From Survival Mode To IT Success:

How Nathan Drager Went From High School Dropout To Building His Own Legacy With Quantum Technologies

Have you ever noticed how some of the most successful people come from some of the most challenging circumstances? Take Nathan Drager, for example. Though his father fostered his early passion for technology, his rocky home life led him to drop out of high school and subsequently struggle for nearly half a decade to find meaningful—or any—work in the industry. So, what did Nathan do? He decided to create his own tech startup that has today grown into the burgeoning technology consulting firm Quantum Technologies, focused on delivering innovative, client-centric IT solutions to organizations throughout Door County.

TECHNOLOGY & TURMOIL

Nathan has always been obsessed with technology. "It started when I was only three or four years old," he begins. "My dad was an engineer, and sometimes he'd bring home leftover computers—or just parts—to work on. A kid like me had no business learning to build DOS shells, but I loved every second of it." His dad encouraged this natural interest, launching Nathan's deep dive into all things tech, from video games to floppy disks. Later, he even turned that passion into a side hustle, burning CDs for classmates and customizing the liners—because attention to detail matters in entrepreneurship.

Unfortunately, technology was Nathan's only escape from a chaotic childhood. "My mom struggled to raise my siblings and I amongst her battle with addiction," Nathan admits. "After my parent's divorce, we moved constantly, and I never felt settled again as a child." With all these different houses and schools, he became a chameleon—always adapting to survive. "It was hard to keep things on an even keel. I ended up dropping out of high school by sophomore year," he says. "I was working at a computer shop, but I was making bad decisions until I just fell away from technology as a career path altogether. Then, when I found out I was going to be a father at 17, I went into survival mode."

This led Nathan to manufacturing, an industry still tied to technology through computer-controlled machines and CNC programming, but it was a dead end. "I hated every second of it," Nathan confesses. Determined to get back into tech, he applied everywhere—mom-and-pop shops, big corporations, even Best Buy—but kept striking out. After five years of trying to break into the industry, Nathan realized he needed to do something different, something bold. "I spoke with my partner, Erin, and I told her, 'Nobody's going to give me a chance—I think I just want to start my own business.' Thankfully, she was fully supportive and saw my passion." Thus, Quantum Technologies was born in 2012.

BUILDING QUANTUM TECHNOLOGIES

When Nathan first started the business, it was him, his knowledge, and his sheer will to break into the industry in a meaningful way. And today, Quantum Technologies has over 30 employees across four locations. Although the company was more focused on computer repair at first, the demand for comprehensive tech solutions in Door County soon became evident. "We quickly started getting all these different avenues of business," Nathan recalls. "From network and server administration to security systems, we were gaining more clientele and bringing on additional talent, which in turn meant we could offer further services."

But just because they *could* rapidly gain clientele didn't mean the accounts they were getting necessarily aligned with their core mission. "What I really like to do is work with business owners like me who understand the risk and the struggle," states Nathan. "And yet this initial onslaught of business had all been residential services. So, although this was very important in our early years to grow the company, what we focus on today is providing technology solutions that help organizations thrive in a constantly changing environment."

Besides tourism and manufacturing—maybe his earlier job experience wasn't in vain after all—one of their largest client segments today is dairy farmers. "Dairy farming is extremely prevalent in Wisconsin and yet many other technology firms seem to shy away from the industry," Nathan explains. "But I love dairy farmers because they're fifth- and sixth-generation entrepreneurs and understand that technology can be a massive asset to invest in for their business. Sure, the hardware needs to withstand potentially being kicked by a cow or run over by a tractor, but that's part of the fun."

Something else that's intrinsically at the heart of Quantum Technologies is giving back to the community. "The world wasn't always kind to me growing up, so wherever we can insert a little extra support with a sponsorship or even our time, we like to do so." As a result, not only do Nathan and his team offer free technology support classes for the community, including helping the elderly stay connected by learning about their iPhones, but they're also involved in countless local initiatives and events. From things like the Sunflower Fest, Shanty Day parades, and Breakfast in the Farm, to ones that hit even closer to home like partnering with the local YMCA to ensure kids from all backgrounds have access to the same opportunities he once wished for.

And this same sense of drive and purpose extends to the family Nathan and Erin have built as well. With a beautiful, blended family including two teenage boys, a 22-year-old daughter, and now his first grandchild, Nathan is more focused than ever on building something lasting. Even Chewy, the beloved office dog, greets everyone with a wagging tail—embodying the warmth, loyalty, and sense of belonging that Quantum Technologies strives to offer to all who interact with the company. "How we show up—for our clients, our team, and our community—matters," Nathan reflects. "I want to build something that not only supports my family today but creates opportunities for them and others long into the future."

Looking ahead, Nathan hopes to continue growing the company beyond its current size, ideally doubling within two years and expanding tenfold within five. But it's not just about numbers—it's about building a company that stands the test of time, one that prioritizes its people, strengthens its community, and adapts to the ever-changing technology landscape. Fortunately, this dedication has not gone unnoticed. In 2019, Nathan was awarded Entrepreneur of the Year by the Door County Economic Development Corporation, followed by the Rural Small Business of the Year award from the SBA Administration in 2020. Plus, for seven years running, Quantum Technologies has been recognized as the Best of Door County in computer repair—a testament to its impact and reliability. As Nathan summarizes: "We're only getting started."

Ultimately, Nathan's journey is one of determination, reinvention, and proving that where you start does not define where you'll end up. From a childhood spent moving from place to place, to doors repeatedly closing in his face, to taking a leap of faith and building something from nothing—every challenge shaped the business owner, husband, father, and now grandfather he is today. Guided by Nathan's unwavering vision, Quantum Technologies is poised to continue giving back to its community and delivering "Tech That Works For You" to businesses across Door County and beyond for years to come. ■

For more information about Quantum Technologies, visit QuantumTechnologies.com.