

Duck News

From Ruth A. Sheets, MBA

June 17, 2008 – *Non-profit international clothing manufacturing company requires a strategic plan for growth and exit strategy for the CEO and founder.*

GRASS ROOTS WOMEN'S SEWING COOPERATIVE FACES FISCAL CRISIS

Company

A thirteen-year-old manufacturing company based in Haiti employs 80 women in a rural community and provides one of the few sources of income in the region. A strong management team operates the company under the constant supervision of its 82-year-old founder who resides primarily in the United States. The founder's desire to retire created a need to hire a consultant to provide direction for growing the company and an exit strategy that would provide her with the peace of mind created by knowing the company will thrive and survive without her.

Problem

- Sales revenue covers 40% of expenses, requiring extensive fundraising to secure donations and grants to cover operations
- Importing and exporting creates many challenges—receiving raw materials, delivering products, and managing costs
- Cultural differences create management issues
- Long distance management results in costly extended trips to Haiti
- Founder takes no salary

Solution

June 2008 Hired Ducks in a Row Consulting

We tackled the issues in three phases:



Helping Businesses Start Up, Fix Up & Build Up

Phase I – Detailed Analysis

- Conducted detailed financial analysis, including comprehensive cost analysis, and developed financial tools to monitor all costs
- Analyzed product offering and recommended streamlining based upon demand and profitability
- Developed retail and wholesale pricing structure resulting in price change for all products
- Analyzed internal management and board infrastructure—responsibilities, job descriptions, and existing committees—recommended employee performance evaluation methods and tools, and board structure changes
- Conducted SWOT Analysis

Phase II – Positioning

- Clarified and restated mission statement
- Repositioned company offering for multiple customers, volunteers, donors and grantors

Phase III – Develop Strategic Plan

- Created a business, marketing, and sales plan
- Created a working capital financing plan
- Developed strategic plan including exit strategy

Results (June 2009)

- Increased profit margin
- Decreased expenses
- Resolved export issues
- Strengthened management infrastructure

In the CEO's words:

"Ruth's help was invaluable in getting us on track with a strategic plan that we crafted together. Now we know where our company is going, how we are getting there and why. We wasted too many years in anxiety and half-hearted steps before we found direction with Ducks in a Row Consulting. I wish we had used the Ducks sooner."

To increase your revenue and profitability and fix operational problems that have become obstacles to your business growth, contact us for a free initial consultation at 978-463-2264 or ruth@ducksinarowconsulting.com.