



Cultivating Growth Companies

G r o w F L . c o m

Company Case Study

A.G. Findings

CFO: Alan Kleinman

Employees:

37

Location:

Southeast (Broward County)

Website:

www.agfindings.com

Product/Services:

Electronics Accessories and Cases

The Florida Economic Gardening Institute has supported the growth of many second-stage businesses through its state-funded GrowFL program. Second-stage companies throughout the state are taking advantage of GrowFL's programs and services including specialized technical assistance, peer-to-peer CEO roundtables, CEO forums, networking events and more.

One participating company, **A.G. Findings**, found the program helpful in navigating the many challenges presented to a growing business. Founded in Fort Lauderdale in 1993, A.G. Findings originally focused on developing jewelry findings and clasps. Since that time, A.G. Findings has transitioned to serving the wireless communication industry by providing innovative mobile accessories and cases. The company has experienced rapid growth along with the mobile communications industry. When Alan Kleinman, A.G. Findings' CFO, learned about GrowFL from his banker, he saw it as an opportunity to deal with many of the challenges he faces in a growing, second-stage business.

Just-in-Time Technical Assistance

Alan found that GrowFL's customized technical assistance program helped the AGF executive team focus on a few key efforts that were particularly important as the company grows. One thing that stood out to Alan was the insight the GrowFL Economic Gardening Team provided on Internet marketing.

GrowFL's Internet marketing services analyst explained the nuts and bolts of interactive marketing, search engine optimization and pay-per-click marketing," Alan explained. "Receiving an overview of the tools and tactics that are available to make our company more accessible online has been very valuable." Since participating in the program, A.G. Findings has hired a new employee to manage these programs for the company.

The technical assistance team also helped A.G. Findings with finding new markets for their products, both nationally and abroad. As the CFO of a growing business, Alan said one of his biggest challenges has been figuring out how to expand his distribution channels and maintain a sustainable level of growth.

"More than anything, the GrowFL team acted as a resource for information when I didn't know where to start on solving a particular business problem," said Alan. "I was able to pick up the phone and call GrowFL, and suddenly I had access to a wealth of information and professional business resources."

Alan said he was impressed by how quickly the technical assistance team acted on the items his team brought up with them. He said it was a pleasure working with a team of highly motivated and knowledgeable experts.

In fact, Alan was so pleased with the assistance he received that he plans to apply for a second engagement with the program. In his second engagement with GrowFL, Alan hopes to focus on developing a standard system of metrics and analyzing the company's management structure, among other things.

GrowFL CEO Roundtables

Alan found the CEO roundtables to be a particularly rewarding experience. He still participates in the roundtable program and has said he finds the insight he receives from fellow second-stage business owners to be tremendously helpful.

"The CEO roundtables offer a unique opportunity to sit down with other business owners and executives who are dealing with similar issues that we are going through," Alan said. "To me, that experience has been invaluable."

Meeting with other entrepreneurs at the same stage of growth proved to be a great benefit for A.G. Findings. Not only did it help Alan solve various problems he was facing, but it also allowed him to connect with other second-stage entrepreneurs, something he hasn't found to this extent elsewhere.

"The opportunity to sit at a table and forge relationships with people who are facing similar problems is hard to come by," Alan said. "Gaining insight and advice from my fellow business executives—several incredibly bright businesspeople—has been very rewarding."

Florida's Inaugural 50 Companies to Watch

In 2011, A.G. Findings was selected as one of 50 companies for the inaugural group of *Florida Companies to Watch*. This nationally recognized awards program, presented by GrowFL and the Florida Economic Gardening Institute, celebrates growing second-stage companies throughout the state.

"It's nice to be recognized as a company that's viewed as doing well," said Alan. "It's refreshing to know there's an organization in the state that's watching the accomplishments of smaller companies, rather than just the Fortune 500 companies that some groups are constantly trying to attract to the state."

Alan said he also benefited from attending the Florida Companies to Watch awards gala, which took place in Orlando in February. Similar to his experience with CEO roundtables, the gala presented a great opportunity to expand his network and connect with other second-stage business owners and executives.

Overall, Alan feels participating in the program was a very beneficial experience. He now sees the GrowFL team as a resource he can turn to when solving complex business problems.

"When I learned about the program a little over a year ago, I attended a breakfast seminar to learn more," Alan explained. "It seemed like it could be interesting and useful so I decided to participate. The technical assistance program was helpful but as I took advantage of more of the program's offerings, I learned how everything fits together and the true potential of the program."

Since participating in GrowFL, A.G. Findings has added 10 employees. While not all a direct result of the program, Alan credits GrowFL with helping him manage the company's rapid growth. A.G. Findings has already added two people this year and Alan said he expects the company will add another three or four positions throughout the remainder of 2011. He also said participating in GrowFL has had a positive impact on A.G. Findings' bottom line.