

## **2018 Wisconsin Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award Application Questions - Charles Rose**

### **What inspired you to start your business?**

During the summer between my freshman and sophomore year in high school, I found an awesome deal on a starter sealcoat unit in Racine, Wisconsin to start sealcoating smaller asphalt driveways as a hobby. I was able to purchase the sealcoat unit using money from my job at the time. To start, I was just planning on using the sealcoat unit to just do friends and family driveways, as I had a full time job working for another asphalt maintenance company making pretty good money. But, after sealcoating a few driveways on my own, I made the decision to go for it and start my own asphalt maintenance company that specializes in sealcoating, crack sealing, line striping, and asphalt patching.

I knew that I had a huge hill to climb to make this company successful for the upcoming summer. I figured that if I wanted to become successful, I would have to get new equipment that could handle the volume of work that I planned on doing in the summer. I had to convince my parents that I had what it took to make this company succeed. Without my parents on board, there was no way that I would have been able to afford the equipment I needed. With my parents on board, I went to the National Paving Expo in Nashville and was able to purchase the necessary equipment to help me succeed with the plans I had for the summer. Once I placed the new equipment in the space I rented, I knew it was all hands on deck to get ready for the summer of 2017 and I had to step up if I was going to make a go of it.

### **Describe your business?**

Action Asphalt Maintenance is an asphalt maintenance service company that specializes in sealcoating, line striping, crack sealing, and asphalt patching. The products that I use are all commercial grade. I offer eco friendly products as well. Action Asphalt Maintenance mission; is to provide asphalt maintenance services that can fit most budgets, while providing both commercial grade and premium products to meet the needs of both commercial and residential customers. By using both coal tar and asphalt emulsion sealers, there are advantages that I have over my competition. We are able to use products that work best for protecting the asphalt, due to pavement surroundings and weather conditions. By providing eco-friendly products, we help protect not only the environment, but also reduce sealer odor, VOC's, and sealer burns.

To transport the sealer, I use a 550 gallon seal-rite unit to provide the type of sealer needed to complete that project. The seal-rite unit also helps distribute sealer with heavy sand loads using a 2 inch diaphragm pump. This unit allows us to do both spray application and make brush application much faster while not having to carry buckets of sealer saving us time.

Once cracks are filled, and the sealant is applied, pavement marking is ready to be done! With our line painter machine being equipped with lasers, it allows me to complete bigger striping jobs faster, and with more accuracy than the chalk line method.

I do some marketing for Action Asphalt Maintenance over social media, but the biggest way we get jobs is through word of mouth, or cold calling customers and asking if they are interested in any of our services. I've also used a door hanger method that has seemed to work, but I've noticed that as long as you leave a yard sign at one of the jobs you did in the area that seems to get the word out pretty well. I've also been able to sponsor at a few charitable events such as Granite Peak Ski Team Casino Night and the 2017 Paige Bootz Memorial Golf Tournament. I've also donated paint to our local race track (State

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Park Speedway) to repaint the center line and sponsored a spot on the Granite Peak ski race bibs that has our logo on all the race bibs.

### **Tell us about yourself and how you make your business succeed?**

Becoming an entrepreneur had allowed me to put my motivation into the fast lane. Everyday I'm always thinking about how I can push myself to make my company grow to new levels to complete bigger challenges. Making a successful company is one thing, but being able to look back and see the transformation of each project, how it enhances the customers businesses and the community, gives me the drive to keep pushing to grow my business.

One thing that I think is important and drives me to succeed, is to give back and to support local events and organizations throughout our community. Action Asphalt Maintenance has sponsored different things, such as the Paige Bootz Memorial golf tournament, Granite Peak Casio Night, Granite Peak Ski Bibs, Wausau EGL Year Book and also repainting the center stripe at our local race track.

Since we offer eco-friendly products, it has enabled me to provide a safer asphalt surface for kids to play on with not having to worry about sealer burns and sealer odors/fumes. In today's society, things are always changing and as things change you need to be able to adapt to them. Some changes might be good and others may not be good. Being able to be a part of different industry social media groups has allowed me to see what other asphalt maintenance companies are doing to adapt to different changes happening in the industry, that can help us provide better products/services to our customers than my competition.

When working on projects you never know what might happen. A fitting broke on our sealer supply hose and sealer sprayed all over a customer's garage door. We had to work fast to clean up our mess before the sealer dried to the garage door. We used water to rise the sealer off the door and then used cleaning chemicals to get the rest that dried to the door. I was able to problem solve and figure out how I could clean up the mess so that it wasn't like it ever happened. I've noticed that in sealcoating, you can never say that "you have seen it all", meaning that at any moment, something could happen that you would never expect. The biggest thing that I have learned to do is to just stay calm and relaxed if something bad happens on a project. Challenges we have to adapt to are dealing with the weather, humidity, moisture, and sunlight, all factors to sealer dry time. The challenge is making sure the sealer dries before any precipitation washes the sealer away.

One achievement that I was proud of last year was being able to apply sealer on a parking lot overnight and being able to have the lot re-opened with stripes in the morning. The restaurant wanted me to work around their hours. I had to problem solve and come up with a way to perform maintenance from 2am to 11am. We used a fast-dry additive and help from the sun in the morning. I was able to start striping pavement marking by 10am and had the parking lot open right at 11am using fast dry paint. I believe with dedication and motivation anything is possible!

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### What are your future goals and vision for your business?

My vision for Action Asphalt Maintenance in the future is to become a one stop shop for any asphalt needs. I believe that I can make this business grow to meet my vision. One goal that I have is to be able to perform asphalt paving. Being able to pave would allow us to install new asphalt in both driveway and parking lot applications and also allow us to work in both Spring and Fall seasons. This would extend my working season tremendously. Being able to pave would also allow me to open up into new markets of asphalt installation. From there Action Asphalt Maintenance can put in place maintenance plans for our customers to get the greatest life span out of there asphalt pavement.

Updating and added new equipment to our fleet is another very important goal that I have. By having new equipment, it allows me to have less downtime and more work time, to use that equipment out in the field to expand my business. Especially growing into bigger commercial projects. Having enough equipment on site to provide a quality job is also important.

Bigger projects require different challenges that need to be dealt with, such as sealer transportation. Asphalt sealer is not light. One gallon of sealer can weight up to 12 pounds with the sand added. Being able to transport that sealer from the plant, to the bulk/storage tank, then to the project all requires the right kind of equipment to make the process go smoothly. Being able to afford the necessary equipment to make my vision a reality is definitely a must, in terms of success. Being successful is one thing, but being able to see your personal skills grow and helping others is what makes it all worth it to me. Having more equipment will allow Action Asphalt Maintenance to carry a wider variety of products across all services. More products means being able to provide a wider variety of Action Asphalt Maintenance services to match the customer's specific pavement needs.

Last summer I had two part time employees help me take on commercial projects. In the future as I grow I look forward to creating both part-time jobs for students in the summer as well as full time seasonal jobs. Creating jobs in Northern Wisconsin is great for our area and will be crucial to my future growth. Action Asphalt will always support North-Central Wisconsin with a quality product, charitable giving to the community, and provide job opportunities for the area.