

Caboodle Cartridge brought to Maryland by Brothers Courtney Carroll & Doug Estelow

By Beth Losik (Baker University; Kansas City Alumni Chapter)

Introductions and Background

Courtney Carroll and Doug Estelow are both brothers, new owners of a franchise, and planning a wedding for November 4, 2006.

During his collegiate years, Doug Estelow served the Eta Xi chapter at Philadelphia University as Senior Vice President, Chancellor, Vice President of Chapter Operations, Ritual Chair, and Social Chair. After his December 2002 graduation, Doug was District Director and a member of Philadelphia Alumni Chapter. Doug is currently a member of BNI (Business Network International) and serves as Visitor Host. Besides his Caboodle Cartridge franchise, he is also an Assistant Manager at Brooks Brothers and is an election judge for his county.

During her collegiate years, Courtney Carroll served the Epsilon Kappa chapter at Shepherd University as Ritual Chair and President. After her May 2000 graduation, Courtney served the fraternity as a District Director, Eastern Regional Vice President, Philadelphia Alumni Chapter Secretary, and a member of the Shepherdstown Alumni Chapter. Currently, Courtney is running their Caboodle franchise as a Sales Representative and full-time Store Operations Manager. She is also a member of BNI (serving as Membership Chair) and will help start a young professionals group for the local Chamber of Commerce.

The couple started dating in the summer of 2003 and will be married in November 2006. Their move to Centreville, Maryland makes it difficult to actively participate with their nearest alumni chapter (the Baltimore chapter is over an hour away). They hope to find more alumni brothers in their area and possibly start an alumni chapter. They will attend the October LEAD held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and hope to facilitate a session.

Courtney and Doug were looking for a business opportunity when Courtney's parents, Brent and Linda Carroll, showed them an article in *The Wall Street Journal* that mentioned Caboodle Cartridge as one of the best new franchises. They opened the doors to their Caboodle Cartridge franchise in Centreville, Maryland at the end of July 2006. Caboodle Cartridge sells remanufactured ink and toner cartridges for printers, copiers, and fax machines. These cartridges are not "refilled" or "refillable" but go through a patented process. The cartridges are meticulously cleaned and inspected then filled with top-quality ink or toner. The remanufactured cartridges sell for 30-65% cheaper than the Original Equipment Manufacturer's (OEM) and are good for the environment by keeping the cartridges out of the landfills. There are now over 40 franchised locations of Caboodle Cartridge nationwide.

Brothers Courtney Carroll and Doug Estelow sat down and answered a few questions for us.

Fraternity Experiences

How has Deltasig influenced each of your lives?

- Doug – The fraternity gave me confidence to handle everyday matters in the business world. It also helped me develop leadership style, networking skills, and my personality. I became more personable with brothers and co-workers (and life in general).
- Courtney – During college I remember sitting at meetings and admiring each brother's personality and how it contributed to our chapter. Our chapter knew how to have fun and be responsible at the same time. I look back at how DSP influenced my life, and I realize it was a practice ground for leading people, problem-solving, communicating, and working with others. I also learned tolerance for people and patience. These are skills I use daily in my career.

How did mutual experiences bring you together (a.k.a. "Alumni Love")?

- Doug – Courtney and I had a great conversation at a Philadelphia Phillies baseball game. Courtney was picking my brain on the future of my chapter (Eta Xi). She was a caring person who was interested in others and the best interest of the chapter. That conversation was the beginning of our friendship.
- Courtney – We became close friends after Doug graduated and started dating after that. Support through challenging times has brought us together, and loyalty kept us together. We also share a dedication and passion towards Deltasig and our careers. We knew we would make a good professional team because we saw the effort we each put into DSP activities.

Building a Business Together

Why this business?

- Doug – It is a "dream come true" for me. Since high school, I wanted to own my own business. Courtney and I are running the business together and building a future for ourselves. The concept of a Caboodle store was new to our area, and we saw an opportunity.
- Courtney – Doug had the idea of running a business together, but we could not think of a business that fit. We looked at a small hotel with a restaurant and a liquor store, but neither worked out. Then my father brought Caboodle Cartridge to our attention, and we were all attracted to its simplicity at first. I liked the idea of being able to help businesses save money on a quality product. After learning the effect cartridges

have on the environment when not recycled, it makes me feel good to know we are helping lessen the effects on the environment caused by manufacturing and disposing of cartridges. The business seemed to be a fit for us.

Who benefits from your business? What is your niche?

- Doug – Anyone and everyone who is tired of paying high prices for their ink cartridges will benefit. Also, the environment benefits because we can help keep cartridges out of landfills and back in the business cycle.
- Courtney – Non-profit and government businesses/organizations, small to large companies, households, the Earth, and our customers. We strive to give excellent customer service and to exceed expectations.

What were the lessons learned along the way in setting the business, franchising, and starting your operations?

- Doug – Things don't happen as quickly as you expect them to. Franchising is more detailed than I realized. There are items such as: royalty fees, rules and regulations and the UFOC (Uniform Franchise Offering Circular) versus the contract. Preparing your own operations is time consuming. We prepared the store, ordered office equipment, and created a marketing campaign. My business experience was limited to my background in retail. Luckily, Courtney's knowledge of corporate operations (advertising, marketing, accounting, & payroll) has been a huge asset in getting our business running.
- Courtney – When buying a franchise, plan it out & then have the guts to go for it! Negotiate, take your time and be persistent. Just ask for what you want. My past operations experience helped, but it is the little things that surprise you.

What's it like working with a brother and loved ones?

- Doug – It is nice having the same fraternal experiences and interests as Courtney. Working with someone you are dating is very interesting, because we can be very creative together (or we can drive each other crazy). Each of us brings something different to the business; so we are able feed off each other to find ways of improving our business. Courtney's parents played a huge part in getting the business up and running. We can discuss ideas with them or go to them for advice. Working with my future in-laws is beneficial because of their wisdom gained from running their own business for over 35 years.
- Courtney – Because we both have been treated poorly in past jobs, we wanted to be good people to work for and to create a fun working environment. I work hard but for the first time in my life I also allow myself to goof off a bit. Working with my parents is even harder than working with Doug, because I want to impress them and not let them down (I think my parents feel the same way). They are my support ladder

and a wealth of knowledge and guidance. Working with your man is tough and frustrating - but totally worth it! All his bad habits and all my bad habits seep into our work life, but the opposite is also true. The stuff that makes us a great couple also makes a good business relationship.

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Sound bytes –

Deltasig lead me to Doug... now we are planning to get married this November. – Brother Courtney Carroll

We try to call every customer to ensure satisfaction with our products. We keep track of our customer's printers so when new technology comes into the market, we can let them know there is an alternate cartridges available that might be cheaper or longer lasting. – Caboodle Cartridge franchise co-owner, Courtney Carroll