



G&V MOBILE DETAIL SERVICE

Side Hustle Turns into Thriving Business for Former Pharmaceutical Operator

Some of the best ideas to start a business originate in places where you least likely expect them. George Smith worked as an operator for a global pharmaceutical company for 25 years. He recalls that in 2010 the employees could not go to work for eight months because of a contract dispute. To pass the time, Smith started taking his wife to the beauty shop for hair appointments. He says, "I was bored." To cure the boredom, Smith washed customers' cars. He elaborates, "People started asking me to come to their homes and the business just grew and grew from there."

Smith turned his side hustle that started outside a hair salon into a thriving business. He owns G&V Mobile Detail Services, LLC. The "G" is for George and the "V" is for his wife, Valerie.

Smith now details any size vehicle, from tractor trailers to boats. He says, "We clean engines and rims. We also polish, buff, and shampoo vehicles as well as complete vehicle and headlight restoration."

The company is authorized as an "ozone vehicle" service company. "It's for killing any living organism like a virus, cigarette or marijuana smoke, whatever odor it may be," Smith says. The company uses water-based products and professional grade vacuum steam cleaners and brushes.

G&V Mobile Detail Services is now 10 years old. In March 2019, the company became certified as a Minority Business Enterprise, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Airport Concessions Disadvantaged Enterprise. Smith credits family members with helping him complete the online certification application and turning all the paperwork into the Business Diversity Development office.

Prior to gaining certification, Smith detailed vehicles for rental car companies. That experience and his certification created an opportunity for detail work with Enterprise, Alamo and National car rental companies operating at St. Louis Lambert International Airport.

Smith is cautious about growing too fast. "Sometimes it can get out of hand with all the service calls. We're trying to keep it balanced."

Smith has eight employees. He is looking for a warehouse to house his company vehicles and plans to utilize the space to train new employees.

Smith, a leader in his church for over 20 years is known in the St. Louis metro area for helping others. "We hire from all walks of life, from institutions, from my church, my nephew works with us, we pray with them. I am a father figure to quite a few of them. I try to teach them about the ethics of life and what it really means and why we are here and what we are supposed to do to help each other, and I give financially and spiritually. That's a hustle worth sharing with others," he says.