

Philip Benson
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An accomplished executive with a track record of building and scaling efficient organizations towards sustainable growth and long-term success. I've used a foundation of deep education and Fortune 100 experience in operations, finance, and international business to successfully build one of the most iconic footwear brands in the outdoor industry. I use a highly analytical and pragmatic management approach supported by excellent relationships with colleagues and partners.

EXPERIENCE

Calzaturificio Zamberlan, Srl – Global outdoor footwear brand headquartered in Vicenza, Italy

Country General Manager, USA – 2009 to Present – Carlsbad, CA

- Established and led Zamberlan's North American subsidiary with full P&L and budget responsibility through 13 years of extreme growth, profitably growing company at a 32.9% CAGR since 2009, including 70% in 2021
- Wholesale sales into over 400 doors in the Sporting Goods, Specialty Retail, Online and Hunting retail channels across North America, managing a team of independent sales agents as well as directly managing all key accounts, including REI, Sportsman's Warehouse, Cabela's, Bass Pro Shops, Zappos, Amazon, MEC, Sail, Scheel's, and Sport Chalet
- Improved overall gross margin percentage by 1,125 basis points and created a revenue stream of millions of dollars from 2015 through 2022 through the development of the brand's e-commerce direct-to-consumer sales channels
- Launched the brand into several new customer segments and led product development initiatives for Hunting, Wildland Firefighting, Logging, and Military markets. Established Zamberlan as the fastest growing footwear brand in Western Hunting, taking the segment from 0% of revenues in 2011 to nearly 50% of the business in 2021
- Created an omni-channel distribution operation, allowing company to service large national, online, and specialty retailers, as well as owned direct-to-consumer sales channels with near real-time inventory data via our NetSuite ERP. Led sales and operations planning function while achieving inventory turnover targets above 3.0 for the last six years
- Created a customer service organization that manages service tickets across talk, chat, and email access points, with robust self-service and answer-bot capabilities through an integrated Zendesk platform.
- Lowered fulfillment and shipping expenses by several hundred basis points over last 24 months by optimizing third-party warehouse operations. This also allowed company to meet vendor compliance requirements of top industry customers and achieve same-day order turn-around for e-commerce and Direct-to-Consumer shipments
- Improved Gross Margins by more than 1,100 basis points and created millions in sales by structuring a factory-direct product sourcing model through the creation of a portfolio of SMU products for the largest outdoor retailer in the world
- Achieved a doubling of the Direct-to-Consumer business over 18 months through an integrated marketing program, which includes paid search, social, ambassador, and direct mail programs, delivering average ROAS in excess of 500%
- Worked closely with our Italian product development and factory teams to source custom SMU product for North America, several of which went on to garner a myriad of editor's choice and industry awards for innovation
- Reduced landed costs on importation of products from Italian parent by 5% through import process restructuring

Sierra Marketing Partners

Owner, President – 2007 to 2017

- Launched six international brands, including Zamberlan, into the U.S. sporting goods, outdoor, and hunting markets through various corporate structures, achieving nearly \$80 million in aggregate sales since their respective launches

L.E.K. Consulting – Global growth strategy consulting firm

Growth Strategy Consultant – 2006 to 2007

- Led strategic due diligence for a \$18B private equity fund in their acquisition of a \$1.5B nutritional supplements retailer, analyzing store planograms, product performance, and industry-level trends, directly leading to the acquisition decision. Directly conducted primary research assessing brand's market position across consumer purchase criteria
- Built market model for oncology, neurology, and cardiovascular imaging agent markets for our client, a \$7.4B medical device manufacturer. Made build-or-buy recommendation after analyzing radiopharmaceutical development pipeline
- Led assessment of a myriad of growth opportunities for a \$72M radiation safety manufacturer, examining strategic fit and profit potential towards five-year corporate goals. Developed complete growth strategy along with implementation plans, including marketing, financial, and organizational components
- Created recommendation for a market-entry project for a \$10.5B financial services provider into the emerging Premium Finance market by building a bottom-up market model and value chain analysis. Directed all primary and secondary research efforts towards assessing future growth, competitive landscape, and profit potential

- Created strategic due diligence for a private equity firm acquiring a \$50M educational software brand, leading primary research effort to analyze purchase criteria among institutional buyers, while also developing a market model identifying and analyzing growth drivers within the educational products market
- Developed a growth strategy for a national dental services company servicing low-income patients by developing data analysis tools, including a predictive regression model identifying ideal growth markets
- Consulted a private equity firm acquiring a \$75M plumbing supplies distributor, leading primary research on 100 clients analyzing purchase criteria, supplier performance, and market trends. Developed market model identifying and analyzing key drivers of specialty plumbing supplies market

BAX Global - \$3B global transportation & supply chain management provider (Acquired by DB Schenker)

Corporate Finance Manager Planning & Development, I.T. Controller – 2000 to 2003

- Created financial policies and instituted financial management, planning, capital budgeting, and accounting control processes over \$150M of annual capital investment and telecommunications spend in \$3.2B global organization
- One of 13 members of the Executive Steering Committee, setting corporate strategy and planning & development
- Assisted in supplier negotiations resulting in millions of dollars of annual cost savings for spending in areas of telecommunications, information technology, and third-party logistics expenditures

Senior Financial Analyst, U.S. Supply Chain Operations & Global Financial P&D – 1998 to 2000

- Lead analyst responsible for annual budgeting, strategic review, and forecasting processes for 150 countries
- Performed ad hoc financial analyses, financial modeling, and corporate reporting for global executive team, including creation of presentations for Board of Directors investor meetings
- Operations analysis and optimization for U.S. transportation and supply chain management field offices
- Created annual financial and operating budgets for North American operations

Kimberly-Clark Corporation - \$14B global consumer products manufacturer

Senior Operations Analyst & Cost Accountant – 1996 to 1998

- Performed cost accounting, demand planning, production planning, distribution optimization, operations analysis, forecasting, and budgeting for major manufacturing plant and distribution center fabricating more than \$500M annually
- Assisted in development and implementation of cost savings initiatives across manufacturing and conversion operations, resulting in reductions in cost of manufacturing exceeding 30% for core Kleenex brand SKUs

EDUCATION

The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

MBA, Strategic Management

- Warner Music Group – New Media International Business Development Intern – New York, NY
- The Walt Disney Company – Disney Studios Finance Intern – Burbank, CA
- Allen & Company – Investment Banking Special Projects for Media & Entertainment – New York, NY

The Joseph H. Lauder Institute of International Studies, University of Pennsylvania

Master of Arts, International Studies, Spanish and Latin America

- Immersion study in Mexico (ITESM), Chile (Adolfo Ibáñez), Argentina, and Cuba
- Master's Thesis: "Mexico's Response to Chinese Trade and FDI Competition"

Marquette University

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration

- Specializations in Finance and International Business, 2nd Major in Spanish
- Immersion study at La Universidad Complutense – Madrid, Spain
- Harley-Davidson - Business Process Improvement Intern – Milwaukee, WI

OTHER

- Member of the Board of Directors for San Diego Sport Innovators, an Active Lifestyle Industry group, while also leading SDSI Accelerator class peer groups, and contributing as a member of a CEO group
- Foreign language fluency in Spanish, basic capabilities in Italian and Greek
- Avid runner, 7-year member of San Diego Track Club; golfer; cyclist; archer; avid outdoorsman
- Skills in financial planning, demand planning, sales and operations management, and strategy