

Franchisee Success Series: Chris Beer on Family-First Culture



God, football and his franchise – it sounds like something straight out of a “Welcome to America” pamphlet, but these things are essential to Chris Beer’s livelihood. He has carried a passion for sports, for as long as he can remember. “We are a football family. It stems as far back as my Grandfather who played without a helmet, to my Dad who played with a leather helmet and now I’ve passed it down to my children,” Beer’s passion for football is surpassed by his love for God and family. And it’s his work with Our Town America, the nation’s premier new mover marketing franchise that allows him to fully enjoy his life’s passion to the

fullest!

The Virginia native graduated from James Madison University with a marketing and business management degree. Beer applied the same discipline and mental toughness needed on the athletic field.

He ran track and played football during his high school and collegiate years. Several injuries and a family illness kept Beer from playing his senior year in college. “This is when I decided to buckle down and direct my energy toward gaining success in the business world!” says Beer.

“After graduating from college, low on funds, and in need of employment, I had an idea to stand in front of a grocery store and approach every sales representative that walked through the doors,” says Beer. “Thankfully, after telling him I was fresh out of college and in debt, the grocery store manager respected my gumption and approved of my plan. I got a bunch of business cards and made several positive connections. I was really close to landing a job when a headhunter put me in touch with my first employer. It was an experience that taught me, at a young age, that capturing an opportunity is possible through reaching out to people and clearly communicating goals and objectives.”

Beer is a proud husband and father of three grown children: two sons and one daughter. He is also the successful owner of Our Town America of Atlanta. For 20 years, he has enjoyed connecting new residents with a wide variety of businesses in the Southeast’s largest city. Beer says his connection with his family has never been stronger because of his Our Town America franchise.

“For the first 18 years of my professional career, I didn’t have the opportunity to control my time, my income earning potential or, most importantly, the time I spent with my family and my quality of life,” says Beer. “That all changed when I invested in myself and joined the Our Town America family.”

Beer joined Our Town America in 1999, after a nearly two-decade-long run with two prominent consumer products companies. He excelled in corporate sales and marketing, but the job, and the rigors that come with being on the road, were wearing him thin.

“There are very few things more valuable than quality of life, but unfortunately, my professional career was interfering with my ability to spend quality time with my

family,” Beer says. “I reached a point where I needed to step away from working for corporations and strike out on my own.”

The Beer family was quickly introduced to the perils that come with working for big conglomerates. “Two weeks after our honeymoon, I learned I was being transferred from Roanoke, Virginia, to Charleston, South Carolina,” recalls Beer. “We were in Charleston for under a year. Thirty days after buying a house there, I was transferred to Atlanta. That’s when my wife jokingly asked if this is what our life was going to be like forever.”



Chris Beer of Our Town America of Atlanta

Married for 33 years, Beer credits his wife for his success. “I have the most supportive wife in the world,” he says. “Her belief in me and my desire to be an entrepreneur during the early years is the main reason why I am here today. You have to have a spouse who is supportive because making the transition from employer to entrepreneur is scary.”

Family lineage also played a huge factor according to Beer. He is a third-generation American — his grandparents first arrived in the US via Ellis Island. “Both sets of grandparents instilled the need to work hard, set goals and look for opportunity,” Beer says. “My great-grandfather spoke five different languages, but no English. They were humble beginnings, and I learned how to listen and learn from them.”

Beer says his dad also played a role in sacking any apprehension he might have

had about leaving corporate life to become self-employed. His dad actually left a corporate position in Michigan and moved the family to Virginia in an effort to realize his personal dreams and improve the family's quality of life. "It was a tough decision leaving a comfortable salary, benefits, and a corporate vehicle," Beer says. "But I inherited a leap-of-faith mentality from my dad. I knew it was time to better control my quality of life."

After a brief experience as an owner with a different, less targeted direct mail marketing franchise, Beer wasn't satisfied. That's when he conducted even more research and got in touch with Our Town America's founder Michael Plummer Sr. It didn't take long before he knew he had found the perfect match with the nation's premier new mover marketing franchise.

"I was on the verge of rejoining the corporate work force after my first crack at entrepreneurship didn't turn out the way I wanted," Beer says. "Michael and I talked, and he sent me some information. After a lot of soul searching and praying with my wife, I called Michael back and we had a tremendous conversation. Sixty days after our initial conversation, I was signing the paperwork to open an Our Town America franchise in Atlanta."

Beer flew down to corporate headquarters in Tampa, but he wasn't traveling solo. "My wife and three kids joined me



Wife PJ and Chris Beer

during my first training session," Beer says. "That's how amazing Our Town America is as a company. The fact that I brought my kids with me for my initial

training wasn't frowned upon. We were even invited to the Plummer household for dinner. After three or four years of traveling to Tampa for conventions, my kids began to view the Plummers as family."

That family setting at Our Town America, according to Beer, is not only found within the corporate headquarters. Beer says he has the same relationship with fellow franchisees.

It was Plummer Sr.'s guidance that helped Beer through what he called a tough first year. "We joke about it now, but the first couple of months we were eating a lot of frozen pizzas and hot dogs," Beer recalls. "After six months, I took a deep breath and realized that if I just followed the Our Town America system, there was ample opportunity for growth. Michael Plummer Sr. was a wonderful mentor. He allowed me to see the big picture of what was possible. He always had a twinkle in his eye. Now I see similar personality traits with his son, Michael Jr."

Michael Plummer Jr., who is now the President of Our Town America, is also someone Beer considers a significant person in his life. "Michael has done a tremendous job of growing this company. I value the relationship we share!"



CEO Michael Plummer Jr. and Chris Beer of Our Town America of Atlanta

Beer's game plan to success involves consistency and hard work. Owning a franchise in one of America's most populous cities keeps him busy. Beer consistently ranks as one of the top franchisees year in and year out in terms of sales revenue. In business ownership, he draws several parallels to what he learned playing football.

"You have to believe in yourself and in your team in both football and in business," says Beer. "You have to look down the road and understand it's going to take hard

work to really get where you want to go. There are going to be obstacles preventing you from getting in the end zone or finding success as a small business owner. Work hard and believe in the opportunity. Consistency will pay dividends.”

“When you’re an athlete, you try to polish your skills. It’s the same as a sales person and business owner. Learn, grow and develop. After 20 years, I still enjoy the aspects of owning my business. I’ve learned when I get knocked down, I must get back up and only then will good things happen. When you stick with your beliefs, and the Our Town America program, good things will happen.”

For Beer, those good things with Our Town America included being able to attend his daughter’s dance and singing recitals and attending his sons’ football games. Beer was able to also coach football at the high school level. “Isn’t that what life is all about? Family? I love my wife and I love my kids, and I get to enjoy great moments with them and my grandchildren thanks to Our Town America.”

“My wife and I were recently sitting on the couch, wondering where have the last 20 years gone,” says Beer. “What a great 20 years it has been though! We’ve had an opportunity to be close as a family while generating a nice income. We have had an opportunity to share a beautiful life together and have shared many special moments together as a family. In addition, every single day still brings new opportunities, which is invigorating. When you get to be my age and hit certain benchmarks in life, man, what a blessing. In terms of quality of life, family time and income level, it has been 20 great years with Our Town America.”

Are you in search of a similar experience as Chris Beer? Does the Our Town America franchise opportunity sound like it could be for you? If so, learn more at <https://www.ourtownamerica.com/franchise-us/>.