

From 5 Counties to 45 States: Get Ready to Grow

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I. Prepare for Growth

1. Develop a business plan for expansion

Do you currently have the customers to justify expansion? If not, where and how do you get them? What markets exist that are untapped or underserved, and how can you position your company to take advantage of those opportunities?

2. Examine working logistics

Where does it make sense to do business? Among the considerations: licensing, UPL, plant access, etc. You must strategically expand, as not all markets are viable or worth expanding into.

3. Obtain underwriter support

Acquire or obtain commitment for a national title agency agreement. This gives you the power and stability to offer your clients a national solution, and builds a solid base on which you can grow.

4. Commence strategic national licensing program

Once you have determined which markets it makes sense for your company to expand into, begin your national licensing program. Ensure that you have the administrative support needed to see to the details of your licensing program.

II. Tell Your Story

1. Develop a marketing and branding strategy

-Develop your key message and branding

-UVP

-Executing necessary collateral (including a website.)

-Note: to be a worthwhile investment, this should be done on a budget and a timeline. Determine those up front. Set expectations.

-If you don't have the resources in-house, outsource. It's better to spend the money up front on hiring a professional than to attempt it yourself and have to 're-do' it later on.

2. **Implement your marketing and branding plan**

-How do you get the word out there effectively, and cost effectively?

-Some ideas: social media, content generation and distribution (e-newsletters, blogs, webinars), simple PR tactics, expert positioning and more.

-In some cases, advertising on search engines or content networks will give a significant ROI; do the math up front.

-Ensure your branding is consistent across all collateral, and do what you can to drive traffic to your website (SEO, social media, blogging, etc.)

-Install and monitor analytics; set goals and observe when and how you achieve them.

III. **Develop and Implement a Business Plan**

1. **Systems infrastructure**

-Do you research into software and find out what you need in order to grow.

-Acquire scalable software and other needed technology consistent with corporate vision.

-Implement new technology consistently.

-Be sure to provide adequate training for all stakeholders.

2. **Operations planning**

-Build a scalable "process" with process mapping and other tools.

-Use "surge protectors."

-Engage in team building with the customer.

3. **Strategic Partnership Planning**

-Obtain workshare partners in non-licensed states, a vetted national abstractor list and national closing solution.

-Consider and select outsourcing partner(s) for any jobs that cannot be handled in-house.

-Prepare to become a vendor manager; this may involve hiring new talent as necessary.

4. **Strategic Staffing/Team Building**

- Recruit intellectual capital as needed i.e. Marketing Director, National Operations Manager, National Sales Manager, National Compliance Officer, any other necessary roles
- Develop a long-term hiring plan. Do you need a whole marketing team? Hire a Marketing Director, then work with that person to build your team.
- Again, remember that sometimes it is more effective to outsource certain processes.

5. Sales strategy and implementation

- Who will do the selling? How will they collaborate with your marketing team?
- How will they implement your marketing and growth plans?
- How will you map targets and follow through?
- Expanding your market, one customer at a time.
- Avoiding a “single crop” economy.

Q&A with Rick, Chuck, Brian and Rusty

Notes: