

AND Deb Norton-Riha

Question: If you could give one tip to a rookie business owner, what would it be?

Answer: Invest in great people with more knowledge, ideas, and experience. You will learn so much from them.



Deb Norton-Riha

vice president of sales
and marketing

Priority Services Inc.

1000 N. Villa Ave in Villa Park, Ill.
60181

Founders: William and Barbara
Norton (my parents)

Year business started: 1973

Web address: www.PriorityServices.com
and www.PSI-Logistics.com

Q: Describe your business. What do you do?

A: Priority Services Inc. is an asset based family owned and operated trucking company. We provide truck load, less-than-truckload, and pool distribution services to manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers throughout the country.

Q: How did the business start?

A: My grandpa owned a small Chicago based courier service and my dad worked as a driver through college. That is how he met my mom. They both had a dream of owning their own business and trucking was what they knew best. Fast forward 40 years, and my parents are retired in Florida and the second generation (my husband and I) have taken over management of the operation.

Q: What has been the most difficult obstacle in running a small business?

A: This economy has been very difficult. Every business is trying to save every penny, including us! Trucking in general has huge overhead expenses and is especially affected by the price of oil. For example, our fuel expenses are outrageous, but we have to have it to move the trucks. The larger trucking companies are volume driven,

so they make less of a margin per transaction, but process a lot more freight than a small business. It's a challenge to stay competitive while pursuing growth on smaller margins.

Q: What do you enjoy most about operating your business?

A: Definitely the people. We have the best group of people at my company. My team is so dedicated to the company's growth and success, and we have so much fun working toward our goals.

Q: Is this what you pictured yourself doing when you were young? When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A: Yes. Since I was a little girl, I took every opportunity to join my dad in a truck, or on sales calls, etc. I loved working with my dad and emulated him in every way. On another note, I have known most of my co-workers, their families, and many of our customers since I was young and have always cared very much about their continued success.

Q: What keeps you up at night?

A: Children!

