

# Broadway Elite Is a “New” Player in North Jersey

By Tom Mazza

**B**roadway Elite Chauffeured Services Worldwide is a “new” limousine company in the North Jersey market. It was formed when Elite Limousine of East Hanover acquired Broadway Limousine of Nutley and formed a new company with the owners of both companies becoming partners in the new venture.

The former Elite team, Brian and Gary Wecksler, joined Broadway’s Jason Sharenow as working partners in the new company. Another partner, Jim Chickara, helped facilitate the late 2007 acquisition of All Points Car and Limo Service of Union, N.J. The new company projects sales approaching \$4 million for 2008.

## What to Tell the Clients

The idea of sending out a letter to all of the clients, including the All Points accounts, was quickly killed. Brian Wecksler says, “There was no advantage in sending out a letter. We figured all of our clients want service. They want a clean car, on time, with a good chauffeur.” After eight months, the companies are being run separately with separate billing and accounting. Gary Wecksler and Jason Sharenow, who are hands-on operations people, have learned to deal with their entire client base including the All Points accounts. Brian Wecksler says, “It was a big adjustment; the Elite clients were used to dealing with me or my brother and they gave

information for a ride in about three sentences. We definitely got a little push back with new people involved, but we did a great job retaining clients. Now we are giving them the full story on our merger, but after they see how good the service is.”

## New Name

When the merged company opened for business in July 2007, both names—Elite and Broadway—were used depending on the client. Then, unofficially, the name Elite Broadway was used. Finally, with creative guidance and marketing advice from Arthur Messina at Create-A-Card, the new brand was settled upon: Broadway Elite Chauffeured Services Worldwide. Sharenow says, “It flows

better and the reference to ‘Broadway’ was a great way to



L to R: Jason Sharenow, Gary Wecksler, and Brian Wecksler



Integrating employees, software, pricing, and company culture in a short time was a daunting challenge.

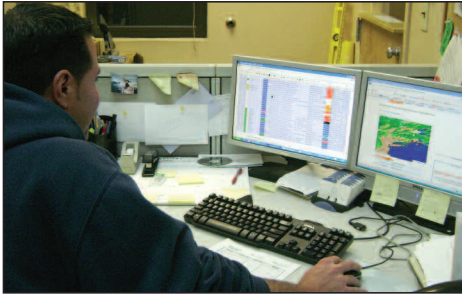
## Giving Staff the 411

The Weckslers and Sharenow met one-on-one with all of their staffs including the chauffeurs. The new company would be based in the Elite facility in East Hanover with the former Broadway office in Nutley retained as a staging area for company vehicles. (The company hopes to relocate into a larger facility this summer.) It was emphasized to staffers that the changes were positive and would allow the company to go after larger accounts. Since Broadway and Elite had worked together as farm-out companies there was familiarity with personnel on both sides.

link up with our prime market—New York City.” With “Elite” being one of the most common names in the industry (15 in the NLA alone), Broadway Elite is a more memorable brand.

## Integrating Software and Back Office

Elite was on the old LimoWare reservation program, while Broadway and the merged company is using the Odyssey reservation program from GT3. Although LimoWare is a program supported by GT3, it was important that the new company got up to speed on Odyssey. Gary Wecksler, lead dispatcher, had the biggest adjustment to make. “I was very comfortable in the LimoWare program. I did not have to think, just react, even when we were extremely busy. Odyssey is a fantastic product but it



Dispatchers work with the Odyssey program from GT3

has forced me to change, and change is difficult." Sharenow believes his partner's biggest adjustment is relying on the electronic transmission of a trip to a chauffeur's PDA rather than a paper ticket. "The paper ticket is almost like a security blanket," says Sharenow. "Gary is one of the best dispatchers I have ever seen but he was used to doing things a certain way."

## Sales Efforts

Brian Wecksler and Jim Chickara are the key salespeople for Broadway Elite. Wecksler is working on the creation of a true "national network," and he believes this will be a hit with the client base. "We have everything in place to sell national service the right way," says Wecksler. "Our office is staffed 24/7. We have developed great relationships with operators across the country. We have the best reservation software program to manage our network. And with a bigger staff, we can dedicate attention to our network."

Wecksler says, "We really hustle for new business. But we also see that soliciting our established clients for more business is a winner. We have a bigger fleet, more staff available as greeters, and just more people available to serve our clients." A special effort is being made to solicit inbound work from companies across the globe. "Every company has some Newark Airport work and we can service that work, quickly, efficiently, and economically," says Wecksler.

## Challenges

"We have been careful to the point of paranoia on being consistent with our clients," says Sharenow. "I have continued to deal directly with as many Broadway clients as possible. We have tried to use the same chauffeurs that our clients are accustomed to. We have tried to build all of our client profiles so we know what they expect from us on every ride." Gary Wecksler says, "Jason and I have worked at getting to know all of the chauffeurs. It is very important that dispatch and the chauffeurs work well together."

## Future Plans

Broadway Elite has big plans and lofty goals for the future. Sharenow says, "We are in the best market in the country. We have talent, energy, and a sincere desire to serve our clients. The sky is the limit!" **LD**



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