

Client Spotlight: RS Custom Design

Brampton entrepreneur Ravi's journey to launching his dream business



Rajeshwar Sharma (Ravi) is the owner of RS Custom Design, a successful upholstery shop with expansion plans and a bright future in sight.

But the road to get here wasn't always easy. Twelve years ago, Ravi arrived in Canada from Guyana with no money in his pocket. He found a job in a woodturning shop, and he also did upholstery part-time in his parents' garage. When circumstances began to change at his job, he decided it was time to focus his efforts on building his own business.

Things began slowly. Ravi borrowed \$40 from his uncle to get things up and running. He used that money to buy his first tool, and put gas in his van so he could go searching for business. He visited several banquet halls to see if they needed their chairs reupholstered, but initially, they all said no. But Ravi kept going, and towards the end of that day, someone from the first banquet hall he had visited called requesting a quote on 60 chairs. Jumping at the opportunity, he quickly picked up fabric, went to the banquet hall and quoted on the job.

That day, Ravi received his first big order. He was given a \$15,000 order with a \$5,000 deposit on the spot. Since then, he has received countless customer referrals for his great work.

Like every business owner, Ravi has hit some bumps along the road; there was a time he used all of his savings to purchase the fabric needed for a job and he didn't get paid for that job.

Through it all, the Brampton Entrepreneur Centre (BEC) was there to guide and support him and his dreams. He had many questions about legalities and he attended some of the marketing sessions

offered. “The BEC was instrumental in getting my business up and running,” says Ravi. “They helped me in so many ways and they continue to be there for me whenever I need them. They have had the answers all along the way.”

In December 2018, Ravi secured a location and opened up his first shop outside of his parents’ garage. With a staff of four employees, in the last six months, he has more than doubled his sales from 2018. Despite the fact that everything hasn’t always gone according to plan, “the key is to keep going – don’t give up. Things don’t always go according to plan, but that’s how we learn.”

Would he have done anything differently? “I would have started a long time ago. I would have put my fear aside and taken the risk,” he says. “Don’t be afraid – if you don’t take the chance, you’ll never know what you’re missing out on.”

Ravi’s future is bright. He plans to expand his shop, focus more on marketing, and build a showroom where clients can see his finished products. “I know where I want to be, and I am going to keep pushing forward with it,” says Ravi. With his ambitious outlook and his successful track record as evidence, he most certainly will.