

▶ SETTING UP FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Insights from an independent waste hauler thriving for nearly 50 years

After 46 years in the waste industry, the Troiano family has a solid handle on what creates a sustainable business. Son of founder Mike Troiano, Thomas or “TJ”, recalls working on the back of his dad’s trash truck and watching the family business grow from basically his mom and dad along with himself and his brother, to nearly 100 employees. More than 40 years since his dad bought and operated his first commercial trash truck, Troiano Waste Services has emerged as a multi-million dollar enterprise and the leading hauler in Maine and beyond. In 2021, Troiano received the coveted Hauler of the Year award from the Maine Resource and Recovery Association.

According to TJ who serves as COO, the company’s rapid and sustainable growth is founded on simple but powerful principles they have adhered to since day one. These include engaging in responsible business practices for all involved, investing in technology that accelerate efficiencies, and responsiveness that outpaces others in the market. Following a few examples.

▶ Choosing Customers Wisely

For any business, it’s easy to think the more customers you have the more profitable you would be. This concept can actually hurt you. You need to have metrics in place that let you identify the profit and loss data for every single customer you serve, at any given time. When you find customers with a lopsided balance for profits generated vs. resources used, you need to let them go. It’s important to establish profitability goals per customer and have access to the data that lets you identify your gain leaders and your loss leaders.

“When you take a look at your profits and costs at the individual customer unit, you might see that you are serving customers that are actually losing you money vs. helping you grow,” said TJ. “When this is the case, it’s in your best interest to help them find a company more suited for them. The first step, however, is to invest in resources that allow you to identify winners and losers.

To reach your business goals, current and future, you need to invest your resources in customers who understand the cost of doing business. Operational costs often increase for reasons out of control. To stay in business, you often have to pass increases in fuel, labor, equipment and insurance costs on to customers. When you have strong relationships and services that add value beyond price, your top customers are more likely to stay with you.

TJ recommends operators take the time to analyze the profits margins and costs associated represented by each customer in order to see where they are losing money, and where opportunities lay. It not only helps you identify profitability streams, it helps you identify like audiences for prospecting and sales.

Current software applications designed specifically for waste management haulers allow you to monitor and manage the costs and revenue streams for each client, making this an easy and affordable priority.



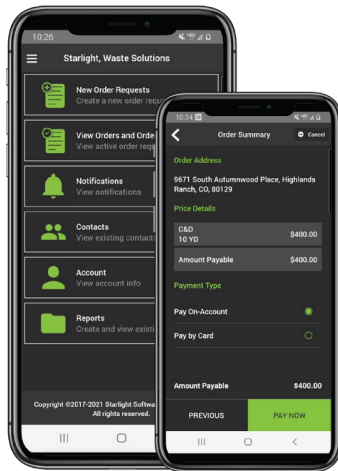
► Investing in Technology

With the growing number of software options to help streamline all areas of operations, no one can really afford not to integrate software solutions into how they manage drivers, routes and customer expectations. To stay competitive, you have to stay ahead of the efficiencies game by having access to the data that indicates where you have waste, literally and figuratively, and where you do not. Being able to make changes to drivers' routes, manage inventory, and service new orders on the fly is critical to seizing opportunities and preventing losses.



"The right technology allows you to adjust pricing instantly when demand changes or when a customer's issues impact your profit margin negatively and you need to avoid a loss," says TJ.

Technology is a complex purchase, as TJ's company has learned firsthand when systems have been phased out with no appropriate replacements offered. His suggestion is to ask all suppliers you are considering the same questions about features, service, training, open architecture and integration, future development plans, hidden costs, contract terms, and more. He suggests looking for customer-centric terms and contracts that assure you the flexibility you need as your business needs change. "Its hard to know what the future brings for any business, so having flexibility to adapt without losing a lot of money is key when selecting partners," says TJ.



► Responsiveness

Behind Troiano Waste's rapid growth market dominance is their commitment to 24/7 customer service. According to TJ, callers always get a live person instead of a recording so they can deliver the human touch and build personal bonds.

Creating a staff culture on friendship, trust, respect, and empowerment to do what it takes to respond to and solve customer issues is a large factor in customer retention which is critical to sustainable growth no matter the size of your business.

Responsiveness is not just about customer service, it is also about responding to markets. Waste management companies need to be prepared to respond to changing market conditions that affect cost, timeliness, service expectations, and more. Educating customers about current and projected change, and how you plan to respond so that everybody wins, helps to foster partnerships between customers and operators so that solutions can be customized as unforeseen changes occur.

► Troiano Waste and Starlight Software Solutions

TJ is a current member of the Starlight Software Solutions Advisory Council, providing insights on what waste management companies need most to drive efficiencies and profit. He chose to partner with Starlight due to its robust features that allow for instant data analysis to monitor profits and loss per driver, truck, route and customer, and its ability to reduce invoicing time from days to minutes. TJ's insights have been instrumental in helping Starlight develop a comprehensive suite of applications for waste management companies operating roll-off, commercial, residential, and portable toilet business lines.

STARLIGHT SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

offers a cloud-based comprehensive, integrated suite of mobile and enterprise applications that are changing the way waste hauling and transport companies do business. Proprietary tools encompass complete business operations and are proven to drive higher efficiency and profitability.