed the equipment, installs and repairs. One of our coworkers, who knew Andrew wanted to eventually get back to Florida, saw that a local office coffee service business was for sale. At first, Andrew thought New Smyrna Beach was too far north. He grew up in South Florida and was used to it down there. However, after we came to visit, we both really liked what we saw."

The Wollard's took their visit over Mother's Day weekend. They met with the previous owner, poured over the financials and decided the opportunity was too good to pass up. Within a matter of three months, they sold their house in Denver, purchased a new one in New Smyrna Beach and closed on the sale of the business. As of Aug 7th, 2017, they were the proud new owners of Sunrise Beverage Service.

"It was definitely a gutsy thing to do," Tawni said. "My husband was pretty nervous, but I was mostly excited. We were both looking forward to a change, but leaving family and friends was tough."

Immediately after closing on the business, the previous owner took Tawni on the road to meet customers. She stuck around for two weeks and trained Tawni and Andrew on all aspects of the business. Tawni shared some of the early challenges they faced along the way and how they're planning on growing the business.

"Cash flow and startup inventory was definitely an early challenge," she said. "I never had to deal with anything like that before. Once the business was flowing, things became much more manageable. An ongoing challenge is dealing with the competition. Some of the bigger companies like Standard Coffee and First Choice are able to come in and undercut us. Fortunately, New Smyrna Beach is an area that really appreciates and supports local businesses."

To hedge against the threat of outside competition and to further distinguish themselves as a local business that also supports other local businesses, Tawni and Andrew are in the process of forming a

partnership with a local roaster. This will give Sunrise Beverage Service access to additional routes and customers and the ability to offer current customers fresh locally roasted coffee. By September 1st, they're hoping to have a new warehouse and a delivery driver to help with the additional accounts. Tawni expects the business to quadruple in the coming months.

What advice does Tawni have for aspiring entrepreneurs thinking about taking the plunge into the world of small business ownership? "I'm pretty adventurous and brave," she said. "It didn't seem that crazy to me. I just saw it as a great opportunity. I think you need that spirit of taking on a challenge. You can't be afraid. Some specific advice I would give, in regards to buying an existing business, is to do your due diligence and ask a lot of questions about the business and customer accounts."

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