

Melville Teen Launches Tech Company

Originally published: October 22, 2011 5:41 PM

Updated: October 22, 2011 7:37 PM

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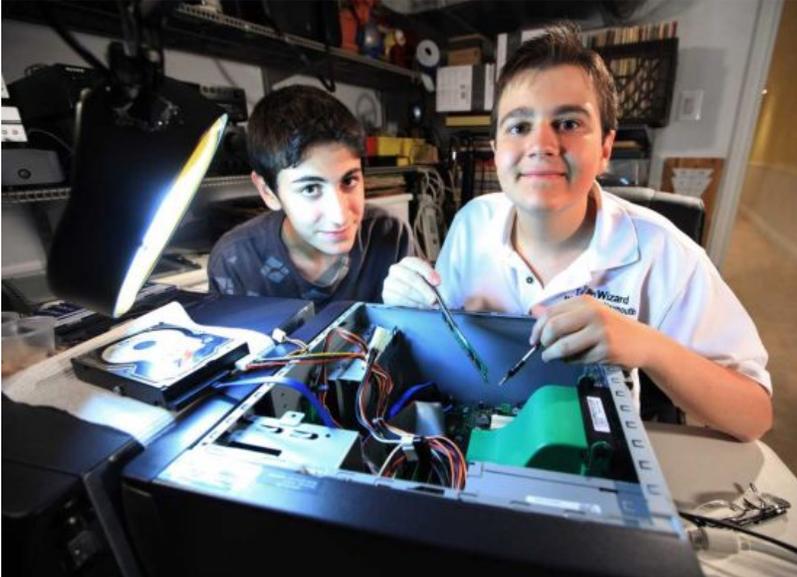


Photo credit: Newsday/John Paraskevas | At 14 years old, Michael Weymouth, right, is CEO of his own company. Michael, shown here in the basement workshop of his Melville home, started TechWizard, a computer service company with friend Nicholas Petosa, 14, left, and another friend Matthew Cunningham, not present. (Oct. 17, 2011)

Forget [Harry Potter: Long Island](#) now has its own boy wizard, and all he needs is a keyboard.

But Michael Weymouth, the 14-year-old founder of TechWizard, a technical consulting service based in his hometown of Melville, knows his talent for technology isn't magical by any means. It's the product of hard work and a natural curiosity.

"I just really love technology, so it was kind of an easy fit for me," Weymouth said of starting his service, which he brainstormed and developed in the summer of 2010. TechWizard offers a range of computer services such as product research and setup, RAM upgrade, storage drive wipe, software installation and personal technology instruction.

He says he has taught local small-business owners how to use software to streamline their operations.

Many adults acknowledge that a 14-year-old knows more about technology than they do. Not all 14-year-olds, however, can set up a business.

Weymouth got his first laptop when he was 10 and has been enamored of computers since. Barely a year into his TechWizard venture, he has two employees and has worked with roughly 35 clients, including about 15 who have done repeat business.

Tara [O'Hare](#) of Melville said she was impressed when Weymouth was able to fix her laptop

after a retail electronic service wasn't able to do it. She took a chance on Weymouth after receiving his card and a recommendation from a stranger at Kinko's, because she thought the idea of such a youngster running his own business was cute.

"My computer has never run faster than after he fixed it," she said. "He talked in simple language that I could follow, nothing unnecessary that would be overwhelming."

Weymouth has made pragmatic decisions in getting TechWizard off the ground. He realized early on he needed publicity and acknowledged he was "terrible" at graphic design, so he held a design contest in his middle school and hired the best designer, classmate Nick Petosa, 14, to be the company's artistic director.

In addition, he brought on Matt Cunningham, a student in his English class and also 14, to be in charge of advertising. Cunningham, of [Dix Hills](#), promotes the company by speaking to local media and placing ads online and in print, while Petosa, of Huntington, designs logos for the website and other promotional products.

The trio came together in February to make up TechWizard as it is today -- a business to provide cheap, customer-oriented service on technology.

They charge by the hour (\$15-\$25) for some services and a flat fee between \$30 and \$75 for others. TechWizard charges \$75 to set up a single PC. Weymouth estimated the business had brought in about \$250 since the end of June.

"We have to do work, but we add a little bit of [fun](#)," Petosa said. The three have become friends -- occasionally throwing in jabs and inside jokes at each other while chatting about their business.

The three have busy lives that sometimes take precedence. They began high school at Half Hollow Hills East last month and plan to be active in sports clubs and student organizations. In addition, they have found their youth can be an obstacle in business.

"It is kind of difficult, because people say, 'Oh, he's 14,' " Weymouth said. "They expect that the only thing kids would want to work on is lemonade stands and things like that."

To overcome that problem, he has placed a lot of emphasis on customer testimonials and using word-of-mouth as a way to gain new clients. He is also humble about the growth of his company, saying he wants to keep it small and personal.

"Calling it a small business might be a bit of a stretch. We're more of a nano business, if you will," Weymouth said.

Michael Weymouth's TechWizard

Location: Melville

Employees: 3

Business: Technical consulting

Founded: October 2010

Website: litechwizard.webs.com