

Dealer Spotlight

JML Audio: A Toast to Ten Years

He's very young to be celebrating a milestone anniversary. At just 27, Josh Landau is wrapping up his first decade as president of JML Audio, a company he started ten years ago as a teenager with his friend and partner, Adam Stein.

As early as 1997, Landau and Stein developed reputations for being the go-to guys for quality layout, custom design and fabrication. "We now have a reputation on a national level," Landau said. Located in St. Louis, Mo., JML Audio attracts customers from as far away as California, and even Canada. "It means a great deal to us that clients would drive that far for us," Landau added.

Now the sole owner, Landau attributes his dedication to quality and customer satisfaction to his company's longevity. His methodical "under-promise and over-deliver" approach to customer service leaves clients feeling they've received a great value. "This is a quality-driven operation. At the end of the day, it's not how many cars we've whipped out the door, or how much money we've made," he said.

Looking back on the last ten years, Landau has no regrets. There are, however, a few things he might have done differently. "I would have liked to do more training and gone to shows sooner. As soon as we could finance trips to CES and KnowledgeFest, we went."

Landau credits the trade shows and workshops for reducing the industry's learning curves, as well as creating invaluable networking opportunities. "Instead of learning the hard way, by trial and error, [retailers] can work together to learn off each other," Landau said, noting that one of the benefits of using other retailers as resources is strengthening the industry as a whole.

As for changes he'd like to make for the future: "We definitely want a larger facility," Landau said of his plans over the next ten years. JML has created a name for itself in fabrication, and Landau is looking forward to designating a large space for the sole purpose of designing and building things like fiberglass enclosures. Landau hopes to relocate his shop within the next year.

He's going to need the extra space. Landau predicts that, over the next few years, the aftermarket installation world will continue to rely on the car audio enthusiast. "Our clients are going to be true audiophiles," Landau said of his future (and current) customer base. "I think this shift is going to help us in the long-term, but it's going to change the industry for everyone," he finished.



Josh Landau of JML Audio can't stress enough how important it is to invest in good tools. He sees it as an investment, not a cost. JML Audio turns ten years old this year. Landau started the company when he was 17.

JML Audio's Top Ten Tips to Ten Years on Top

1. **Invest in tooling.** Shell out for good gear. It's an investment, not only in the tools, but in your employees as well.
2. **Attend trainings.** Education is a lifelong thing. Embrace it.
3. **Stay passionate.** If you don't care about what you're doing, it doesn't matter how much you know.
4. **Network.** Creating a network of shop owners, technicians, and fabricators strengthens your position in the industry.
5. **Find solutions.** Think innovatively. Don't be afraid to take on projects you've never done before. Do your homework. Challenge yourself.
6. **Market, advertise and promote.** Even excellent work won't sell itself. Get the word out.
7. **Listen to your client.** Don't just hear them, but truly listen to what they are asking for.
8. **Be honest.** Honesty is truly the best policy. Be upfront, and don't hide anything. Clients don't come back to a shady operation.
9. **Provide a rental car.** It's an inexpensive way to avoid inconveniencing your client.
10. **Think big.** Whether you have one bay or ten, you are larger than life. The possibilities are endless. If you believe in yourself, others will too.