

## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

# FOOT SOLUTIONS A HEALTHIER YOU, STEP BY STEP

**C**hris Cole didn't start out in the foot business, but when he saw an opportunity to be a business owner he not only seized the chance, he jumped feet first into learning all he could about helping people find the right shoes. Now he's the owner of Foot Solutions in Estero.

The New Jersey native moved to Southwest Florida six years ago and began working as a front office manager at the Ritz Carlton in Naples. While he did enjoy his job, Cole had much bigger plans.

"I always wanted to start my own business," he said.

So he began looking at different business models to see what might be successful in Southwest Florida.

"Foot Solutions had a great model," Cole explained. "I thought it would have a great fit here."

It also had all the components he was looking for in a career.

"I could still work with people and run my own business," he said.

Cole has a business degree from Clemson University in South Carolina, so he already knew the business side of his new career. But he wanted to learn more about feet. So he took classes to become a National Board Certified pedorthist. His expertise includes footwear for diabetics and working with Medicare patients.

Foot Solutions isn't your average shoe store. Nobody just walks in and pulls shoes



>>> Chris Cole, owner of Foot Solutions, stands beside one of the high tech tools used to determine the best type of footwear for an individual's foot.

off the shelf. Instead each customer works with Cole to find the perfect shoe. He puts customer's feet in special high tech equipment that analyzes the mechanics and shape of the foot, the pressure distribution and the way the person walks. Then he matches the shoe to the foot. Cole said he spends about 30 minutes with each customer.

Most of Cole's customers have problems with their feet, but Cole said Foot Solutions

isn't just for people with sore feet.

"We're more than a shoe store," he explained. "We want to educate people about the feet and about how important it is to your body and a lot of times it is neglected," Cole said.

Cole is also luring in customers concerned about the environment. He said the average sneaker's mid sole takes 1,000 years to disappear in a landfill. But Cole sells a new shoe by Brooks that is bio

degradable and disappears 50 times faster.

"They are now starting that technology in other shoes too," he said.

■ FOOT SOLUTIONS is located in Corkscrew Village-Estero on the corner of U.S. 41 and Corkscrew Road. For more information call (239) 495-8911 or visit [www.footsolutions.com/estero](http://www.footsolutions.com/estero).

