

Business with a Purpose

VRG Components' multicultural workforce serves clients worldwide. But no matter how big the business gets, its founder will never forget where he came from.

**VRG
COMPONENTS**

#1426

2018 INC. 5000
RANKING

7

NUMBER OF
LANGUAGES
SPOKEN FLUENTLY
IN THE OFFICE

329
PERCENT

THREE-YEAR
GROWTH

38

NUMBER OF
COUNTRIES
SERVED BY VRG

7.7
**MILLION
DOLLARS**

2017 REVENUE

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL entrepreneurs are driven by something more than revenue or profit margin. For Ruben Gutierrez, founder and CEO of VRG Components, a global supplier of electronic components, the driver is his past—and his desire to help others build a better future.

Gutierrez emigrated to the U.S. when he was a boy, from an impoverished town in Mexico. His parents worked hard to give Gutierrez chances they never got. He credits them for his work ethic and “underdog mentality.” The Gutierrez family was one of just a few Latino families living in Nashua, New Hampshire, where Gutierrez spent his teenage years. His childhood wasn’t always easy, but Gutierrez is quick to find the positive: because he has seen hard times, he is tenacious and strong. Because he has faced real challenges, he knows how to keep things in perspective.

Verena Martin, co-founder and COO of VRG Components, says that sales is in Gutierrez’s DNA. They founded the business together in 2014. Prior to that, Gutierrez was the top sales manager at an electronic components supplier. Both he and Martin wanted to build something of their own, something with a distinct company culture. “We wanted to give back,” explains Gutierrez. “We started this business so we could create a culture that gives other people a chance to achieve something with hard work and discipline.”

VRG Components was profitable year one, and it grew by 31 percent in its second year of business. From 2015 to 2017, its growth rate was 329 percent. It succeeds, in part, because Gutierrez and Martin complement one another so well. She handles operations and finances. He handles business development and sales. Together, they have built a multicultural, multilingual team that speaks 7 languages and supports clients in 38 countries. The ability to connect with so many customers in their native tongue has been key to long-term relationship building, says Gutierrez.

To the company’s advantage, there was, and is, a shortage in the global electronics market. Many



manufacturing companies have a hard time identifying and sourcing enough product. This high demand has worked in VRG Components’ favor, especially since it excels at sourcing parts that are hard-to-find or obsolete. But Gutierrez says the real secret to their success is work ethic, culture, and their team-wide commitment to delivering an exceptional customer experience.

Certainly, leading a fast-growing global business comes with challenges. Because VRG Components has clients all over the world, sales representatives have to work unconventional hours. Recruiting people willing to start their day at 3 a.m. isn’t easy, but Gutierrez tries hard to make it worth it by investing in their continual development and ensuring hard work is recognized and rewarded.

The VRG Components team has plans to grow in headcount and revenue. But Gutierrez is as passionate about his hopes to increase the company’s charitable work and to further support the Latino community by creating a scholarship program.

Gutierrez is grateful for his success, and he will never take it for granted. “I have had special people in my life who have mentored me, and I will never forget that, or where I came from,” he says. “The more successful I am, the more opportunities I have to give back.” ■

