



KOMPANY39
THE GAME | THE MINDSET | THE STORY

HOW YORK IE HELPED KOMPANY39 EVOLVE FROM A VISION TO A BUSINESS.

Like countless boys who grew up skating on frozen Canadian ponds, Matt Fornataro dreamed of playing professional hockey. Unlike the vast majority of those starry-eyed youngsters, however, Matt reached his goal and played professionally in both the United States and Europe. But it was when he hung up his skates and retired his childhood dream that Fornataro began to dream bigger.

Matt had a vision of how to change the way professional athletes and fans interact. He brought that vision to life through Kompany39, a sports media company. Kompany39 does two major things: It helps athletes grow their digital profiles and increase fan engagement through authentic storytelling; and it also runs a digital platform that inspires the next generation of athletes by sharing first-person insights and training tips from the world's biggest superstars.

FROM THE BEGINNING, THE IDEA RESONATED WITHIN THE HOCKEY WORLD.

SITUATION

Kompany39 is a way to give this generation of aspiring young athletes a chance to get closer to that icon than ever before. Everyone I talk to about this idea, from athletes to parents, understands it and wants to get involved.

"We all had an idol, an icon we looked up to or pretended to be when we were young and in the driveway playing street hockey," Matt said. "Kompany39 is a way to give this generation of aspiring young athletes a chance to get closer to that icon than ever before. Everyone I talk to about this idea, from athletes to parents, understands it and wants to get involved."

That includes Matt's co-founder, NHL superstar Joe Pavelski, who was the first athlete to sign on to do a digital camp, which highlights the drills and mindset that made him a beloved sports figure. Since then, more have followed, and all of them have rallied around Matt's vision.

But while Matt had a strong and powerful vision, he needed help turning it into a business. So he turned to York IE for more than just capital investment; he wanted a partner.

“Working with the York IE team has completely changed the trajectory of Kompany39,” Matt said. “Kyle, Joe, Adam, Marshall — the entire team — have helped me with everything from pricing to website infrastructure to social media strategy. They have injected energy and life into my company in a way that has positively impacted my entire team.”

RESULT

August 2019, two short months after partnering with York IE, was Kompany39’s biggest month in terms of increases in sales, revenue, social followers and website traffic.

The largest impact has been on Matt himself, who has come into his own as CEO of Kompany39. Through working with York IE, Matt has identified the largest priorities for the company, which has enabled him to focus on impact. Additionally, York IE has helped create clear, defined roles for the other Kompany39 team members to allow them to have complete ownership of their disciplines. The results have had an obvious impact: August 2019, two short months after partnering with York IE, was Kompany39’s biggest month in terms of increases in sales, revenue, social followers and website traffic.

“Listen, I’m a former professional athlete,” said Matt. “I am still learning how to be a CEO. But the York IE team is coaching me, and I am a good student. I feel like they are as obsessed with Kompany39 as I am, and I also feel like they care about me as a person. I used to feel like I was alone. At times I couldn’t sleep. But I am more confident than ever that there are big things ahead.”

Matt won’t have to look far into the horizon to see those big things. This fall, Kompany39 will release its next batch of digital camps for youngsters that include international superstars. It will also formally launch its digital agent line of business and bring that to athletes across multiple sports.

All this momentum should help make it easier for Matt to sleep at night. And when he does, watch out. Who knows what else he’ll dream up and bring to life.

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MATT FORNATARO