



Grafton True Value Grafton ND

Owner: Kerry DeMars

Growing up on a small family farm, Kerry DeMars helped out as a farm hand. Throughout his childhood, he didn't really know what he wanted to do. "I went to school to be a crop duster," says Kerry.

Kerry first dreamt of running his own business when he worked at a lumberyard during his high school years. In 2004, Kerry, purchased his first hardware store located at 532 Hill Avenue, Grafton, ND. His prior work experience at that lumberyard many years ago, led him to plan an expansion on his hardware store to include a full lumberyard. In 2015, Kerry and Grafton True Value moved locations and completed the expansion project.

Kerry admits that working with the ND SBDC and Julie Campbell of Walsh County JDA made it an easier process for him. Both Julie and the ND SBDC worked together to provide a financial strategy. ND

SBDC provided the guidance and direction that he was looking for and made it easier to figure out the financial projections and realistic project results.

Kerry was motivated to take advantage of the collaborative nature of the ND SBDC, and the relationships they could build together with resource partners. It was nice to have everyone involved. Kerry found the ND SBDC services to be very beneficial and would recommend ND SBDC to others looking to ease the process of finding the right business financing options, and assembling a comprehensive and presentable plan for the lender.

When asked what his plans are for the next 5 to 10 years, Kerry's response was, "I want to get to the point where I can retire, or win the lottery and retire." Kerry isn't sure that will happen by the 5 year mark

but hopes it will by year 10.

"The greatest thing about being a business owner is the privilege to work with the public," Kerry says, but there are always drawbacks.

When asked what advice he could share with new entrepreneurs, he replied, "be ready to put in long hours. It is not a typical 8 to 5 job and your nearest vacation may be the next largest town and a movie."

