

# FRISCO *FS* STYLE™

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**FRISCO SQUARE**  
Here We Grow  
Again

**FRISCO FRESH MARKET**  
From the Farm  
to the City

**MARINE DREAMS**  
Local Heroes All  
Around Us



*PICKUP's geographical territory spans the entire Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex, and their marketing strategy lights small fires of interest along the way.*

*Provided by PICKUP.*

**IT MAY BE** a hackneyed stereotype, just like tumbleweed, armadillos, bullet-ridden road signs and 72-ounce steaks, but it is no exaggeration to say that Texas likes its trucks. With one out of every six full-sized pickups sold in the Lone Star State, it seems everyone either owns or knows someone who owns a pickup truck. Of course, on those days when you are unable to locate one of your handy, dandy, pickup-owning friends to help you move a large object from point A to point B, what are you to do?

Single mom Susan Manning recently discovered the answer using PICKUP LLC, a mobile application that placed a fleet of owner-operated pickup trucks right at her fingertips. "I needed to move a huge load of sheetrock from Lowe's to my home. Having recently read an article about PICKUP and knowing I could not wait on a delivery from Lowe's, I decided to try it out. Within a few minutes of speaking with a representative, I had received a photo of both the driver and truck, and within a 30-minute window, the driver had arrived and was waiting outside of Lowe's to help haul my load to my home. Plus, the cost was only \$45. This was one of the easiest and best decisions I have ever made," explains Ms. Manning.

In a city with so many unique businesses and companies, it can be challenging to develop a new idea that is popular and profitable, but PICKUP has done it. Aptly explained as "Uber for the pickup truck," the company describes themselves, saying, "PICKUP gives you a pickup truck in your pocket." The company's main mission is to provide an on-demand pickup truck and driver for customers who need something, whether that is furniture, art work, junk or whatever else fits in a truck bed, hauled from one point to another. The free app sends users the estimated time of arrival for their pickup as well as a "Good Guy Driver," which are mostly off-duty firemen, military personnel and veterans, along with the estimated charge and a photo of themselves and the truck.

This unique, local company was created by owner and Outstanding 2015 Entrepreneur of the Year, Brenda Stoner. PICKUP originated from an idea she had when she could not find someone to move something for her personally. "I was closing one business and

needed to move equipment from one part of town to another. After researching freight costs, inquiring at the Post Office and even speaking with a courier, I had no success in figuring out how to move my items at a reasonable cost. One quote was even \$350," notes Ms. Stoner. "So, like many others in this situation, I reluctantly borrowed a pickup truck from a friend, and as I was driving down Central Expressway,

I noticed all of these pickup trucks on the road driving around me, and the idea just came to me.

## Take a Load Off

BY CAROLYN CAMERON

I realized there was a gap in this market space to move large items on demand less than 100 miles, and it repeats itself over and over, whether you find an item on craigslist that you want to purchase or to haul patio furniture back to Home Depot because it did not work for your space. It was truly born out of a need."

Available and orderable via a mobile device application, directly from a computer (pickupnow.com) or by calling

800.560.2168, PICKUP provides the service within an hour window, typically with a \$45 minimum charge. For longer rides, the price determined is \$1.50 per mile and 80 cents per minute. Customers are quoted an estimated cost before the driver arrives, and their credit cards are not charged until the trip is completed. All Good Guy drivers are background checked and vetted, insured for up to \$20,000 and guaranteed items are well taken care of and transported safely. PICKUP drivers do have a few restrictions. They cannot haul animals or hazardous materials, for example, and they cannot give the customer a ride in their vehicle. Drivers are paid immediately after the successful completion of a trip, which only increases their loyalty and increases satisfaction.

Ms. Stoner and her cofounder, Tony Cornett, founded PICKUP in June of 2014 and spent six months completing research, compliance work, understanding the market, modeling work and fundraising. They put their first truck on the ground in January of 2015 and started driving around trying to figure out the model and determine how to make it successful. Beginning target market-

ing in the Park Cities area within the heart of Dallas/Fort Worth, they discovered a large amount of activity within a relatively small area, which was a perfect fit for PICKUP to understand their customer. Ms. Stoner continues, "There is a really nice niche among the high-end consumers of those that are both upsizing and downsizing. People are always moving things a short distance within the Park Cities area, so it aligned nicely with our mission statement. Through this experience, we learned a great deal and are now beginning marketing in our second market, which is the Frisco area. By design, the process is repeatable."

PICKUP's geographical territory spans the entire Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex, and their marketing strategy lights small fires of interest along the way and creates a nexus of activity. Eventually, PICKUP will spread organically to other areas, branching out to other areas outside of Frisco, including Allen, McKinney and Fairview, along with other surrounding communities. This is a powerful example of something starting small and becoming big! Utilizing a number of techniques and tactics to encourage growth, PICKUP has implemented direct mail, field sales, guerilla marketing, networking and a combination of other ideas to accomplish their goals and spread the word. "We have seen that the Frisco homeowner is our perfect consumer, and this is an ideal market for us. They are tech savvy, smart and very busy, so having the convenience of a guy and a truck on their smart phone is really resonating with this customer," explains Ms. Stoner. "Beyond that, they are very community-oriented and talk to each other. Overall, they are just awesome people. It is a fantastic match to the PICKUP market."

Dozens of Good Guy drivers have been hired to drive for PICKUP, and the requirements to join the company are extremely stringent and rigorous. In fact, only 14 percent of those who apply actually become Good Guy drivers, passing through PICKUP's thorough funnel

for hiring. Applicants who are military veterans, police officers or firefighters seeking secondary incomes are heavily favored as those individuals have already passed thorough criminal and driving background checks in addition to the



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qualifications and skills to possess the job. As the demand for contract workers, such as ride-sharing drivers, is also on the rise, more Americans are turning to contract and freelance work rather than more traditional full-time employment, which is an added benefit for PICKUP. The company hires all kinds of individuals as their drivers, bringing additional jobs to the communities in which it serves. Currently, they have an American Airlines pilot, an employee at Texas Instruments and even Uber drivers with nightly shifts on their payroll.

"Every driver we hire has the flexibility to drive when he or she wants. Overall, our drivers want to make extra money on their own terms, and they are also sometimes asked to load and unload deliveries into a customer's home. As a single mom myself, there are not just a whole lot of individuals that I let into my home, so I want to ensure that my customers know these are really good guys working for PICKUP," notes Ms.



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Stoner. "The process is extremely intensive and extensive, and we only hire the best. That is why we call them the 'Good Guy' drivers. They really are just that."

PICKUP also likes to flex their "good guy muscles" by supporting various charities around town, specifically focusing on military and veterans' causes. "We make it a part of our 'Good Guy' culture, supporting those that we believe in and doing the right thing all the time. It resonates with our drivers as well as our customers, and we try to live by what we believe in," explains Ms. Stoner.

Having just completed their second round of fundraising, PICKUP has now added several esteemed investors to their list, including Ross Perot Jr., the chairman of Hillwood Communities and a billionaire real estate investor and Mike Wetzer, a former partner at Accenture. Although the size of the investment has not been disclosed, Ms. Stoner specifies that it was in the multi-million-dollar range. Now, the team is moving full steam ahead in expansion mode. PICKUP is quickly evolving to create processes to rollout their services throughout Texas and eventually into other states. Because Ms. Stoner has been so intentional about building a small, repeatable process, the plans include creating a larger model and expandable national brand. "These investors are the right kind of money," she explains. "Every time we are at an impasse, the right people and investors show up. It is somewhat crazy, but extraordinary. We believe our job is to channel these resources to improving and providing the best service possible at all times. In this case, we could not have picked better partners."

A key challenge for PICKUP may be the entrance of competitors in this market space, including, possibly, Uber itself. While there are sure to be imminent "copycats" and imitators in the horizon, Ms. Stoner is unconcerned. She says, "There will always be competition in every market. For me, personally, I do not worry about my competition. At PICKUP, my focus is always on my customer, doing it right and ensuring I provide the best service I can to them. Then, we let the market decide. Overall, our job is to kill it at the curb, every single time. Startups are really difficult and require so much effort. Many focus only on how they plan to monetize their efforts. For us, it is about the passion and dedication. We live with much uncertainty, but when you constantly believe in something, it is worth it. Basically, at PICKUP, we do not sleep, but we are so excited and

believe wholeheartedly in this business -- one that gives first responders, veterans, firefighters and policemen a valuable opportunity, and on the other side, we have customers who are absolutely thrilled with what we are doing. So, there is happiness in the entire equation."

Ms. Manning most definitely plans to use PICKUP again in the future. "For someone like me who does not have access to help and transportation like that, it was the best best decision ever. In the past, I have always been on the store's delivery timeline, which has been inconvenient and not nearly as helpful. PICKUP was instant and on my timeline. Someone came up with an awesome idea with this one!"

It is extremely exciting to see all of the new business ideas making their way to Frisco. With so much expansion on the horizon, new and successful companies, like PICKUP, will be popping up to make residents' lives easier and help keep the economy strong. You never know where the next great idea will come from!

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*Carolyn Cameron is an online writer and marketer who fancies coffee, her family, random creative endeavors and finishing a home project in her off time.*