

Pinellas County - the Perfect Location for Stand Up Fitness



Brody Welte came to Florida looking for the ideal location in which to start a new stand up paddling business - he found that location in Pinellas County. Welte launched **Stand Up Fitness** in 2008 and credits both the area's natural assets and its business-friendly climate for the company's success. "Our beautiful waterways - from canals, lakes, and rivers to Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico - offer endless opportunities for enjoying stand up paddling," he explains. "Combined with the healthy lifestyle available here and the fantastic wildlife in the water, Pinellas County was the perfect place for us to start Stand Up Fitness." Welte and Stand Up Fitness have also benefitted from the business assistance provided through the **Small Business Development Center** (SBDC) at Pinellas County Economic Development.

Stand Up Fitness is a multi-dimensional fitness and recreation business offering lessons, rentals, and equipment for stand up paddling (SUP). The company also organizes a wide range of local and national paddle events, including local eco tours and races, as well as the nationally-recognized Kalama Kamps and the Gulf Coast SUP Championship that draws professional athletes from across the country.

Since its opening three years ago, Stand Up Fitness has grown to two locations, in the cities of St. Petersburg and Clearwater, and a staff of six. Wanting to continue his business growth, Welte began meeting with Kurt

Forster, a fellow paddler and Certified Business Analyst at the SBDC. Among a variety of business improvement ideas resulting from their meetings, Welte and Forster developed a strategic marketing plan for Stand Up Fitness. According to Welte, "We were doing most of the right things, but making marketing decisions felt completely disorganized. Now we have a plan to help us make those decisions more efficiently." Forster expands, "A lot of entrepreneurs are simply too busy to develop a strategic marketing plan on their own; they need another person focused on moving that process forward. That's what SBDC counseling is all about. We don't tell clients what to do, but we give them a framework for making the best decisions."

With its marketing plan in place, Stand Up Fitness is poised to continue its success in Pinellas County. Attesting to the benefits of working with the SBDC at PCED, Welte concludes, "The time spent working with the SBDC paid off both in results and in getting us organized."

Visit Stand Up Fitness and learn more about the sport and the company at www.standupfitnessinc.com.

How can the Small Business Development Center help your Pinellas business?

Visit www.pced.org/entrepreneurs or call (727) 453-7200 to learn more.

