

Is CrossFit Built for the Long Haul?

Trevor Chayer
University of the Incarnate Word

Ryan Lunsford
University of the Incarnate Word

This case study explores the unique business model of CrossFit Inc., a fitness company founded in 2000 by athletic trainers Greg Glassman and Lauren Jenai. (Cej, 2009) and based in Santa Cruz, California. CrossFit derives its revenue streams from a combination of global seminars, annual licensing fees from CrossFit affiliate owners, a clothing deal with Reebok, and an online journal (Helm, 2014). Its fast rise from a small, obscure gym in California to a worldwide phenomenon has created great curiosity related to its success. The case explores the CrossFit brand, the entrepreneurial model used to grow quickly and profitably, and the likelihood that its model will lead to sustainable, long-term profitability. The case also explores CrossFit from the perspective of an independent gym owner who chooses to brand their existing gym as CrossFit. The case concludes by considering recent controversies, criticisms, and lawsuits that CrossFit faces.