

Brake Masters Celebrates 20th Anniversary

On February 14th, while many Americans are thinking about love and Valentines Day , brothers Eric and Shalom Laytin will be remembering another February 14th, the one in 1983, which was the day Eric launched the first Brake Masters Store... his vision of what fast, value priced, quality auto service should be.

In 1980 the two brothers, natives of Israel, decided to immigrate to the United States to earn a share of the “American Dream”. Eric and Shalom, both in their twenties, had spent a short time in New

York and then moved to California. Eric, whose education was in technology, had gone to work as an auto mechanic. Shalom started in door-to-door sales. Shalom’s skills led to work with a company that specialized in condominium conversions. He utilized his friendly disposition and people skills to do sales and marketing.

In 1982, Eric visited a friend in Tucson, Arizona. He liked Tucson and decided to go into business. To bankroll his new venture he purchased a used sports car, rebuilt it, and sold it to finance his first Brake Masters. In the beginning he worked alone. Eric dealt with customers, did the repairs and handled the financial aspects of the business. He worked over twelve hours a day, seven days a week.



Shalom Laytin (left) and Eric Laytin

One of Brake Masters’ new stores in Mesa, AZ



Brake Masters’ first shop opened Feb. 14, 1983



A few months later Shalom joined him. The brothers divided the business responsibilities and formed a very effective management team. Eric's background and skills made him the logical manager of the technical side of the business. Shalom's experience in sales and marketing made it possible for the company to excel in customer service.

From the very beginning, Eric and Shalom embraced a business philosophy that has guided their enterprise to this day—honesty, hard work, fast service and low prices. Eric explains, "Brake Masters is changing the auto maintenance business. We are doing for auto service what fast food did for the convenience dining industry. We provide fast service and high quality products at very reasonable prices."

Brake Masters expanded rapidly and opened its first franchise in 1994. In 1997, the company started a Franchise Area Development Program in Southern California. Under the program, area developers purchase exclusive rights to open franchised stores in a specified area. Since the program started, Brake Masters has established a network of 22 stores in the Greater Los Angeles Area. A second such program in Nebraska and Iowa now has three stores in operation and is continuing to expand in those states. Today, there are close to 80 Brake Masters stores in Arizona, Nebraska, New Mexico, Texas, California, Utah and Nevada.

In the first quarter of 2003, Brake Masters will open five new stores. Two will be in Reno, Nevada, two in the Phoenix Valley and one in Elk Grove, a suburb near Sacramento, California. Over 500 individuals work for Brake Masters. About half the stores are franchised and the balance is company owned.

The brothers say the opportunities here are even greater than they had wished for. Shalom says

"America is the greatest country in the world. If you are willing to work hard and are honest, the opportunities are here. We look forward to celebrating future February fourteenth's with an even larger network of successful shops."

Brake Masters specializes in Lifetime Brakes with free brake inspections for most vehicles. They also provide lifetime warranties on the replacement parts cars need most; water-pumps, starters, alternators, CV boots, U-joints and axles. Other services include Pennzoil oil changes with free tire rotation, radiator, brake and transmission fluid exchanges, belts, hoses, batteries and air conditioning service and replacement.

The company is privately owned by Eric and Shalom Laytin and the corporate headquarters is located in Tucson, Arizona.



Company at a Glance

Brake Masters
6179 E. Broadway Blvd.
Tucson, AZ 85711
Phone: 520-512-0000
Fax: 520-512-1000

Owners: Eric and Shalom Laytin

Management: Richard Fortuno, executive vice president; Don Isaacs, vice president of marketing; David Wyman, director of field operations; James Egon, real-estate director

Parts used: Qualitee International and Raybestos brakes; BCA and National bearings and seals; Monroe shocks and struts; Pennzoil filters, oil and lube products; Wynn flush products

Equipment used: Snap-on and Craftsman tools and diagnostic equipment; Hunter brake lathes; Pro-Cut on-car lates; Wynn cooling-system and transmission flush machines; RTI air-conditioning recycling machines.