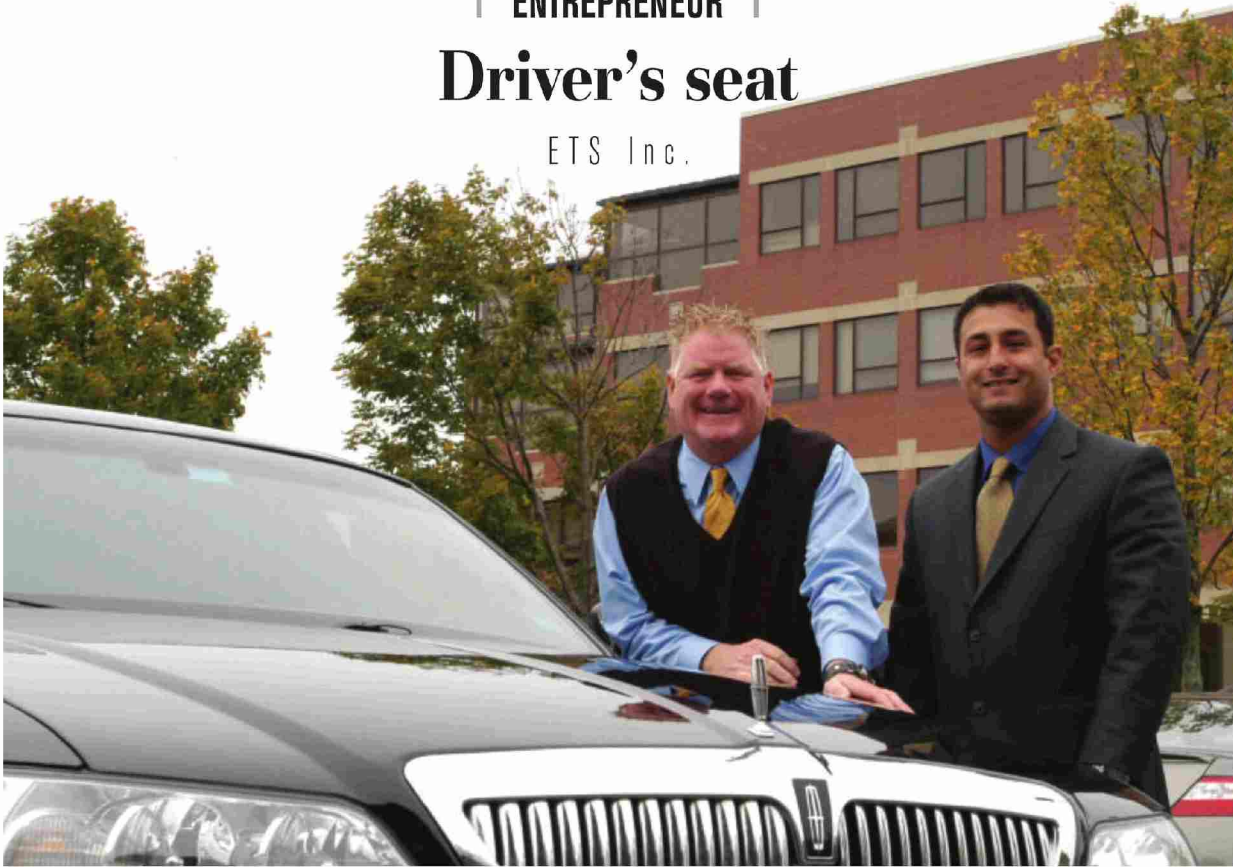


| ENTREPRENEUR |

Driver's seat

ETS Inc.



DAVID SOUZA PHOTO

John Green, left, shown here with **ETS** Sales Director Demetri Martin, had his own livery business for more than a decade before selling out. After working as an industry consultant, he decided to get back into the business full time.

Livery business veteran gets back into the game with new limo service

BY ROBERTA HOLLAND
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Fifty-year-old **John Greene** is continuing his wild ride in the livery business.

The Quincy native built his first transportation company in the mid-1980s and ran it for over a decade before accepting a \$5.5 million buyout from **Carey International** in 1998.

"There was a lot of consolidation happening in the industry," Greene said of

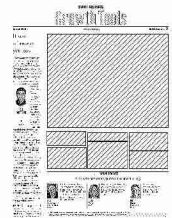
the business climate when he decided to sell. "It was a good time to sell if you were going to. You'd never think that just a couple of white limousines would grow into a millions-of-dollars company."

He worked for Carey for a few years after the acquisition, then went into retirement to enjoy his kids and financial success, and then took on some consulting jobs for peers in the industry.

Now he's back behind the wheel. Greene and his younger brother **Peter**, who worked with him in the first business, launched **ETS Inc.** in 2006.

"I traded in my car for a Suburban, got out my Rolodex, started calling old customers and friends," Greene said.

It was a combination of factors that



lured Greene back into the business. Peers in the industry recruited him to consult for their companies, helping with mergers or sales programs. Greene figured if he was going to work again, he

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may as well do it for himself. Nothing else he had tried matched his success in the livery business. He lost much of his money from the Carey buyout due to poor investments and the stock market collapse.

Greene, president and CEO, handles the sales, marketing and accounting for the business while his brother manages the operations with its dispatchers and drivers. They both train the drivers. Based in Quincy, the company focuses on business travelers.

Revenue for **ETS**, which stands for Executive Transportation Services, grew from \$759,000 in 2007, to \$1.7 million in 2008. This year, the company expects to take in \$3.3 million, Greene said. It acquired two small livery companies, Home Safe Coach of Quincy and All-Star Limousine of Kingston, in 2007.

Because he was "back to bare bones," Greene funded ETS with a second mortgage on his home, combined with savings and outside investors.

Almost half the company's revenue comes from national or international livery companies using ETS as their Boston affiliate. The affiliate network also enables ETS to transport its own clients when they are in other cities here or overseas.

Jed Heller, president of client company the **Providence Group** in Duxbury, said having the company handle his transportation, regardless of his destination, relieves much of the logistical burden of his hectic travel schedule.

"I knew in terms of starting (the second) company he was going to be successful no matter what. He wasn't afraid to go out, work hard and roll the dice intelligently," Heller said. "The

last couple years have been tough times and he's only been flourishing."

Lisa Nourse, a meeting planner with **Organogenesis Inc.** in Canton, uses ETS to ferry visiting doctors and nurses to the biotech's programs and between airports and hotels. Nourse said the company's pricing and online booking is helpful, but it is their consistency that keeps her coming back.

"They are always on time and get my people wherever they need to go," Nourse said.

Other customers include the **Boston Bruins**, **TD Banknorth Garden** and **TJX Cos.**

Greene first got into the livery business by chance. After dropping out of

college after a year, Greene was working as a salesman for a plumbing and heating business. He often rented limousines to entertain clients. When the three-car limo company went up for sale, the owner's son suggested Greene buy it. He did, backed financially by one of his plumbing customers.

His philosophy is simple — keep the customers and employees happy, and business will thrive.

Greene expects to hit \$5 million in revenue next year. He said he has about \$3 million worth of leads in the pipeline and just did a mailing to 4,500 fresh prospects. As companies tighten their travel belts, the key to revenue growth is new customers, he said. His base right now is 200 corporate customers with about 3,000 passengers. He averages 140 trips a day with an average trip price of \$130.

"I've never had a down year, ever," said Greene, who lives in Scituate. "We grew 70 percent last year in the worst economy you or I will ever live through."

Many of his 58 employees worked for his previous company. His 30-vehicle leased fleet consists mainly of sedans and SUVs with just one limousine.

Mark S. Ain, founder and executive chairman of **Kronos Inc.**, is a customer

turned investor. He mulled Greene's pitch to invest for about six months before signing on. Ain praised Greene for his hard work ethic, attention to detail and "burning desire to be successful."

"Johnny had the same ethic and same way of doing business which I've always had," said Ain, who was a customer of both of Greene's companies. "You make the customers happy and exceed their expectations. I see in Johnny someone who is a real entrepreneur."

FIRST THREE BOX

John Greene founded ETS Inc. in 2006, eight years after selling his previous livery business. In the intervening years he went into semiretirement and worked as an industry consultant.

Quincy-based ETS expects revenue of \$3.3 million this year, compared with \$1.7 million last year. About half of the company's revenue comes from livery companies that use ETS as their Boston affiliate.

ETS maintains a fleet of 30 vehicles – mainly sedans and SUVs – and employs 58 people.