Executive Bio

Ryan Kotula is the Owner of multiple businesses including Northern Tool + Equipment, The Sportsman’s Guide, The Golf Warehouse, Kotulas.com, Baseballsavings.com, Soccersavings.com, Great Northern Equipment, and several others. Ryan started working in his family’s business, Northern Tool + Equipment, at 8 years old while it was still in the garage of their family home. He worked in every aspect of the business all the way from janitorial duties, shipping and receiving, merchandising, customer service, up to his current role working in Senior Management.

After graduating college, Ryan decided to start a retail and mail order snowboard business in Idaho. The company took off but was hindered by people’s lack of trust, at the time, for purchasing goods over the internet with credit cards. Ultimately the business expanded to 3 retail stores and Ryan owned it for 15 years before selling it in 2012. Not long after starting Ground Zero Snowboards, Ryan returned to the family business in Minnesota in a role that would be best described as start, grow, delegate, and move on. He started the RV Direct mail order division and helped grow the Herters Hunting division. These businesses were sold to Overtons in the late 1990’s. He has been responsible for the international expansion and disposition of various business units in Canada, the United Kingdom, China, Mexico, Chile and Australia. A recent project involved Ryan finding a 13 year-old girl in New Zealand who was making a product called the Kindling Cracker. Using his background and expertise in sales channels, he helped this young girl sell several millions of dollars of Kindling Crackers for her and having a dramatic impact on her life. Today, Ryan’s various businesses sell a vast array of products. They range from fart machines to tractors and power tools to hunting equipment and guns. His businesses generate in excess of $1.5 billion in annual revenue and employ over 3500 people in 19 states

Ryan regularly contributes to charitable organizations including organizing broomball tournaments to raise money for Make-a-Wish trips and funds for charitable causes including HopeKids.org, Children’s Cancer Research Fund, and Children’s Hospital of Minnesota. Ryan is an investor and advisor to Veterans Green and Veterans Green Coffee, organizations that hire veterans and provide them with training and jobs such as collecting and recycling electronics and roasting and selling coffee sold through retail channels. Volunteering is encouraged throughout his companies including paid time for employees to volunteer. A recent example of employees using their time to volunteer includes, employees building bunk beds in the back of one of the warehouses so that single mothers and their children who were escaping abusive homes had beds to sleep in.

Ryan holds a Bachelor of Science in Finance and Marketing from Boston College. Ryan has been an active member of the church throughout his life. He regularly volunteers his time including teaching Sunday School, vacation bible school and leading the AWANA Program for kids. Ryan is an active Broomball Player, achieving 3rd place in the 2014 Broomball World Cup, an active heli-skier, scuba diver, and triathlete. Ryan has been happily married to his wife Traci for 18 years. They live in Eden Prairie, Minnesota with their two sons, Kaeden and Carson.