



NOVA SCOTIA

# KUSTOMWORKS MOBILE ELECTRONICS

**E**LLIOTT BEALS and **SEAN** BURKE can tell you first-hand what it's like trying to start a business today. Judging from their own experience, two of the most important criteria any would-be entrepreneur will need are patience and planning skills.

Money, of course, is also high on the list. That's the reason why patience and planning are so important. The two men decided to start their own car audio business in January 1997, but it was August before Kustomworks Mobile Electronics was open for business. During this time, they learned some valuable lessons on business preparation, financing and the harsh reality that, in business, things seldom move as quickly as we would like.

Based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Kustomworks offers retail customers a variety of audio components and electronics, including stereos, amplifiers, speakers and even car alarms and remote starters. It's an impressive undertaking for the young partners who, in their mid 20s, have realized their dreams of being their own boss.

"We had two big problems starting out," recalls Elliott. "First we couldn't get enough information to put our business plan together and then we didn't get enough positive feedback from the banks." Both admit this was a frustrating process. "There was a lot of waiting involved," adds Sean, "and it was difficult at first to get people to believe in us and to agree that our idea could work." To overcome these obstacles, the two remained optimistic and continued to approach other banks until they found some success.

The financial support they so desperately needed came from the Black Business Initiative and the Halifax-based Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development. These



Barrett and Mackay

two agencies provided the essential financial assistance that enabled Elliott and Sean to access approximately \$25,000 they needed to get Kustomworks Mobile Electronics off the ground and into business.

Both men came into the venture with valuable business experience. Elliott

The partners agree that becoming your own boss gives you the freedom to do what you want to do and the realization that you are responsible for your decisions and your actions. "It's exciting to see the potential," says Elliott. "We know that if we treat people fairly and do a good job educating

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completed a course in entrepreneurship sponsored by the Employment Insurance division of Employment and Immigration Canada and had previous sales and technical experience. Sean had a retail background and had managed a car audio business. They specifically chose the car audio field because it is something they both enjoy and have the skills to do well. Both are certified for the installer level of the Mobile Electronics Certification Program.

them about the products, our business will grow. When our business grows, we can watch our profits increase."

Since both are committed to their dream of being successful businessmen, they don't regret the long hours required at this point. "We're having fun doing what we do," confides Sean, "so we don't mind working late. We just try to make sure that when we do leave, the work stays here."

## WHERE TO REACH ELLIOTT BEALS AND SEAN BURKE

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