

ENTREPRENEUR

## Concrete plans

U.S. Pavement Services Inc.



### Pavement company builds foundation for growth through marketing strategy

BY SEAN MCFADDEN  
JOURNAL STAFF

Several years ago, after being in business for two decades, **Michael Musto** made a move that has provided a concrete marketing strategy for his paving and sealcoating company, **U.S. Pavement Services Inc.**

Woburn-based U.S. Pavement, the parent company to **U.S. Sealcoat** and **U.S. Paving**, has built a solid niche in asphalt-maintenance services while focusing largely on New England customers. But recently it's uncovered a way to broaden its scope on a national level.

It began when Musto acquired the phone number 1-800-PAVEMENT from a marketing firm in 2005. He soon learned the number was an easy way for prospective customers to identify his business.

Musto invested close to \$500,000 to acquire the phone number and its associated Web addresses and launch a major re-branding effort that heavily promoted the number on the company's trucks and at project sites.

"I saw how great it was," says Musto, 47, of the strategy. "People drive by, they don't have to write down the number; they'll remember it, even a month later."

### FAST FACTS

**Michael Musto** founded U.S. Sealcoat Inc. in 1985. The company, which does business as U.S. Sealcoat and U.S. Paving, changed its corporate name to U.S. Pavement Services Inc. earlier this year.

**The company provides** paving, sealcoating, crackfilling, line striping, asphalt and concrete services to commercial and residential clients.

**It maintains offices** in Woburn, Mass., and Hartford, Conn.

Michael Musto, president, and nephew Andrew Musto, executive vice president of U.S. Pavement Services Inc., have strategized for the national expansion of their business.

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The company subsequently acquired other telephone numbers from communications companies and other contractors — 1-800-SEALCOAT, 1-800-BLACKTOP, 1-888-PAVEMENT and 1-800-SWEEPING. Two years ago, it began licensing those numbers to other pavement contractors nationally to help them market and grow their own businesses locally. For example, a sealcoating company in Fort Myers licensed 1-800-SEALCOAT for the 239

area code for \$250 per month. Anyone who calls the number from that area code will reach that contractor directly.

U.S. Pavement has further leveraged those relationships by subcontracting work for national projects. The end result, says Musto, is that his company can provide large commercial and chain-store clients with a single source for paving and sealcoating services for their properties at sites nationally.

The network consists of more than 115 contractors doing work in 36 states.

"I see this company as a 23-year-old startup, because of what's happened with the numbers," says Musto. "The ultimate goal is to service national accounts wherever they have work."

Meanwhile, U.S. Pavement's revenue grew from nearly \$11 million in 2004 to \$18 million in 2007, with projections this year of \$20 million. About 20 percent to 22 percent of the company's revenue comes from its national accounts. Those customers are largely serviced by the company's network of certified subcontractors, with U.S. Pavement serving as project manager.

**Rick Adkison**, division manager with **Carolina Site Concepts Inc.** of Charlotte, N.C., and a member of U.S. Pavement's contractor network, says, "They've helped me out tremendously, as far as marketing strategies. They've given me at least a half a million dollars worth of work."

Musto has further expanded upon his phone number-marketing strategy with the acquisition of 1-800-DRIVE-WAY, which is being promoted in the residential market.

Client **Randy Hausmann**, a facilities management executive at **CVS Caremark Corp.**, says, "They're in an industry where there's lot of providers. But the quality of their work and their thorough review of what they do sets them apart."

Now, a second generation is paving the company's way for continued growth: Musto's nephew, **Andrew Musto**, who like his uncle is a **Babson College** graduate, serves as executive vice president. The younger Musto has helped revamp the company's systems and shore up national accounts.

As the business grows, delegating responsibilities to his staff of 120 employees is a priority, said Michael Musto.

"I think the challenge is going to be organizing the company, so that I can focus on these national accounts and concentrate on this network (of contractors)," he said. "But we don't want to lose focus on the work that's being done here in New England, which is our bread and butter."

**SEAN MCFADDEN** can be reached at [smcfadden@bizjournals.com](mailto:smcfadden@bizjournals.com).