

# This MBA grad opened a NerdsToGo IT store in Old Town during the pandemic. Now business is booming.



By [Ana Lucía Murillo](#) – Staff Reporter, Washington Business Journal  
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NerdsToGo franchise owner Regis DeVeaux opened his Old Town Alexandria store in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**About the business:** NerdsToGo is a locally owned and operated franchise that provides IT support for small businesses and homes. It has a [brick-and-mortar shop in Old Town Alexandria](#), as well as mobile vans.

**How it started:** Regis DeVeaux and his now-business partner Tadeal Teshager met as students at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business. After they graduated, the two of them got together with DeVeaux's father-in-law, Michael Wilson, who has decades of experience as a financial planner, to brainstorm franchise opportunities in the D.C. area.

DeVeaux, who also co-founded consulting and investment firm GroveGate Capital with Teshager, had worked for AT&T in sales and as a store manager, so venturing into another tech franchise seemed a natural fit. DeVeaux said customers sometimes came to his AT&T store asking for help with their laptops. "Just being in technology — more so, mobile tech — I just saw the need in the area," he said.

So he signed on for NerdsToGo. That was in February of 2020.

He said they "weren't able to open until September [2020] because we just had such a hard time finding, or even viewing, real estate during the pandemic."

He was admittedly nervous about signing the lease — a five-year one, at that — but says he has no regrets now.

**Pandemic effect:** It turned out that the pandemic was a good time to get into IT. Many companies were in remote operations — up to 35% of workers were logging in from home at the highest point in the pandemic, according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data — and schools had shifted to virtual learning. Requests for "Nerds" were flooding in.

"We had a huge rush through our early adopters," he said. And as guidance around pandemic safety fluctuated, NerdsToGo adjusted, remaining masked in client spaces, at some points wearing gloves and working in out-of-the-way areas in order to minimize contact.

A little more than a year in, DeVeaux said revenue was up 50% in October.

**Challenge today:** The company is working on becoming more efficient, DeVeaux said, while also figuring out supply chain issues. A universal remote the business would typically order is now taking two months to arrive. Similarly, "certain firewalls are just not available right now."

In the meantime, he said the company is considering how to balance "picking the right products that are available, but also [that] a residential customer would be able to utilize for five or 10 years without having to replace" it.

What's next: DeVeaux hopes to eventually open a second location in the region and grow his five full-time staff — including himself, an office manager and three “nerds.” But he's looking for folks who can work just as easily with small businesses as with working-from-home families and the elderly who need help understanding how to use fast-advancing technology.

“We are looking for people who are not just IT professionals who have years of experience, but also who are able to connect with the common person,” he said. “It's a very unique skill set we're looking for. But those are the individuals that truly allow us to continue to grow our business.”

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