



FOOTWEAR SPECIALIST FINDS ITS STRIDE WITH ONE-ON-ONE COACHING

Chris Schiel started Xtra Mile Running in 2018 after working seven years in middle management and earning an MBA. “Xtra Mile Running is a ‘sit-n-fit’ shoe store that takes a complicated buying process and makes it simple for our customers,” Chris described.

They assist customers with walk, run, & medical referrals by conducting free on-site gait analysis and a 3-D foot scan. While they are a traditional retailer, they also are very active in the community, hosting multiple events on a weekly basis including fun runs, intro running courses, track workouts, yoga, and pub runs.

The biggest challenge though was growing the business. Chris had been working with a company on some digital targeting, but the agency and the ad spend was just getting too expensive. “We were getting a lot of impressions, but low conversions.” So he applied for Next Level Northwest’s business accelerator.

WORKING WITH A PLAYER’S COACH

“Working with Jeff was great. From day one, he was clearly in tune with moving forward in a way that not only helped my business, but also ran parallel to my schedule without interrupting it.” Next Level Northwest provides 90 days of one-on-one coaching. The two spent the first 30 days identifying areas of opportunity, and then the remaining 60 days on implementing changes, including email automation, marketing copy, and cleaning up the P&L.

“There’s a cost with your time, even with your own business. It was great to have someone hold my hand through these changes. It gave me the confidence that I wasn’t engaging in anything that was a waste of my time.”

51%

GROWTH OVER 12 MONTHS

LOWERED ADVERTISING COSTS

SALES UP 70%

YEAR OVER YEAR IN Q1 2022

I WOULD DO THIS EVERY YEAR IF I COULD. Large companies pay **TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS** for this kind of **CONSULTING.**

Chris Schiel, owner, Xtra Mile Running

RUNNING THE MARKETING WITH CONFIDENCE

With his coach's guidance, Chris made connections with a copywriter and acquired some skills with email automation through Constant Contact. "The biggest impact was getting my marketing automated. His copywriter is excellent, and I learned how to pull the levers myself at a lower cost. By doing it myself I gained a lot of insight into my numbers and margins."

FULL SPEED AHEAD FOR GROWTH

With sales goals set for the next few years, as well as quarterly planning for booking and launching new products, Chris is very excited for the future of Xtra Mile Running. "Things are looking bright. We accelerated the growth curve in this first quarter alone. We're already up 70% year-over-year!"

AN EXPERIENCE WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD

This program is designed to take an individualized approach to each business. By spending 30 days identifying the business need, Chris was able to weigh a number of options. Plus, Chris and his coach agreed on what was possible, so as not to set unrealistic goals or overload himself as the owner. The result was a sustainable workload during the program, and achievable goals coming out of it.

"I would do this every year if I could. Large companies pay tens of thousands of dollars for this kind of consulting. I would recommend this for any business owner, regardless of how well-established your business is."

ABOUT NEXT LEVEL NORTHWEST

Next Level Northwest is a not-for-profit business accelerator program that supports existing local businesses. The program was founded by five Northwest Chicagoland municipalities—Elk Grove Village, Hanover Park, Hoffman Estates, Rolling Meadows, and Schaumburg—as a public-private partnership to support regional and local businesses through collaborative and innovative initiatives to help grow local economies. To learn more about Next Level Northwest or to submit an application for your company to join the next class of companies in the business accelerator program, visit www.nextlevelnorthwest.org.

THE PATH TO SUCCESS STARTS HERE



To get started, visit NextLevelNorthwest.org and/or contact your local Economic Development Director for more information.

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