



Success Story: Storage Mill

When talking about declining businesses who have done a complete one-eighty, there's no better example than Storage Mill. Run by a motivated Pennsylvania native as a sidejob, Storage Mill rents storage units to the general public for twelve-month contracts. The business was initially successful, but over the course of a year, the business was waning. Chris Kunkel, the owner of Storage Mill, was struggling to get new clients for his business. He knew that he needed to do something fast to save his business—that's when he found ThriveHive.

Marketing Problem

Despite nine successful years in business, Storage Mill's occupancy rates began dropping steadily in 2015. The self storage business in Nazareth, Pennsylvania needed to attract at least one new rental each month to remain profitable. But the marketing methods that once filled units were no longer pulling in customers.

Owner Chris Kunkel knew a little bit about marketing but was quickly running out of options. Street signs were only covering a small area, drive-by marketing tactics were unreliable, and his investment in Yellow Pages ads and Google AdWords showed little to no return.

Chris knew that the key to reaching local customers was online, but his website was too outdated to support current marketing best practices. Since the site wasn't ranking on Google, potential customers weren't finding the business online. In the rare instance that visitors did find the site, there weren't any analytics for to show Chris how much traffic it was generating. As a result, Chris had little insight into how to improve his marketing and was unable to understand how to improve it.

Both a business owner and full-time employee, Chris didn't have the time to become a digital marketing expert. Chris knew he needed help, but he wanted to be involved in the strategy. His modest marketing budget wouldn't cover the cost of a marketing agency and so he sought out do-it-yourself options. Like most local business owners, he wanted a low-cost solution, but he didn't want to be locked into a contract that he wasn't sure would deliver great results. "Then I found ThriveHive," says Chris. "When I saw I could choose the level of service that made sense for my business and my budget, I knew I had to try it."

Solution

Chris signed up for ThriveHive's Guided Marketing Platform, adding on a Marketing Coach to help him create and execute a marketing plan. "My Marketing Coach was consistently helpful. He asked questions that kept me focused on the most effective marketing activities in order to meet my goals," says Chris. "My Marketing Coach looked out for my interests as if he were a coowner." Chris originally planned on staying with ThriveHive for

only six months, but because of the quality of the coaching and the results he saw, he decided to stay on. "My Marketing Coach kept delivering value," says Chris. "He thinks in terms of what the business owner needs. I know he really cares."

With the help of his Marketing Coach, Chris set up autoresponders that sent discount offers and ran an AdWords campaign that generated leads for his business. Chris found he was able to market his business in just a few hours a week, and ThriveHive was there to help when he needed it. "I pay far less than I would have paid to a marketing agency," says Chris, "and I know I wouldn't be getting the great results we're getting now if I hadn't signed up with ThriveHive."

"We had customers calling us on Christmas and New Year's Day. Now we turn people away."

- Chris Kunkel, Owner

Optimal Occupancy and New Opportunities

Chris needed to rent out at least one bin a month to stay profitable. In the first month with ThriveHive alone, he rented out twelve. Also within that first month, Storage Mill began ranking higher on Google. "As soon as customers could find us, business boomed!"

An effective Adwords campaign drove the business ranking even higher and brought in new leads for the business. "We had customers renting units on Christmas and New Year's Day." Storage Mill is now filled to capacity with six and twelve-month contracts. "We have to turn people away," says Chris. "ThriveHive helped us achieve a complete turn-around when nothing else worked." Today, Storage Mill gets a steady flow of business leads.

The success of Storage Mill has even allowed Chris to turn his attention to a new business, which he is also growing through ThriveHive.