

Valet Plus Parking



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Jared Frisk, left, and Jeff Neises used to park cars at the Montgomery Inn Boathouse. They formed their own company, Valet Plus Parking, which has grown nationally since it began.

They found way to do it better

By Jeff Wallner
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Co-workers collaborate on improved business model

It's not uncommon for co-workers to discuss going into business for themselves and how they might do things differently. While few people have the vision and talent to implement that dream, Jared Frisk and Jeff Neises made it happen, partnering to form Valet Plus Parking Inc., one of the region's fastest-growing private businesses.

VP Parking, which says it has experienced 77 percent sales growth since 2004, including 27 percent growth this year, has built a portfolio handling high-profile events such as the Barclays professional golf tournament, the Barber Motorsports Park, and the U.S. Women's

Open in golf.

It started when Frisk and Neises, both Northern Kentucky University graduates, met when they were hired as valet parkers at the Montgomery Inn Boathouse the same week in 1989.

"It's funny how things worked out," Frisk said. "We didn't know each other, but we both had that entrepreneurial spirit."

It wasn't long before the pair was managing the daily parking operation at the Boathouse. While the Montgomery Inn was pleased with their work, it was not satisfied with the parking

company's slow response to claims and poor service.

"We knew things weren't going well," said Frisk, an Edgewood native. "They weren't getting a response from the company. It was (Montgomery Inn vice president) Dean Gregory who said, 'You guys should consider doing this on your own.'"

Frisk and Neises agreed they could do better. They formed VP Parking in 1993, and eventually they acquired the parking contract at the Boathouse from their

See **PARKING**, Page **B3**

Parking: Co-workers create their own business

From Page **B1**

previous employer. Today, VP Parking keeps about 25 part-time workers on staff locally and uses another 10-15 contractors throughout the year to help manage jobs outside of the city.

"They've done a wonderful job for us," Gregory said. "Those first and last impressions are so important for our customers. They provide great customer service. They're such an important part of our company."

VP Parking has two divisions: valet and parking. That means they can handle a private party with 50 attendees or a major event with thousands of spectators. But they do more than park cars. VP Parking develops parking plans and designs traffic patterns to move thousands of cars in and out of parking areas that can range from farm fields to shopping malls. They consult with local police and transportation companies, provide lot preparation, ac-

curate car counts, and event summary reports. VP Parking also provides signage, tickets, pylons and other parking-related equipment.

"Some of our events are at brand-new venues," said Neises, a native of Cold Spring. "At times we are developing parking plans from scratch. We provide intense attention to detail with everything we do."

While about 70 percent of VP Parking's clients are national, they now are pursu-

ing more events and customers in the Greater Cincinnati area, hoping to gain a 50-50 split between out-of-market jobs and local work.

"Most of our events were major golf events, which took us out of the Cincinnati area," said Frisk, who recently completed his law degree at Salmon P. Chase College of Law. "But we're looking closer at home. If there's a market for this nationally, it would make sense there's a market for it

here."

If they are successful, Neises said, VP Parking will look to add jobs locally. The good news so far: The recession has had minimal impact on their business.

"The state of the economy impacts everyone," Neises said. "We see it on the valet side of the business. Client-wise we've grown. We've seen the impact in volume. It's caused us to look at how we can provide quality service at lower costs."