

LINKEDIN CONNECTS EX-METCASH CHIEF WITH CONDOM HERO

A 28-year-old entrepreneur used LinkedIn to convince an experienced businessman who ran a multi-billion dollar retail organisation that employed over 5000 people to mentor him.

Dustin Leonard dreams of making the world a better place, so created the HERO Condoms brand as a university assignment in 2012 with the mission to save lives in developing countries by donating a condom to Africa for every one sold in Australia.

In 2013 HERO Condoms grew into a viable business and the product started landing on shelves in pharmacies across Australia.

But given that 75% of condoms are sold in grocery stores, Leonard knew that to truly make a difference in the world, he would need to crack the Australian grocery market. But he was hitting brick walls.

"I contacted every single grocery retailer in Australia, but no one would even meet with me. I could see that this was going to be a tough market to break into, and that I would need some expert guidance and advice."

Leonard came across top Australian retail guru Silvestro Morabito in a Google search and contacted him on LinkedIn. Morabito is a strategic and commercial retail sector leader who led the conversion of 300 supermarkets trading under five different banners to fall under the IGA banner. With 30 years of retail experience, he is the past chief operating office of Metcash.

Morabito also re-engineered the IGA national and state structures to realise synergies of \$7 million and also successfully launched a national marketing campaign which resulted in strong improvements in the brand equity score for the group.

While a retail superstar in his eyes, Leonard boldly contacted him on LinkedIn and Morabito agreed to a coffee. Inspired by the mission to save lives in developing countries, he agreed to mentor the Gen-Y entrepreneur and recently came on board as the company's director of business development.

Leonard says that LinkedIn gives Australian entrepreneurs opportunities to connect with business leaders in a way that would never have happened in the past.

"From introductions to top retailers and wholesalers and providing strategic advice on industry best practice, his vast experience and contacts in retail are helping turn HERO from a small start-up into a mature FMCG company.

"I've been learning the tricks of the trade under his guidance for six months, and already HERO Condoms has been stocked on shelves in IGA Supermarkets across the country. I've also now managed to secure meetings with other major grocery chains, which I hope will result in broadening our distribution footprint even further."

Leonard completed a Masters in International Business and a Masters in Logistics Management in 2012 at the University of Sydney and has a bright future ahead of him.

"I strongly believe that it is possible to succeed in business and help people. Ultimately, we want to turn HERO Condoms into the HERO brand, and all products will have a focus on social responsibility and sustainability."

For every HERO Condoms purchased in Australia, HERO gives out a condom in Africa to help stop the spread of HIV. Africa is home to 69% of people living with HIV, and 72% of AIDS deaths in 2009. Leonard is running a campaign called Hero to Zero that aims to help the Botswana government reach zero new HIV infections by 2016.

HERO also sponsors antiretroviral treatment to expectant mothers, which minimises the chances of HIV being passed on to their newborns. The condoms come in two variants, regular and super thin. HERO Condoms are manufactured at a world class facility in Malaysia and the brand has a

wide range of certifications.

HERO's packaging is made from 100% recycled materials and its manufacturing utilises environmentally-friendly practices throughout production.

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