

Dealer Service Alternatives



MEET ALEX AVILES

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Dealer Service Alternative is a European car owner's dream come true. It services, repairs and maintains all makes and models of vehicles but specializes in European cars, especially Mercedes, BMW and Audi. Owner Alex Aviles prides himself in offering his clients and their vehicles a dealership-level experience at fair prices. Aviles motto is "dealer quality service at friendly prices." When he founded and launched Dealer Service Alternative, Aviles' had a lot of ideas about the direction he wanted to take his company. But before he started investing his money, he wanted to make sure he was on the right path. That's when a friend suggested he visit the Florida SBDC at UCF for a no-cost consultation with one of their expert consultants.

"When I started my company, I knew I could be a top technician and manager. But there were a lot of business matters I was not trained in at the dealership where I came from. Issues like licensing, procurement and leases were all unfamiliar to me," remarked Aviles.

It was at the FSBDC that Aviles met Pauline Davis, a consultant specializing in finance and business accounting. "I went in with the original idea that I would buy an existing business. But Pauline Davis showed me a different approach, one that wouldn't require so much funding. So I purchased some equipment, got some leads and partnered with another company to share space in our building," Aviles says.

"The FSBDC helped me to figure out all the 'ins' and 'outs' of business that I had no idea about," continued Aviles. Working with Davis and other FSBDC consultants, Dealer Service Alternative moved to a better location, upgraded their website and implemented an internet marketing campaign that was tailored to Aviles' needs and his budget.

"Between implementing my online marketing campaign in stages, my wife joining the company to manage the finances and the help I received from the FSBDC, we have pretty much doubled the size of our business in the past year," Aviles noted. "Now we've outgrown our space and I'm looking forward to expanding into a new location with all the convenience and comfort of a dealership, only not so fancy or expensive for my customers. I want a showplace that is a reflection of how well we treat our clients' babies, err, vehicles," concluded Aviles with a smile.

"My experience with the FSBDC at UCF has been nothing but great," Aviles says. "They've always had answers to my questions, and if they didn't, they found the answer. It's an amazing set of resources they have over there – all under one roof. They are like a business encyclopedia...the business Google. I say 'Thank You' for all you've done, Ms. Davis and FSBDC."

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