

It's pretty daunting to envision the work and sacrifice that it takes to start a business and keep it successful. So many people think about it, dream about or talk about doing it but few take the risk of launching their own business.

Thanks to the hardy few there are goods and services available to those of us looking to buy cars, invest for our retirement, enjoy a meal out of the home or find a unique gift item. Some entrepreneurs discovered they needed to strike out on their own after having worked a number of years for someone else. A few entrepreneurs figured it out earlier in their career but Geoff Ness of Nessit, an I.T. services firm in Somersworth, knew it was his calling about the same time he got his driver's license.

While Geoff is only 27 years old his business has been active for 11 years. During the summer between his freshman and sophomore year in high school he got his first job working for an I.T. firm. The following summer he was struggling to find something similar and decided, "What the heck, I'll start my own firm." That summer he began scouting various computer-related jobs from family friends and colleagues of his father who owns Ness Dental, also located in Somersworth.

As a student at Keene State College, Geoff landed an I.T. internship at Wentworth Douglas Hospital. According to Geoff, his boss, Fred Newton, "was the smartest guy I ever met who inspired me to learn more." His boss became his mentor and the two remain in contact today.

After college Geoff spent three years working at Liberty Mutual all the while continuing his work on his own business after regular work hours. His work weeks stretched out to 70 plus hours but Geoff knew he wanted to make the sacrifice before he had a family that would need his time and attention.

In 2012 Nessit became his fulltime endeavor with a smartly appointed office located along the Route 108 "Medical Mile." Two years later he hired his first employee and by the end of this month Nessit will have a staff of four.

One of the reasons the business has continued to grow and succeed is Geoff's ability to expand his services and his willingness to take on new challenges. What began as a computer repair service evolved into what Geoff refers to as a "technology firm." The guy who began by offering to fix computer problems began offering web design services, web hosting and eventually added network design services for new construction. As Geoff puts it, "We handle all things I.T."

Nessit credits the strong personal relationships with their customers for their success. The company works with some of the same customers that handed over their computer issues to Geoff when he was a high school student. Like most successful service businesses the professionals at Nessit understand that business isn't transactional. "People need to know they can rely on you," stated Ness. That commitment has been there from the very beginning when Geoff managed to provide that personal service even while studying abroad in Scotland.

Today, as the company plans for their growth, Geoff is learning that finding others with the same vision and drive can be a challenge. "Technical skills can be learned but motivation comes from within and finding that right fit for the company has taken longer than I had expected."

Fortunately, at the age of 27, he has the energy and time to continue to make it happen.