

Steven Bankler, CPA

Client Spotlight: American Dream Vacations

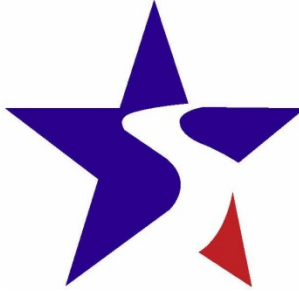
Steve Franklin learned how to spot a great business opportunity at an early age. As a child growing up in Oklahoma City, his father would take him and his brother to the local farmers market to purchase the freshest produce, repackage it, and sell it door-to-door throughout the neighborhood.

“I learned early on how to make money for myself,” he remembers. At the time, Steve was 7 years old. By the time he was 19, he had delivered newspapers, hauled hay and delivered mattresses—and was ready to “up his game” as a salesman.

“I marched into the local Sears store wearing my only suit and asked for a sales position,” he recalls. Eight years and numerous promotions and relocations later, he was a seasoned manager for the company. During this time, Steve moved to Corpus Christi and fell in love with Texas, where the pull of business ownership prompted him to trade his suit for shorts. He opened a boat business first in Corpus Christi, then in Rockport. However, Hurricane Allen and the 1980s oil bust stirred up insurmountable rough waters. Steve and his family moved to California but found themselves longing to return to Texas.

“That’s when I entered the RV business, working for a friend in Rockport,” Steve says. For eight years, he helped his friend grow his RV business into a five store chain. All the while, an idea was brewing that would eventually hatch American Dream Vacations.

“I noticed that folks would purchase RVs and use them a lot during the first year. The second



year, they’d travel less. After that, the RV would collect dust,” he observed. What if they could make income off of their little-used RVs, he wondered? In 1996, Steve leased three acres of land in Boerne with just one travel trailer in tow. He scoured classified ads for people selling RVs and introduced the option of rental income instead. Two years later, he bought the land. Soon he had an inventory of 35 RVs and a thriving business.

Today, American Dream Vacations is considered one of America’s largest, most established RV rental companies, with 11 stores in six states and another set to open in Utah. The business is a family affair, with Steve’s two sons Tony and Trenton helping to run the flagship store.

When Steve’s CPA retired several years ago, Steve was referred to Steven Bankler for help with his fast-growing business. “He [Steven] is really hands-on, which I love. When he sees an opportunity, he will pick up the phone and call me. He’s constantly watching out for us.”

Steven has also been able to help in a surprising way: by strengthening the company’s sales pitch to potential clients.

“I knew that renting out an RV was a great way to offset tax liabilities but I wasn’t always able to articulate that benefit,” he says. “Now I’m able to send potential clients to Steven to help explain the tax benefits. He’s intrigued by the business and is always happy to help.”

To learn more about American Dream Vacations, visit www.americandreamvacations.net or call (830) 981-8835.

