



company here, we thought it should be quick and easy to gain a big market share. But getting all the legislation and business licenses in place, as a foreigner to the country, took two-and-a-half years. By the time we were good to go and made the investment, there were other existing privatized waste companies. Things here take time; if you haven't got a foothold, or you haven't been here for a while, you don't know where to turn to get things done.

"TCI now has over 3,000 customers, and about 85 percent market share. We're not a large company, we run with about 35 employees, six big garbage trucks, and several smaller ones to do the side work. When we started, there wasn't even a landfill. Just a

designated area where all the trash was dumped and burned. It was only four or five years ago that a landfill was put in place, and run by a private company. Even though we have a recycling facility, today, we still use the landfill. Because we're not 100 percent recycling, we're at about 50 to 60 percent, but our end goal, within the next few years, is to get to zero landfill.

"There are still three other garbage companies here, and when we first started, we looked at how they were operating (I'm going back eight or nine years). Take, for instance, hotels and restaurants – the only kind of garbage pickup system they had was roll-offs. That's where you pick up a bin, take it to the landfill, and return it. So, one of our selling



points was having trucks with a compaction system built in. The advantage is we come to the customer's location, empty the bin onsite, and then go to the next place. Rather than having to drag the whole thing away, and bring it back half an hour later. Now, we're in the roll-off business, as well.

"Residential customers didn't have bins, they used old oil drums, and the trucks would come and try to empty them into a trailer. There were no professional bins at houses, it was all makeshift stuff they were using. I decided I wanted to change all that with the compaction trucks.

"Another thing we market heavily is that all our trucks have GPS systems, so we know where they are and when. We also put a huge emphasis on maintenance. Because if you have higher maintenance, there's less chance of us delaying our pickups or not showing up. So, those were the initial selling points we used to differentiate ourselves.

"To be honest, we were turning a profit within the first two years, but we didn't pay dividends to the shareholders for a while. We just invested the profits back into the business. We are a private entity with four shareholders who own the company.

"The significant turning point for TCI, after being open about five years, was starting the recycling part. Before then, recycling of any sort – household or solid waste – didn't exist in this country. To do it, we had to build a \$1.5 million facility and bring in sort lines, balers, all types of equipment, purchase the land,