



## From Radio Show Personality to Media Group CEO

The independently owned country radio station WZLA 92.9 FM has served the Abbeville, SC area since 1989. Today, its CEO Benji Greeson is expanding the station into a multimedia company—but building Greeson Media Group has demanded a significant investment of time and money. Greeson was able to self-fund the purchase of a more spacious and technologically equipped building in 2021, but still found himself in need of additional capital, as well as help with developing his business plan. Fortunately, a local connection suggested that Greeson contact SC SBDC Greenwood Area Manager and Business Consultant Ben Calhoun for assistance.

### Industry: Radio and Television Broadcasting

**Initial Challenge:** Client needed to obtain financing to expand his radio station to a larger location. He also needed help developing a long-term strategy to achieve his goal of creating a multimedia company.

**Approach:** Consultant helped the client prepare a business plan, assess the feasibility of expanding to a new location, compile loan application packets, receive commercial and CARES Act funding and purchase a new facility.

### Results:

- 2021 Annual Gross Revenue: Approx. \$300,000
- Annual Revenue Percentage Increase: 30%
- Capital Formation:
  - \$120,000 Commercial loan
  - \$55,000 CARES Act loan
- Jobs Retained: 2 full-time

The two immediately got to work, calculating financial projections and conducting a feasibility analysis of Greeson's proposed expansions. They also analyzed and proposed improvements to WZLA's marketing strategy. Perhaps most significantly, Calhoun assisted Greeson in applying for and receiving a \$120,000 commercial loan and a \$55,000 CARES Act loan. Together, these loans provided the gap funding to make upgrades and renovations while maintaining the station's current operations. The now state-of-the-art radio station has enabled Greeson Media Group to dramatically strengthen its signal, and thus its reach. The station is also able to produce its own content, which allows its programming to be more relevant to local audiences.

Although the pandemic cost WZLA many of the live events it normally covers, Greeson is more optimistic than ever: "Greeson Media Group is now involved in everything but print. We're on track to break

### Services Provided:

- > Business Plan Development
- > Feasibility Study
- > Financial Projections
- > Capital Formation
- > Marketing Research

every earnings report we've established, and next year we anticipate beating 2021's margins by another 20%." Greeson attributes much of his success to the aid he received from the SC SBDC.

"Ben was instrumental in helping me create a rock-solid business plan," he said. "He is very knowledgeable about the steps it takes to get a business off the ground and truly has a heart for seeing businesses succeed."

**Ben Calhoun truly has a heart for seeing businesses succeed. I feel as if without the help I received from the SC SBDC this dream/vision of mine would still be on the runway, instead of soaring into the clouds.**

Benji Greeson, Owner  
Greeson Media Group

