CASE STUDY:
Trans Tasman trading

CLIQUE

Auckland-based Fitness clothing specialists 'Clique Fitness' has an extremely high customer retention rate in New Zealand and is on track to achieve the same results in Australia.

Clique Fitness was established in January 2017, as a predominantly online business but had an exclusive stockist, "People Like Us Active," based in Orakei, Auckland.

A business plan was created before launch and the first 'marketing' in Australia was through the influence of Kiwis who had moved to Australia.

A formalised marketing plan saw a significant pick up in sales in Australia in early 2020.

Clique Director Carena West says the company's latest limited-edition collection of 1,000 plum tights sold out quickly with 10 % of sales in Australia. It's foray with trans-Tasman trade is off to a good start and its only about to grow. Targeted advertising in this new market is their next focus.

Clique has collaborated with a few New Zealand and Australian companies for giveaways on social media and partnered with several fitness studios across New Zealand. Their experience and success with these partnerships and online marketing gives them the confidence to continue to explore this strategy across the Tasman.

As an online business Clique have faced no barriers (at this stage) and are now confident to move into Australia. Following their online marketing, when demand is high enough, they plan to begin distribution from centres in Australia.

"We always planned to expand," says co-founder Bex West. "So chose a warehouse management company who have warehouses in both Australia and New Zealand".

Scalability is on the cards. "There has been an organic increase in sales in Australia. So, scalability for us includes analysing our current customer base and moving into these territories as we grow."

They are slowly increasing production and this year have a projection of approximately 25,000 pairs of compression tights.

Clique embraces diversity, ethical suppliers and are all about sustainability.

Their models and sizes promote all shapes and sizes. "We are proud to celebrate everybody at every stage, with sizes from NZ6 to NZ18," West says.

The compression tights were originally designed for women who want to feel comfortable while working out.

"Our tights don't go see through when squatting, lunging or bending over, and hold up in the right places," West says. "We originally designed them for women but have had quite a few photos come through our Instagram from women whose male partners are wearing their Clique tights!"

Clique also expanded their range in 2019 to include sports bras, workout tops, caps, sweaters and full length and crop tees.

All Clique products are designed in New Zealand, and the majority are manufactured in China. All factories Clique Fitness works with hold the GRS certification to provide a zero-harm work environment for employees.

"We regularly visit contracted factories for ethical audits to ensure the high standards of staff pay, working conditions and product quality are maintained," West says.

In terms of sustainability Clique is also leading the way. Their Compression tights are constructed using RECOFLEX™ certified fabric, which is created using recycled plastic bottles. Approximately 12.5 plastic bottles are saved from landfill to create each pair of Gen III Classic Compression tights.

And soon, all Clique packaging will also be fully home compostable, using an Austrian developed packaging which is designed for the lower temperatures of home composting.

Looking ahead, Clique's next goal is to increase their market share in Australia and at the same time develop a top customer retention rate similar to that of New Zealand. It's a plan that's within reach and the future is looking bright.

Reflecting on their time so far, Clique's best advice to other businesses looking to trade trans-Tasman is this: "Running a start up has it's highs and lows. It can be incredibly tough. But when it's good, it's an opportunity to see just how far you've come. Celebrate the small wins!"

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