

TSS: A Sweeping Success in the Garden State

College student Kenny Battiato could not have known that his small business of cleaning parking lots for extra money would someday develop into what is today a leader in the facilities management operations field, with over 400 clients and gross revenues between \$15 and \$25 million.

Headquartered in Union, TSS (Townley Square Sweeping) was established in 1986 using the old-fashioned approach of knocking on doors and focusing entirely on customer service to build professional relationships. “[Ken] was in college and cleaning parking lots, such as 7-Eleven stores, to make money,” TSS President James Connelly explains. “Another store would see him doing it and ask for the same service.” Battiato was soon able to purchase the proper equipment and hire employees, allowing TSS to gradually become one of the largest sweeping companies in the Garden State.

And Battiato’s company kept expanding. “He had the opportunity to meet with building owners and managers, and they asked for

additional services,” Connelly explains. “[These included] perimeter cleaning; emptying pails; sweeping sidewalks; pressure washing, etc.” About seven years ago, Battiato purchased a growing roll-off container business, in which products are sold to high-end contractors and rental properties. “This is a very good business for us – and it’s growing,” Connelly adds.

Today, TSS is an 82-employee company, handling facility management and services; construction services; waste solutions; and both interior and exterior residential services for the entire northeast region - with 80 percent of its business in the Garden State. Connelly joined the company in 2004 to help Battiato manage the growth. “The infrastructure needed work, from payroll to technology,” Connelly says. “I was in the financial industry for 20 years, and very tech-driven...I brought that technology from the financial world to TSS.”

With a group of software experts from Poland, Connelly soon employed his techni-

cal skills to transform the way in which the company’s inspection reports were prepared and processed. “Old-fashioned inspection reports were checkboxes on paper and a few photos. . . it would take someone a day to do a few inspections and another day to prepare the report,” he explains. “Now, we have a program on a wireless tablet. . . an inspector can do three to five inspections a day, and it immediately generates a PDF file that is sent to the contact via e-mail.”

Connelly says this technology has allowed the company to grow and market the product, because it can now efficiently handle greater client volume. The company is currently performing inspections for Stop & Shop, Kohl’s, Coldwell Bankers, Gale Company and Levin Management, along with hundreds of smaller clients. “On the commercial side, this is a competitive industry. We have to do the job and do it right, or we are not going to get the next phone call,” Connelly insists.

Despite the company’s expansion, its original sweeping division remains a key area of business for TSS. Its busiest area lies within the container business, and its residential handyman service is growing rapidly. “We’re concentrating in a circle of Westfield, Chatham, Livingston, Short Hills, Summit and Morris Township,” Connelly explains. “It’s anything for the home – driveway paving, roofs, screen replacement, building shelves – and we’re booked as far as we can see.”

TSS now has a five-acre headquarters with 62 vehicles, countless supplies and three full-time mechanics on staff. Connelly says, “You really have to be organized to provide that level of service, which is key – you can’t provide the service without having the infrastructure and employees.”



James Connelly (left), president, and Kenny Battiato, CEO and founder, of TSS.