



Tire Shop Expansion | Retail & Wholesale Expansion Experience

Expanding Comes With Risk. Barbara Sicka Co-owner and Founder of Hercules Tire Sales walks us through her tire & repair shop expansion.

TULSA, OKLAHOMA, UNITED STATES, September 30, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Tire Shop Expansion](#) | Good Or Bad Idea?

You know we were fortunate to expand in the 80s and we were the only Wholesaler for Hercules Tires in Oklahoma.

So our story of expansion doesn't revolve solely around expanding a [retail shop](#). Our wholesale business allowed for those expansions.

So when we finally made our final expansion of 7 stores, we were geared up to reach every mom and pop business in Oklahoma And Kansas (wholesale). Our strength in wholesaling and exclusivity, allowed for our expansions.

Where Are You Now (Retail/Wholesale)?

Eventually the industry would change and we would sell our big wholesale component and it left us with 7 retail locations, now 5.

Like all businesses your business structure changes to meet demand. So we had this colossal business structure that met the demands of our mom and pop tire shops (wholesale), while meeting the demands of our tire repair & auto repair clients (retail).

It took us awhile to figure it out. The industry was changing, national brands were developing routes to reach the thousands of mom & pop shops across the state that solely depended on Hercules for their tires.

We loved wholesaling, we were good at it. Selling our wholesale business was inevitable as the internet changed, national brands expanded, and manufacturers changed.

That leg of our business that provided cushion enough to expand, no longer was our comfort blanket. We had to be good at retail. We had to think like a retail shop and that was different.

We were always good at retail, but when you go from two focuses to one focus, you learn quickly, you can be better.

This was the biggest struggle. Restructuring our business. Although we were extremely large & profitable, we were still like a mom & pop shop. Letting people go (downsizing) was never on our mind. These people become family and depend on you. So restructuring to match the change was very complex.

So Is Expansion Good or Bad?

Well, truthfully it can be both. Most expansions that we did, we didn't actually go hunt for them. They came to us and we thought, we are successful, lets expand.

Expansion has been wonderful for our family.

It has given us everything we've wanted as a result of smart, hard work. But to say it's been a bed of roses would be a lie.

When it rains and you have one roof, it rains on one roof. When you have many roofs, it rains on many roofs.

In retail, unlike stocks, you need all your locations to be successful. You can't approach retail as a hedge fund. You need profitability, or the organizational complexity can get out of balance. This is why training is essential, among other things.

What is Your advice For Someone Looking To Expand?

Invest money in training systems. If you can, dig deeper not wider. Although, the life we have lived may or may not have been possible with one store, as I look back, we could have always dug deeper down within the ground we had, before grabbing more ground.

Keeping employees in the same building is one thing you will lose with expansion.

When you don't see employees everyday they lose your identity.

The only way to keep them honest is to make them feel like family, pay them what they are worth & also keep them learning.

If you can create processes, videos, manuals, & shadowing for everything in your retail location you will eliminate a lot of headaches.

Yes you can have 16 cameras facing every direction. Yes you can keep a store manager for 10-15 years and keep 95% of the business consistency through that individual.

But it's controlling those last 5% of the variables, those details, that can only be managed through trained & teaching processes; there is no way to remove the headache of expansion but there are keys to ensure long term success.

Final Thoughts?

Training is the key. Enjoy yourself.

If your business isn't turn-key to the point where it could be turned into a franchise, then it might be a little early for expansion. But only you know, because anything is possible.

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