

I-Go Van and Storage grows alongside increased industry demand for movers

by Mitchell Warren

Since its inception in 1898, I-Go Van and Storage Co. of Omaha has been moving persons, businesses and industries across the state, country and beyond. After joining United Van lines in 1960 — a network of more than 500 moving agencies nationwide with more overseas — the company kept busy. This year, however, it is just a bit busier.

Brian Nogg, CFO and treasurer of the company, says business ramped up this summer compared to years past, due largely to an increased volume of “household goods” relocation jobs, an experienced workforce within the company, and a commitment to forward progress and technology applications.

“Our goal is for whenever a residential customer or corporation has any transportation needs, we want them to call us first,” Nogg said. “We want to provide a solution.”

A lack of moving jobs across the industry during the recession created a smaller workforce, Nogg said, and now that people and businesses are moving again there simply aren’t enough movers. In years past, he would have recommended three to four weeks’ notice from a client to a moving company before performing a move during the summer months. Now, he’s recommending anywhere from six to eight weeks’ notice.

Nogg joins his brother, Jeff Nogg, and father, Steve Nogg, at I-Go Van and Storage Co. Steve Nogg is the CEO and president of the company, and the business has been in the family for many years.

“We’re the third generation of the company,” Brian Nogg said. “It’s definitely a great way to run a business.”

Jeff Nogg, vice president of sales and business development, thinks his family’s company stands out in part because of a workforce that has long tenure and little turnover — something not commonly seen in the moving and storage business. Workers stay with the company, he said, and there’s room for personal advancement. If a packer wants to get his CDL, he may be able to become a driver, Jeff Nogg said, giving just one common example of an upward move.

“The thing we like to get across is we really like people in the public to know that all movers are not the same,” Jeff Nogg said. “There’s definitely a difference between movers, and a big part of that is the quality of labor.”

I-Go Van and Storage’s full line of services — including household goods relocation services, office and industrial facility relocations, hospitality solution projects, household and commercial goods warehouse storage and distribution and installation services — help to keep workers around, literally, Jeff Nogg said. Workers are needed throughout the year for these varied and specialized services, and employees stick around because of this “consistent” work.

And much like full-time workers that stick with the company, Jeff Nogg said, much of I-Go Van and Storage’s business is either

repeat or referral business.

“Most people (when looking for a mover) ask friends and relatives; we’ve gotten a lot of referral business,” Brian Nogg said.

I-Go Van and Storage

Phone: 402-891-1222

Address: 9820 S. 142nd St., Omaha 68138

Services: residential moving, employee relocation, international moving, office and industrial moving, warehouse storage, government and military moving and hospitality solutions

Founded: 1898, joined United Van Lines network in 1960

Website: www.igovanandstorage.com

Brian Nogg joined the company in 2004, coming from Bank of America Securities, while Jeff Nogg joined in 2005 after moving from Atlanta, Ga., where he was working as a health care recruiter. Their varied experiences, Jeff Nogg said, are beneficial to the company.

“When we came into the business, our dad always said it was nice to have young blood come into the company, to bring in
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Brian Nogg, CFO and treasurer, left, and Jeff Nogg, VP of sales and business development ... Jump in number of household goods relocation jobs bringing more business to Omaha-based moving company.



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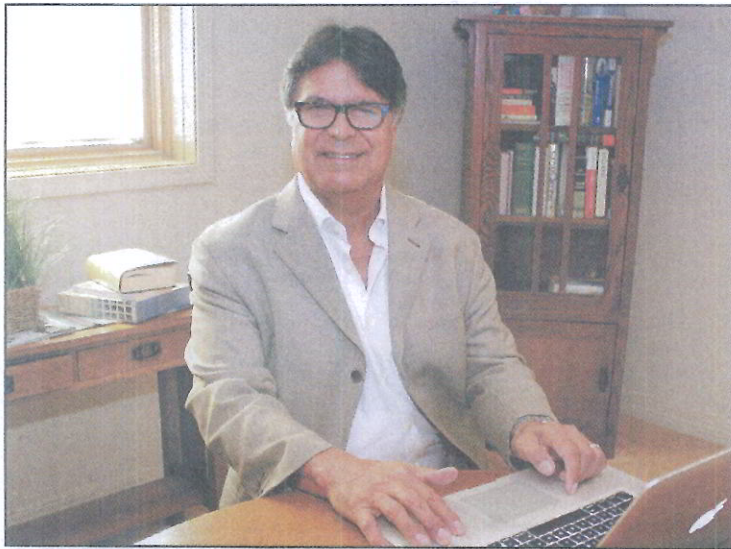
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President and owner Ramón Sánchez ... Focus on educating Midwestern-based clients on reality of workplace environment, community dynamics as means, in part, of insulating employers from complaints such as those related to discrimination based on gender or ethnicity.

Sánchez & Associates expanding with niche in anti-discrimination consulting

by Michelle Leach

Leveraging more than four decades in both the government and private sides of the employment aisle, including anti-discrimination and affirmative action compliance, Ramón Sánchez has carved out a consulting business. Sánchez & Associates with offices in Omaha, Chicago and the far northwest Windy City suburb of Crystal Lake, as well as a following among Midwestern-based clients often with multiple locations throughout the country.

"I've attempted to focus my energies on Midwestern-type clients," the president and owner said. "But I do travel all over to assist them, wherever their location may be."

Sánchez & Associates' assistance spans consultative guidance, and the development of programs and strategies in the areas human resources leadership, by way of firm information, have characterized the Sánchez team as "subject matter experts" in the areas of affirmative action compliance, EEO, anti-discrimination, community and government relations, and diversity and inclusion.

Its site contends: "Program strategies and solutions allow employers to accomplish diversity objectives in one-fifth the time."

"My objective, in terms of how I operate my business, is to promote employment equity and, equally important, is preserving management discretion," Sánchez said.

By that, he indicated employers can use the information gleaned from the partnership with his team in the way they'd best like to use, while straddling both the worlds of government compliance and private industry needs.

"Since employers are under the gun, I put myself in the middle and work with both the government entity and the private industry entity to arrive at something that works for both of them," Sánchez said.

And the graduate of Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management seems equally

comfortable in both worlds; Sánchez started off in government in the early 1970s — working his way up from an "investigator" position with the U.S. Department of Labor to the District Director level for the Phoenix District.

"I felt at that time that I was informed enough to share ... information with a lot more employers on my own in this field, and I thought about making the leap after leaving the government," he said, noting this was 1981.

Instead, fate intervened.

"I was approached by Motorola to head their program in Chicago," he said. "I didn't have that private industry experience at the time."

"It was probably the best thing I've done in my career. It gave me a strong understanding of both sides of the issue."

Sánchez remained with Motorola as its corporate director of affirmative action-diversity for almost a decade.

In 1990, with private and government experience under his belt, Sánchez pursued what had been a dream deferred for about 10 years and launched his business.

Since then, the firm has evolved to open its Omaha office, as well as a condo office on State Street in Chicago and a satellite location roughly 45 miles north and west of the city in Crystal Lake.

Regardless of where clients may be based, there are themes that Sánchez confronts with employers regularly, namely: the need for education.

How can one address an issue when he or she doesn't realize there is an issue in the first place — or when he or she doesn't understand the dynamics of the broader community or, even, the composition of one's own workforce.

"It's always been an uphill battle to inform people," Sánchez said, noting a multitude of misconceptions.

In this vein, Sánchez noted he makes

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I-Go Van and Storage grows with industry demand

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experiences from other careers," he said. "We both brought a wealth of experience from other businesses into our business and we had a lot to bring to the table."

As one of many movers in the area, Brian and Jeff Nogg see a few things happening industrywide that will affect both movers and consumers alike. New, federal guidelines, like the updated Comprehensive Safety Analysis of 2010, are knocking out "rogue movers," Jeff Nogg said.

"I think the industry is consolidating," he said. "The rogue movers are getting out of the industry because the regulations are too high for them to continue how they do business. Safety is a gigantic issue in our business and the regulations of the federal government have been really strict on the moving business — and that's a good thing. That's what we want."

Looking to the future, Brian and Jeff Nogg wish to continue seeing the growth

they've recently witnessed — the company just added about three drivers. They also want to embrace technology both in the field — imagine drivers and packers keeping schedules via smartphones and other devices — and on the business end to engage in conversation with potential clients.

Brian Nogg uses social media tools such as Facebook and LinkedIn to reach out to the public. Jeff Nogg also uses technology and spends time reaching out to real estate agents, pitching the company's services. Reaching out in such ways creates an opportunity to be "proactive," Jeff Nogg said, and it's all part of moving forward.

"We want to continue to build relationships with the community where our offices are and make sure they know of the different services we provide," he said. "We want to get our name out there to new clients. There are a lot of new companies in the area that are growing. Our job is to find these companies as they grow."