

Creating an Empire



During the 2020 pandemic, Mahmood Bitaraf and Adib Baghdadi were living in Houston and, like the rest of the world, were wondering what to do for fun amid public restrictions. With most businesses closed, the only place to go is outdoors

Eventually, people began getting together regularly along the bayou, even late into the night. Bitaraf and Baghdadi saw this large social gathering as a window of opportunity for a business that provides outdoor entertainment. The duo started renting scooters to the public, and in 2021, they opened their first scooter rental brick-and-mortar location in Houston, and ERYD (pronounced “e-ride”) was born.

As the business grew, buzz about their fun scooters spread across the city, the duo knew they were on to something. In 2023, they brought in Abe Levitz as a co-owner to spearhead franchise development.

“There was a point at which scooter rental had evolved to where these large companies, like Lyft and Uber, were setting them up in cities, but their business model is transportation,” explained Levitz. “Very few people were looking at scooter rentals as a form of actual entertainment. What we found through our working together was that there’s this huge demand for late-night entertainment that’s very affordable and isn’t a bar.”

Since launching, ERYD has become a fun outlet for groups of

people to find adventure together within their local area.

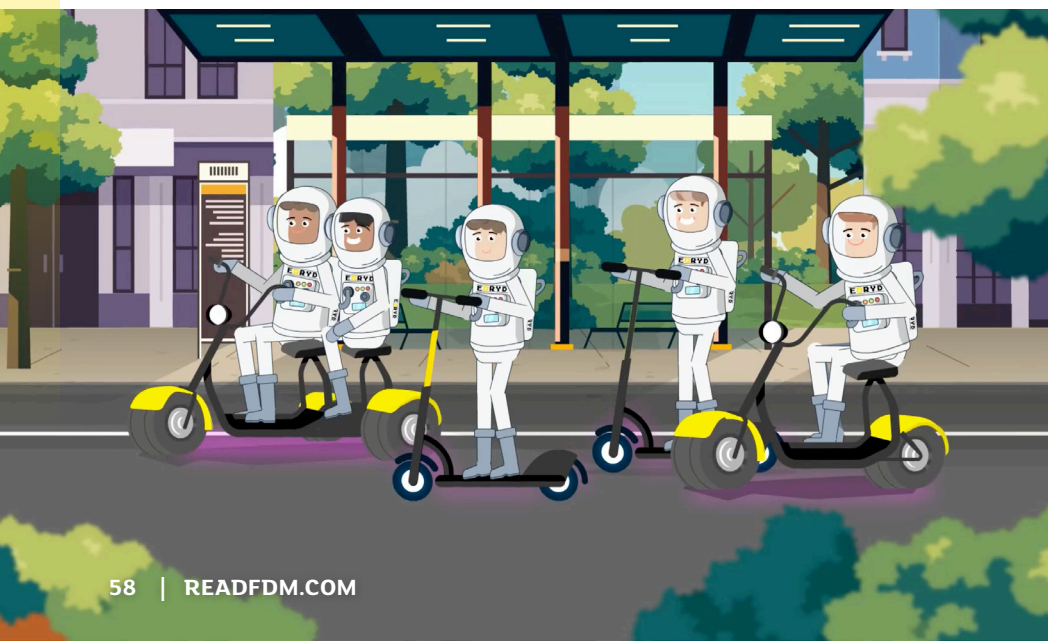
“We have had a rapid expansion,” said Levitz. “We opened up multiple locations. We started doing more pop-up locations all over downtown. Before we knew it, the city was covered with scooter people.”

Now, ERYD is looking to franchise its scooter empire across Texas. Franchisees have the simplicity of managing their business through the company’s custom-designed app. It handles employee scheduling, transactions and more.

Additionally, the company’s striking branding is a key component of its marketing strategy and is handled by the corporate office. The neon, space-themed locations implement that aesthetic to the scooters as well.

In the future, ERYD plans to add “missions” to its app. Customers can do guided virtual tours, taking them through the city during their rental time, exploring sites, completing tasks and earning points for friendly competition.

Kelsi Trinidad



joineryd.com