



A STRATEGIC EVOLUTION IN THE FAST-PACED COURIER LOGISTICS ARENA

While Lady Luck might sometimes play a role, businesses are often better served by being intentional about their growth and sustainability. XDel's Director of Sales and Marketing, Eddie Lee shares how the Enterprise Leadership for Transformation (ELT) by SMU programme has honed his business acumen and strategic thinking, while inspiring future growth plans.



One of the most prominent players in the country's courier logistics industry, XDel is no stranger to change, transformation and collaboration. Established in 1993 by Founder and Managing Director Harold Lee as a modest two-man operation handling floral deliveries, XDel has since flourished into a significant player serving clients in sectors including manufacturing, banking, telecommunications and healthcare.

For continued expansion, deliberate and strategic actions are essential. This was shared by XDel's Director of Sales and Marketing, Eddie Lee. Recognising the significance of ongoing growth, Eddie participated in the programme, Enterprise Leadership for Transformation by SMU, in partnership with Enterprise Singapore, and supported by UOB.

The ELT by SMU programme is a year-long executive programme designed to strengthen leadership skills, business fundamentals and networks for leaders of promising small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME). It targets SMEs in the early stages of transformation that are looking to progress to their next stage of growth.

Eddie, who joined XDel in 2012 after nearly two decades in the mail logistics and fulfilment industry, has been instrumental in growing the business. Despite his substantial contributions, he remains humble and acknowledges the ongoing need for learning.

"The past decade has been a tremendous learning curve for me," Eddie reflects. "There was so much to learn from the other business owners in the programme, especially those who started from scratch and those from the second to the fifth generations who are stepping into their predecessors' shoes."

Detailing the goals

Eddie had clear objectives when he embarked on the Enterprise Leadership for Transformation programme: he wanted to understand how to expand XDel's business to gain a revenue of \$30 million within the next five years, and establish new markets and opportunities in the pharmaceutical and medical cold-chain industry.

After a decade with XDel, Eddie recognised the need to review the company's growth strategies in the existing industries it served. He observed that the banking and financial sectors' shift towards digitisation, which has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, meant a likely decrease in demand for physical document delivery services. Similarly, the



telecommunications sector presents limited growth opportunities. Despite the emergence of mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs), the market for telco subscriptions has matured. This suggests that “the growth from MVNOs would not be significant to carry XDel’s business forward” in this sector, Eddie shares, as the need for delivering SIM cards and handsets diminishes.

Consequently, the company is shifting its focus to the more promising healthcare industry for future expansion. XDel’s foray into serving the healthcare industry began during the pandemic with medication delivery contracts for public healthcare institutions. “While we were getting our feet wet with serving this industry, we realised we needed to create a better operational framework to support our work in healthcare, and started to learn and build our capabilities in this regard,” Eddie explains. Serving the healthcare industry then, as Eddie reveals, became the “cornerstone” of XDel’s business growth plan. This comprehensive framework, which was developed during the Enterprise Leadership for Transformation programme, includes detailed objectives, strategies and plans to achieve business expansion goals.



XDel Singapore’s Director of Sales and Marketing, Eddie Lee (in black jacket), and Project Specialist in Operations & Finance, Zheng Xiaver (in orange top), at a business growth plan presentation in the Enterprise Leadership for Transformation by SMU programme.



Accelerating towards success

To Eddie, the programme's inclusion of a coaching element was particularly beneficial, providing different perspectives on handling various business situations as well as much-needed clarity in thinking about certain decisions.

Reflecting on his experience in the course, Eddie acknowledges that it validated some of his past business decisions and invigorated him for the future. "I realise the journey I've taken at XDel is very much aligned with what I've learnt and practised in the programme," he notes. "I can now understand that growth has to be structured and intentional, and not left to chance."

Eddie emphasises the programme's role in shaping his approach to business growth. For instance, learning about business growth planning during the programme underscored the importance of asking critical questions about how to develop the business.

Charting new routes together

Indeed, collaboration plays a crucial role in business growth, a fact that Eddie took away during the programme. He emphasises the significance of the networking and collaboration opportunities with fellow SME leaders and participants – which have extended even beyond the programme's conclusion. For example, he connected with a major player in the international healthcare cold-chain logistics industry, which has been a valuable link as XDel explores expanding its footprint in this sector within Singapore. The network that he has gained during the programme has also helped him expand on the learning journey after graduation, Eddie adds.

Now, in Eddie's interactions with other business leaders at various events, he naturally finds himself sharing his positive experience of the ELT programme. To him, it is "second nature". He encourages SME leaders to take the leap, saying, "Embark on the programme and go through the transformation for yourself!"