



Massachusetts is lucky to have a high density of bootstrappers. Gordon and Kitter Spater, brothers who started Salisbury-based Motivation Designs LLC in 2003, grew up helping their parents switch from summer to winter tires. They couldn't help but notice what a pain it was to lug tires from one place to another. Kitter, who'd studied industrial design at Pratt Institute, came up with the Tire Tote, a \$23 bag that makes carrying any size tire easier.

"I literally went door-to-door, visiting auto dealerships and tire stores to see if they'd carry it," says Gordon. He had better luck initially with local retailers like Direct Tire; it took nearly five years to persuade Sears to carry the product.

The company expanded its range of products when Kitter encountered another problem that needed solving: a way for him to keep his rambunctious dog from jumping into the front seat. That led to a line of travel products for pets, like the "Backseat Barrier." Other automotive products, like an organizer for grocery bags, didn't take off, and so the company ditched them so it could devote more attention to the product areas that were performing better.