

TODAY'S

LIGHTING

Spring 24 | VOL 31, NO. 17

DISTRIBUTOR

THE DYNAMIC DUO KEEPING FLORIDA LIT

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Driving Lighting Innovation

National
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The Dynamic Duo Keeping Florida Lit



Imagine you're by the ocean in sunny Florida, walking along the docks and seeing a big ship for the first time. You've read about its proven seaworthiness, how its officers and crew are among the most experienced in the business, and that the profit potential is virtually limitless.

So you decide to join the ship's company – not as an ordinary seaman or deckhand, but as captain. It's a pretty bold move for someone without experienced sea legs, but you do offer insights that help navigate the ship toward success. But having a seasoned partner by your side enables you to learn about the ship's inner workings as you go.

This isn't an old sea tale. It's an analogy that directly applies

to Sean Valliere and Miranda Shepherd, co-owners of Lamp Sales Unlimited out of Jacksonville and Orlando, Florida. Just a few years ago, these two business pros took the helm of the company, combining their skills to ensure smooth sailing and organic growth for the future.

Since 1984, family-owned Lamp Sales Unlimited has been a leading source of lamps, ballasts, fixtures, and lighting accessories delivered with knowledgeable, reliable customer service. Its team combines over 160 years of lighting experience to ensure that Florida stays lit.

Miranda has spent the last 23 years of her 37-year career with the company and had been running it as General Manager

since 2016 when, in 2021, the owners decided it was time to retire. The business was in great shape, leaving them in the envious position of being selective on whom to sell to.

Enter Sean, who, along with his wife and her family, were looking for a business to buy. They weren't looking for a fire sale or a company that needed significant investment to be "saved"; they wanted to be involved in a stable success story that offered potential for progressive growth. After visiting the warehouse and doing their due diligence, Sean's family liked what they saw.

With its solid foundation and promising future, Lamp Sales Unlimited appeared to be the perfect match for the family's needs. Except for one thing: they knew nothing about the lighting business.

Sounds shocking? It shouldn't. One of the immutable truths about our industry is that unless you grew up in lighting, you probably didn't envision a career in it (yet here we are, thousands strong). That was Sean, who had spent much of his career in supply chain and logistics and had never paid attention to the lighting industry. How could he helm a leading lighting distributor without experience or knowledge of its operations?

Fortunately, across the negotiating table was Miranda. She agreed to stay on as co-owner to help onboard Sean and immerse him in the day-to-day operations, from the warehouse to the top office. Also, by staying on, Miranda could ensure that the traditions that had made Lamp Sales Unlimited such a huge regional success story would continue.



FEATURE



After the negotiating phase was complete, Sean and his family bought into the company, and he and Miranda have proven to be an unstoppable team built on daily communication, mutual respect, and progressive synergy. They're careful not to step on one another's toes, instead moving gracefully together like Astaire and Rogers, with one's inherent workstyle complimenting the other.

For example, where Miranda likes to act boldly and decisively, Sean will think about the logistics behind every decision, keeping it safe from potential future issues. When Sean needs more clarity on how the industry operates to make informed decisions, Miranda offers seasoned insights and perspectives that have led her team to success.

Building trust with the employees was also a priority with the new ownership. Although one of the purchase stipulations was not to make any significant changes to the company in the first year, Miranda and Sean ensured that the staff got new computers and raises very soon after the purchase. Sean also spends as much time on





the shop floor as possible, continuously learning something new from the crew, who knows the products, trends, and customers best.

Sean also credits his NAILD membership as a driving force to his better understanding of our industry. From the LSI program to the conventions and *The Get a Grip on Lighting Podcast*, he sees the genuine value in joining our association. He understands that while we're all technically "competitors", we can help one another grow by sharing ideas and solving problems together.

With an eye firmly on sustainable growth, Miranda and Sean continue attracting new customers, providing service that ensures their company is always at the top of their minds. One significant value difference is same-day delivery for orders placed before noon, with afternoon orders delivered the following morning. They also ensure that if an item in a larger order is out of stock, they'll give the customer the option to complete the order with a similar product to keep their project moving forward on time.

With this dynamic duo at the helm, the opportunities are as vast as the ocean itself.

So the next time you think of Florida, forget the palm trees swaying in the wind, jet skis racing across the water, and miles and miles of beaches to stretch out on under the blazing sun.

Instead, remember Miranda and Sean from Lamp Sales Unlimited. They're bringing the real heat to the Sunshine State.

