

A Conversation With Francois Leconte of Findal Media on Growing WDFL-TV Through the Revolving Loan Fund



FINDAL MEDIA AND WDFL-TV

Location: Sunrise, FL

Industry: Independent Broadcast Media

As part of its Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) borrower profile series, the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) spoke with Mr. Francois Leconte of Findal Media, operator of WDFL-TV. In this conversation, Mr. Leconte shares how RLF support contributed to the launch and growth of the minority-owned independent station and reflects on WDFL-TV's role as a locally focused community media resource serving South Florida's Haitian and Hispanic communities.



Since 2002, the SFRPC RLF has provided capital assistance in excess of \$52.00MM to over 180 small/medium size businesses in the South Florida Region while helping save or create over 2,050 jobs. Currently, the RLF's active portfolio supports businesses in 33 municipalities and across 90 industries, demonstrating broad regional and economic impact.

WHAT CONCRETE CHANGES HAVE YOU SEEN SINCE RECEIVING THE LOAN?

Since receiving RLF support, WDFL-TV has experienced measurable and tangible growth. We expanded our original programming slate, including locally produced news, public affairs, cultural, and community-focused content designed for underserved Haitian and Hispanic audiences.

The new studio build-out has significantly enhanced our production capacity, allowing us to produce higher-quality content in-house, host live broadcasts, and support multi-platform distribution across terrestrial television, streaming, and digital channels.

HOW HAS THIS GROWTH BENEFITED SOUTH FLORIDA COMMUNITIES?

Our growth has strengthened WDFL-TV's role as a community media anchor in South Florida. With improved facilities and expanded programming, we are better positioned to amplify local voices, cover community issues often overlooked by mainstream outlets, and provide culturally relevant content that reflects the diversity of our region.

Economically, our expansion has supported local jobs through direct hiring and through the use of local vendors, contractors, production crews, and small businesses.

HOW DID THE RLF SUPPORT THE GROWTH OR EXPANSION OF WDFL-TV?

The RLF was instrumental in enabling WDFL-TV to grow in ways that traditional financing simply would not allow in today's broadcast environment. As a minority-owned television company, access to conventional bank capital was extremely limited due to the capital-intensive nature of broadcasting, evolving media economics, and the perceived risk associated with independent stations.

The initial RLF loan made it possible for us to launch operations, secure essential broadcast and production equipment, and establish the foundation of WDFL-TV. More recently, an RLF loan enabled us to undertake a full studio build-out in Sunrise—an investment that would not have been feasible without patient, mission-aligned capital.



WHY WAS THE RLF THE RIGHT FINANCING OPTION?

The RLF recognized both the economic challenges and the community value of independent broadcasting. Unlike traditional lenders, the SFRPC RLF understood our business model, growth trajectory, and public-service mission.

The flexible structure, reasonable terms, and developmental approach of the RLF aligned with the realities of building a broadcast operation—where returns are long-term and capital needs are front-loaded. Just as importantly, the RLF demonstrated confidence in Findal Media and WDFL-TV at a time when many financial institutions were unwilling to engage with broadcast startups at all.



WHAT WOULD YOU TELL OTHER SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS CONSIDERING AN RLF LOAN?

I would strongly encourage other small business owners—especially those in capital-intensive or underserved industries—to consider the SFRPC RLF. Securing funding in today's environment is extremely challenging, particularly for minority-owned companies and media businesses.

The SFRPC RLF provided us with the capital and credibility needed to move from startup to sustainable growth. For businesses that are mission-driven, community-focused, and prepared to execute, the RLF can be a transformative tool that bridges the gap left by traditional financing and enables long-term economic and social impact.

ABOUT THE SFRPC REVOLVING LOAN FUND

The South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) provides low-interest financing to support small and medium-sized businesses in Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties. Established more than 20 years ago, the RLF is designed to meet the credit needs of entrepreneurs and businesses not served by conventional lenders, helping spur economic development, job creation, and community investment across South Florida.

To learn more about the SFRPC RLF or how to apply, please contact Senior Loan Officer Jeffrey Tart at 954-924-3653 or jtart@sfrpc.com.



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