

Self-Storage News

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GOING TO BAT IN 2019 PREDICTIONS FOR SELF STORAGE

How Independents Survive and Thrive
in the *World Series* of Self Storage

HOW MANAGERS BECOME SUPERSTARS



**ASK ALL THE RIGHT QUESTIONS:
HOW TO KNOW IF THIRD-PARTY
MANAGEMENT IS THE RIGHT PLAY**

Thriving in the Aftermath of Hurricane Harvey and Looking to the Future

by Jennifer Jones

Marlon and Tiffany Quibodeaux, although new to the industry, are accustomed to the responsibility of being managers and bring their experience and wisdom with them. “We have only been in the storage industry for one year. Before that, we spent 23 years as owners/managers in the gymnastics and cheerleading industry and 10 years as owners/managers of a family entertainment park called Adventure Kingdom in Lumberton. We had an 18-hole mini golf course, bumper cars, swan paddle boats and water wars designed by the people who built the first Six Flags.”

Many people were devastatingly struck by Hurricane Harvey, losing homes, businesses and even loved ones. When Harvey hit, the Quibodeaux’s livelihood washed away within a few days. However, their story is an inspirational example of determined

“After the huge financial loss and no help from our insurance company or governmental agency, we decided to start the next chapter in our life.” The Quibodeauxs rose from the ashes and began again, this time with a different direction in mind—the storage industry.

resilience and hopeful rebirth.

“Our unkind friend, Hurricane Harvey, dropped 54 inches of rain on our sweet family entertainment park along with water coming from dams north of us. We had nine feet of flood water on the front of our park and 14 feet in the rear. Funny thing is that we found out bumper cars really float! After the huge financial loss and no help from our insurance company or governmental agency, we decided to start the next chapter in our life.” The Quibodeauxs rose from the ashes and began again, this time with a different direction in mind—the storage industry.

“After losing everything we had worked to achieve for more than 32

years because of an uncontrollable disaster, we’ve learned you just can’t sweat the small or large stuff. It’s just material possessions. The perfect order to life is God, family, work, others and yourself.”

Now in the self-storage business, the Quibodeauxs are working hard and looking to the future. “We expect continued growth through the next 20-30 years. We’ll have to see after that point, but people continue to over-spend and buy things they truly do not use or need, and that means they need storage space.”

Currently, they recognize technology as the up-and-comer in many facilities, but realize there are always the few who are stuck in old habits. “Although we have not been managing for long in this industry, we know there are still folks out there using a notebook and pen versus stepping into the 21st century with all the latest and greatest this industry has to offer.”

When it comes to employees, their motto is all about positive reinforcement. “Having to manage lots of people, we understand the number one thing is to praise your employees! Praise is above all other incentives because other incentives are just temporary fixes.”

Shifting their employees’ perspective is also a priority in their facility. “We train employees to look at the business through the eyes of an owner. An owner will generally go above and beyond the call of duty, and that’s how we want our employees to see situations.



Getting to know...

MARLON AND TIFFANY QUIBODEAUX Owner-Managers, Got Storage, Livingston, Texas

We love to take scenic drives, find great restaurants and spend time with family and friends. Last year’s resolution was to become “great givers.” Givers of our time, efforts and finances. We want to expand on that goal this year. Also, we would like to create an event and bring together local churches to have a night light walk on Easter weekend, show the unity among the churches and Christians, and share Christ as a “Light to the World.”

The overall goal, however, is to make a profit, but in a fun and safe atmosphere. Maybe we're old fashioned, but for us, the customers always come first, and we still believe the customer is always right, even if you think they're wrong."

For communication within the business, they say their method is akin to marriage. "We believe in total clear and honest communication (the good, the bad and the ugly). It's like a marriage; the only way to have a great one is to communicate often and daily. We hold nothing back."

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For the future of the industry, the Quibodeauxs have seen a few signs of how technology keeps its foothold and have seen a few ideas pop up. "We've been reading about lots of crazy trends. One is similar to an Airbnb, by renting residential garages out as a storage unit through a website. Another uses robots in hallways showing units and taking people through the lease, payment and lock/key phase. This robot takes the place of a staff member. Sure, they show up to work on time, don't complain and have no vacation/sick pay, and even big-box retailers are replacing checkout cashiers with self-checkouts. Before long, will managers, staff and even owners really be needed? Only time will tell, but technology's growth rate in business has been tremendous so far." ■

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