



JIM POULIN/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Sean Hays and Michael Shubic are co-owners of The Green Carrot. The company is the only authorized Segway dealer in the state. The pair are looking for a storefront in the East Valley to rent Segways.

Pair works to build up market for new Segway

BY ADAM KRESS
akress@bizjournals.com

The Segway, what some are calling the next generation of everyday human transportation, is beginning to roll into the Valley, thanks to a local company that is renting the personal transporters.

The Green Carrot, based in Gold Canyon near Apache Junction, is just getting off the ground after an initial round of private funding and has 10 of the self-balancing personal transportation devices to rent out to individuals or businesses.

At about \$5,000, the Segway HT (Human Transporter) still is far too expensive for many to afford, but the curious appeal of the Segway is undoubted. The two-wheeled, technology-packed and environmentally friendly device routinely causes heads to turn and creates curious but positive reactions from onlookers and users. It was created by a team led by noted inventor Dean Kamen.

The Green Carrot, Arizona's only Segway-authorized company, is looking to capitalize on the curiosity factor by renting the devices to businesses for promotional purposes and also as a fun perk for employees.

Michael Shubic, known as the "Top Carrot," and Sean Hays, "The Big Root," have been ironing out their business plan for the past few months, and have developed a strategy that leads to storefronts and eventually franchises across the country. The pair now are looking into securing a storefront, possibly in downtown Tempe.

Shubic said the company is seeking a second round of funding that would help the franchise get up and running faster. For now, it's concentrating on marketing.

"We saw an opportunity to make this accessible to the public because it's still too expensive for many people to buy," according to the Top Carrot.

Businesses have a number of ways to capitalize on the appeal of the Segway, Shubic said.

"It has a magnetic appeal to it," he said. "Businesses can leverage that to bring in more business through promotions and events."

Shubic said the cost of renting the Segway ranges up to about \$3,500 for a full-day event, but includes insurance and The Green Carrot staff to train riders and take care of the machines.

There also are opportunities for The Green Carrot to lease machines to companies in larger numbers, Shubic said.

"We are looking to lease to companies such as utilities for meter-readers or security companies so their people can move around quicker," Shubic said. "Airports are also possibilities. In the long-term, I can see people renting these to carry their luggage and get themselves to and from gates."

The Big Root said the company has been mostly focusing on the consumer side of the business thus far.

"We've been going to a number of fairs and festivals where we set up demonstrations and allow people to use the Segway," Hays said. "There is a real need to educate the public about the long-term potential of this. And that will also help our business."

Steve Sanghi, president and chief executive of Chandler-based Microchip Technology Inc., has a unique perspective on the Segway because his company has 13 different chips in the machine. Sanghi also owns one Segway for business use and one for personal use.

"For the business, we take it to a lot of exhibitions, and I demo it at our booth at shows and events," Sanghi said. "We use it for a lot of PR-related things, and it helps us demonstrate some of our technologies."

On the personal side, Sanghi said he will sometimes ride the Segway in public and curious passers by often will ask questions about it. He's also ridden the Segway in a few Valley parades.

As far as renting the machines goes, Sanghi said there are some things to be mindful of.

"It is very intuitive to use, but it does require some training," he said. "You would have to be careful with people renting them and damaging them."

Sanghi said it may take a while, but there is potential for the Segway to become a mainstream form of transportation.

"It could cut down on a lot of traffic and it's very environmentally friendly," he said. "If I lived only a few miles from work, I would use it almost every day for my commute."

■ GET CONNECTED

The Green Carrot:
www.thegreencarrot.com

You've got a budget.

We've got health plans to fit it.

Group (602) 864-4260
Individual (602) 864-4899
or call your insurance broker

www.bcbsaz.com



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

We construct solutions.



Our construction law team includes attorney degrees in engineering and architecture, is of the American Institute of Architects. We of decades of experience in the labyrinth of and in environmental, water and gas right here to recognize and address problems best, but when necessary, we have such multi-million dollar litigation and arbitration how we've kept the design and construction major players on solid ground for me

For information contact Marty Harper at 4