

Meet Amanda Aitken

Amanda Aitken - GFA Australia - Melbourne, VIC



Amanda has been 'powered by Mindshop' for over 12 months through Mike Boyle's Sales Rockets platform to boost the effectiveness of Sales Leaders. In the below profile, Amanda discusses the challenges in her role and how she has used the Mindshop resources, as well as her advisor Mike, to grow Sales and her team.

Can you explain a little about your business?

Our business is GFA (Aust) Pty Ltd is a well established family owned & operated business. Our business has become the experts in female orientated fashion, or as we call it "fashionability". Originally starting out in hair accessories and fashion jewelry, GFA has expanded and diversified its offering to include the best range of Hair Accessories, Fashion Jewelry, Belts, Handbags, Scarves, Tights, Sunglasses, Party Accessories, Personal Care and Cosmetics. Our cosmetic brand BYS Cosmetics is one of the fastest growing brands within both Australia and internationally and was recently voted #1 Budget Brand in Australia. Products are sourced and distributed worldwide both under our own house brands and privately branded for specialist retailers. We supply all sectors of the market ranging from Discount Retailers, Major retail chains, Fashion Accounts, Supermarkets and Pharmacies.

What is the most challenging part of your role?

Finding the right people is always a challenge and can be both a costly & timely exercise when not done correctly. As glamorous as it may seem, working in the fashion industry means things are forever changing, evolving and not all people work well in this fast paced environment. We have more than 15,000 active Stock-Keeping Units (SKU's) within our business which is a difficult concept to grasp and we sell to many different

retail sectors which presents challenges in itself. Whilst we have traditionally promoted internal to the business there becomes a point where we need to build our resources, level of experience and/or education where we are lacking internally. We find that training and inducting new people, particularly into our sales team is difficult, not only from a product knowledge perspective but also from a cultural fit perspective. This continues to be a learning curve for us so we are constantly reassessing our recruitment and selection process to try and find the right people for the right roles.

Why did you get involved with Sales Rockets?

In my role as Business and Sales Director I manage the key accounts for the business as well as oversee the sales team. My introduction to Sales Rockets all came about following our yearly strategic planning weekend held with the management team in which we isolated lack of sales growth in sales as one of the key factors holding our business back. As a business we had enjoyed growth on growth for many years but sales in the past 2 years had been constant and we needed to do something about it if we were to take the business forward. We had great strategic plans in place however we were concerned that that our current sales team at the time were not going to be able to achieve the enormous goals we had set for the business. When we asked around for some sales training Mike Boyle was recommended and the first call I made was to him. We put the sales team through progressive training sessions, started the recruitment process for additional sales people, and put a sales strategy together with a clear sales vision. The coaching and mentoring part of the Sales Rockets program has been a great support for me on a personal level. I am always looking for a better way to lead our team and find learning from other people's experiences invaluable. I look forward to being able to take new ideas and sales disciplines away from each of my Sales Rockets sessions.

How have you used Mindshop Tools in your business so far?

Initially I used a lot of these and I must say I am a big fan of the One Page Plan. I use them for just about everything and find them a very quick and easy tool for seeing what our people are working on and if they are heading in the right direction. I have also used the SWOT, Force Field Analysis, the Decision Matrix and Product Portfolio Analysis tools from time to time.

What has been one of the outcomes?

We have now extended the monthly One Page Plans to include our management team. These are prepared on a monthly basis and presented to the business directors. As a business director this is just such a quick and easy way to see if everyone is on the right track, have clearly defined goals and have the right activities in place to achieve the outcomes. This forms the basis of our monthly meetings with both our management team and sales team.