

Dave Zyski, Mr. Handyman

by Jessica Luther

Dave and Amy Zyski both had good jobs with a reliable income when they decided to branch out and start their own business. Dave worked at Woodbridge Corporation, and Amy still works at the Dana Corporation headquarters. However, both had worked in automotive-related fields, and Dave said they saw the way the economy was going. Then Amy had a scare last year.

"Dana started letting people go," she explained. "Some of the executives told us this might be a good time to take stock of our life, and look at what else we might like to do."

Fortunately, Amy didn't lose her job during this rocky period, but it was enough of a wake-up call that the two began looking into franchise opportunities. The couple had met in 1995, at an auto-racing event through a mutual friend. At the time, Amy, an engineering graduate from the University of Michigan, was working at Detroit Diesel and Dave was working in Fremont. They continued dating long-distance for two years, until eventually Amy moved to Toledo and began working for the Chrysler machinery plant.

Now, both were looking to work together starting their own franchise. They worked with a franchise consultant through FranNet, took personality and financial profiles, sat for a two-hour interview, and then began deciding between the five franchises presented to them. Eventually, they narrowed it down to Mr. Handyman in early January of 2009. They had looked at opportunities in education, home health care and house cleaning, but this business felt right to both of them.

On May 11, 2009, the Zyskis officially launched Mr. Handyman, which had over 300 franchises worldwide, but only one in northwest Ohio. They offer almost any maintenance a homeowner or business may need: drywall and wood repair, gutter cleaning, painting, minor plumbing, roof repair- they will even hang holiday decorations and clean out garages. They also work with commercial businesses like doctor's offices, rental properties and restaurants to do any maintenance neces-

sary by contract.

Dave explained they work with technicians for the more skilled labor, but he does the hands-on part of the business as well. Amy takes care of finances and marketing, while still working a full-time job.

"I ask advertisers to come in and see me at 5 p.m. because that's the only time I'm available," she explained.

Dave said that their goal is to have repeat business, and already over half of their scheduled jobs have been repeat customers. It's very important to them to be on time and stick with the job until completion. He described one instance where they went out to do screen repair on a porch. The woman was also having another company power wash her house, and they were a day late for the job and didn't complete it to her satisfaction. Meanwhile, Mr. Handyman was on time and the job was done well.

"She saw that we could do power washing, and that we are on time and did the job right," Dave recalled. "Now we've done three jobs for her, with a fourth scheduled."

Both Amy and Dave appreciate having the franchise behind them, with the benefit of marketing already in place and hundreds of other owners to use as resources. Mr. Handyman also employs its technicians; they don't subcontract, and they do background checks on anyone they hire. During this season, Mr. Handyman does snow removal as well as assembling Christmas presents;

clients can just drop them off at their office. Currently, they are offering a special of a free one-hour of gutter cleaning for any three-hour booked job. The business has been a rewarding but challenging new step, and the Zyskis are putting in the time and effort to make the business flourish.

If you found this story interesting, informative or inspiring please let Dave and Amy know! You may contact Mr. Handyman at 419-324-7177, email david.zyski@mr.handyman.com, or visit their website, www.mr.handyman.com, or their office at 116 West Third St. in Perrysburg, Ohio.



Dave Zyski