



SMALL BIG WINS

Featuring Bob Branscombe, Founder of StowAway Solutions, LLC

As our small business loans team at St. Mary's Credit Union celebrates our ninth consecutive win for the best small business lender in Massachusetts, we wanted to dive deeper into the small business wins that happen every day — with our customers.

So, to kick off this series of blog posts, we sat down with Leominster, MA, resident and local business owner Bob Branscombe, CEO and Founder of StowAway Solutions, LLC, to share his experiences of getting his company up and running with an SBA loan from St. Mary's.

Central to Bob's success story is his partnership with Armand, a lending specialist at St. Mary's Credit Union, whom he holds in the highest regard. Bob's admiration for Armand extends beyond his role as a lender; he describes him as a rare individual who goes above and beyond to understand the intricacies of his business.

With a blend of determination, strategic planning, and unwavering support, Bob's experience stands as a testament to the unique approach taken by St. Mary's Credit Union in nurturing local businesses.



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Bob begins by emphasizing the importance of planning, quoting the timeless wisdom of Benjamin Franklin, “Armand likes to use Ben Franklin’s quote: those who fail to plan should plan to fail, right?” He underscores the critical role of foresight and preparation in navigating the unpredictable terrain of entrepreneurship.

Reflecting on the realities of business challenges, Bob shares Mike Tyson’s infamous quote, “Everyone’s got a plan until they get punched in the face.” However, he adds a nuanced perspective, recognizing the value of preparation while acknowledging the inevitability of setbacks. “I know it’s crude, but I don’t think Tyson’s saying don’t plan, don’t be prepared,” Bob remarks, highlighting the importance of adaptability in the face of adversity.

“Armand is not like any other lender, I believe, in the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts,” Bob asserts with conviction. He commends Armand’s meticulous approach, citing his thorough research on StowAway’s market sector and competitors. Armand’s keen insights and constructive feedback have been instrumental in shaping Bob’s business strategy.

Despite Armand’s critical eye, Bob emphasizes the genuine support and encouragement he receives. “He’s cynical but in a healthy and non-critical way . . . he’s also been one of my biggest cheerleaders,” Bob reflects warmly. In an entrepreneurial journey often marked by solitude, Armand’s unwavering support serves as a beacon of guidance and reassurance.

Bob acknowledges the rarity of finding a lender who not only understands the intricacies of his business but also shares his entrepreneurial vision. “Being an entrepreneur can be a lonely road,” Bob admits. “Very few of your friends and family will understand why you want to venture out onto the tundra. But Armand gets it.”

Through personalized attention, strategic guidance, and unwavering support, St. Mary’s Credit Union continues to be invaluable for entrepreneurs and small business owners like Bob. As Bob’s journey exemplifies, with the right partner by your side, the possibilities are endless.

SBA CREDIT UNION
OF THE YEAR
9TH YEAR IN A ROW

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