

Startup offers car washes on demand that save water, too

January 31 2017, by Nancy Dahlberg, Miami Herald

Imagine telling your JPMorgan bosses you're leaving a high-finance career to start a car-wash company. "They thought I was crazy," Nathan Bekerman said. "But my years at JPMorgan taught me how to execute and run a business."

He and Tarek El Gammal, who was also working at JPMorgan, as well as Ryan Serkes, "the computer guy," believed there was something lacking in car-washing: consumer convenience. It also disturbed them that car-wash employees were typically being overworked and underpaid. Add to that the frightening figure that a traditional car wash can waste 50 to 100 gallons of water, and you have an industry in dire need of a makeover, they thought.

Their solution: WashMyWhip.

"We believe that everyone deserves to have quality car care right at their fingertips. Why would you take the time to drive to a car wash when you can launch an app and have a trained professional tend to your car whenever and wherever you want? The convenience and satisfaction of our customers is our utmost concern," Bekerman, the CEO, said. "If they're happy, we're happy."

WashMyWhip's "WashPros" have the ability to manage a flexible schedule and earn both salary and commission-based pay. "We feel that these car-wash experts don't deserve the working conditions of other car washes and can find a more pleasant working experience with

WashMyWhip," Bekerman said. A graduate of Bentley University, he worked at JPMorgan for 5 { years before starting WashMyWhip.

Water conservation is key, Bekerman said. Instead of gallons and gallons of water, WashMyWhip uses a waterless car wash service that consists of lubricants that raise the dirt, clay that breaks it down, and wax that makes sure a car stays shiny and protected.

The service was launched last summer, and so far, the company has cleaned more than 5,000 cars without wasting 250,000 to 500,000 gallons of water. A reservation can be made sun-up to sundown daily via the free app (iOS or Android). An outside cleaning is \$20, inside and out is \$30, and full detailing is \$120.

But where WashMyWhip sees real opportunity is with corporate clients that manage fleets of cars, and it has developed a web application that can manage their inventory for car care, which is tailored to them. WashMyWhip has already secured a partnership with Xchange Leasing, an Uber company, as its preferred car-cleaning provider, and has begun expanding into other major cities such as Atlanta, Philadelphia and New York.

"Our goal is to eventually expand to other car services, such as battery and tire changes, wiper blade replacements and windshield replacements," Bekerman said.

Where did the name "WashMyWhip" come from? In the early days of automobiles, a car's steering wheel was called a whip, alluding to horse and buggy days, the team said. Who knew?

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Company name: WashMyWhip

Headquarters: Miami

Concept: WashMyWhip is an on-demand, eco-friendly car-care service. Through the WashMyWhip app, you can drop a pin on your car's location and select a service, and a WashPro will tend to your vehicle at a time of your choosing.

Launched: April 2016

Website: www.washmywhip.com/cities/miami

Management team: CEO: Nathan Bekerman; COO: Tarek El Gammal; CTO: Ryan Serkes.

Number of employees: 40

Financing: More than \$225,000 in funding to date

Recent milestones reached: Acquired Xchange Leasing (an Uber company) as a partner; expanded into Philadelphia and Atlanta with wmwFleets (the fleet servicing arm of WashMyWhip); was a finalist in the Global Mobile Challenge for the U.S. and Canada.

Biggest startup challenge: Educating the consumer about its waterless car-cleaning service.

Next step: Expand into other markets while continuing to partner with local businesses in South Florida to grow its foothold.

Strategy for next step: WashMyWhip now offers a comprehensive solution for businesses that own and operate large fleets. The startup plans to continue partnering with car dealerships and car-rental agencies to grow wmwFleets to a national level and leverage that to expand the

WashMyWhip app.

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