



Great Lakes Auto Rescue

Small Operation Transformed into Vital Towing Business

Like saving a stranded traveler on the side of the road, there are few more rewarding experiences than helping someone in need. For sole proprietary owners Rudy and Sharon Castro, this is just another day on the job. They own Great Lakes Auto Rescue, a West Michigan roadside towing and assistance service. They also own a full-service repair shop, for when a quick fix on the side of the road just won't cut it. "We are hands-on, friendly, and helpful to the customer," co-owner Rudy Castro said, "and we train our drivers to be the same."

The Opportunity to Grow

Great Lakes Auto Rescue was established in 2011. The Castros had nothing but a couple weathered vehicles and many sleepless nights when they began GLAR. The company originally only handled basic roadside assistance: lockouts, tire changes, jumpstarts, etc. Without the muscle that comes from a reliable tow truck, the business' offerings were limited.

"Our reputation grew as just roadside, and word got out to network managers encouraging us to add towing," Rudy said. It became obvious to Rudy and Sharon that becoming a more well-rounded company would require adding a few crucial services that they couldn't fulfill at the time based on the equipment they had. After all, both Castros were working full time jobs in addition to putting in long hours for Great Lakes.

The hard work paid off. The Castros poured their profits back into the business, improving on their previous accomplishments. They hired another pair of hands to cover the phones during the day. They also acquired a second service vehicle to cover multiple runs at once. But two vehicles weren't enough for Great Lakes



- Established in 2011 in Western Michigan
- Started as a basic roadside assistance service including lockouts, tire changes, jumpstarts, with just one truck
- Expanded to include towing, leading to hiring more employees and creating more business for the demand of the West Michigan roads
- Acquired three well-maintained trucks through equipment financing with Beacon Funding
- Were able to expand to other parts of Western Michigan and handle business from a management position



Helping Businesses Grow

Auto Rescue. With greater demand from the surrounding area, Rudy and Sharon knew they had to add even more vehicles to their lineup. Their success helped to spread the word, but more business wasn't a substitute for stability.

Purchasing their first truck was viable at the time. For future vehicles, it made more sense to lease. "We had too much business for the amount of service trucks we had running," Rudy said. They turned to Beacon Funding for help with equipment financing. Beacon helps small businesses like Great Lakes Auto Rescue seize their goals by finding a cost-effective way to acquire necessary assets. In this case, those assets were a tow truck or two.



"The financing of additional trucks helped us maintain our ETA's and our volume."

— MR. CASTRO



"We have grown substantially with the help of Beacon's 4y adding tow trucks, we increased our services and our territory of coverage." — MR. CASTRO

Beacon Funding is no stranger to equipment financing for roadside assistance vehicles, especially for companies leasing a tow truck. "Beacon was the most willing to help our company based on references from our network managers," Rudy said.

Where Are They Now?

The Castros put in long hours and tons of hard work to get where they are today, but Beacon helped them make that final dash.

Today, Great Lakes is seeing busier days than they ever did before. Except now, they can handle the extra work. They have a certified mechanic who runs a full-service garage, a full-time dispatcher to handle daytime calls, and three more drivers manning three well-maintained trucks.

Sharon and Rudy continue to put in the hours and the elbow grease to rescue stranded locals in Michigan communities and to keep their vital business running. With Beacon Funding's help, they've grown into not only a first-rate roadside assistance company, but also a helping hand that can be counted on at any time.

What's next for the Castros? They've said that their hopes are to someday enjoy GLAR from the sidelines rather than from the field. They'd like to keep the service excellence top notch while possibly starting up in other areas of West Michigan. No matter what their future plans, the Castro's know that Beacon will have their back, offering them the same level of service that they bring to drivers in need. Now that's good karma.

About the Success Spotlight Program

Businesses are featured that have experienced growth and prosperity through the years. At some point, they have leased or financed equipment with Beacon Funding, adding to their success and/or enabling them to reach greater accomplishments. To join the Success Spotlight Program, please apply online at: beaconfunding.com/successspotlight/enrollment.aspx



Helping Businesses Grow