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The Science Entrepreneur Making Waves in Water Treatment

When Paige Peters's advisor for her masters project at Marquette University suggested she take her project and turn it into a business, she was dumbfounded. A student of science, Peters had a dream to help deliver clean water quickly, and as part of her masters program, in 2016, she had been working on developing a new technology to treat sewage in just 30 minutes. But not once in her life had she ever considered the business world or ever learned a thing about setting up a company.

Fast-forward to today, and Rapid Radicals Technology LLC, founded by Peters, is one of the most promising startups in the environmental sector. The company aims to help with the cleanup and recovery process in the aftermath of sewage overflows, floods and storms by replacing water treatment infrastructure with her revolutionary new process.

Her system is now in testing on a huge shipping container in Lake Michigan. Under current technology, the treatment of sewage usually takes between eight and 14 hours. Peters's process is a staggering 16 times faster, rapidly cleaning sewage and turning it into pure, drinkable water in half an hour.

The company was able to get this far thanks to grants from a scientific community that recognized the incredible potential of her innovation. She won a \$50,000 grant from Marquette's Enterprise Seed Fund shortly after launch and has since raised somewhere around \$1.4 million, including a sizable chunk from the National Science Foundation's Small Business Innovation Research fund.

Her lack of expertise in business has clearly not held her back at all, even though it almost made her choose the wrong name for the company. Originally, she planned to name it Radical Waters until her late comical realization that it sounded like a water park. Thankfully, she came around before it was too late and appears set to become an important name in the history of green technology.

How to Win Big in Today's Economy

The altered economic landscape presents innovative and nimble businesses with opportunities to thrive. Find out how by requesting my free report "How to Win Big in Today's Economy."

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Volunteer Time Off: What Is It and Should You Consider It?

You may have heard the phrase "volunteer time off" or VTO before, but what actually is it? In the simplest terms, VTO is where companies offer their employees paid time off to volunteer for a charity or nonprofit cause.

Volunteer time off isn't the same as using your precious vacation days to work elsewhere. Instead, companies with a strong sense of social responsibility offer you time to participate. In the United States, 21% of companies already offer VTO, with that number promising to go up.

So why offer VTO?

Most Millennials and members of Gen Z who are entering the workforce are more attracted to companies that have a history of social activism. Being able to offer top talent a chance to do some good for their community (and their company) while still gainfully employed is a huge perk.

VTO policies also help employee retention. Your workforce is more likely to stay for longer and put in the effort if they feel like those efforts are helping the greater good.

Why participate in VTO?

Volunteering can help your career as well as give you valuable life skills and unforgettable experiences. It will also give you the chance to get out of your comfort zone and learn more about a cause you may have an interest in.

What are the drawbacks?

Losing an employee is always a drawback of offering any type of time off. It may also be worth setting ground rules for the type of volunteering your employees can sign up for. That way, you can also vet charities to make sure they fall in line with your company's values.

How to implement VTO

How will you track and validate employee volunteerism? How will employees request time off? All are achievable but must be put in place before considering undertaking a VTO scheme.

Worth Reading

120 Holiday Gift Ideas for Employees, Coworkers and Clients

Annie Pilon
Small Biz Trends

Shopping for holiday gifts can be stressful at the best of times, but what about finding just the right thing for your work family? This helpful piece from Small Biz Trends lays out a multitude of different items ranging from \$5 bargains to \$100. There's even a section just for Secret Santa.

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Small Ways Any Size Company Can Make a Big Difference in the World

Kevin Daum
Inc.

With everything going on in the world and on our planet, doing the right thing can feel tough, especially as a business. But if there's one thing that would be good to remember, it's that small things can make a big difference. This article from *Inc.* runs through a list of ways you can do your part to make the world a better place.

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Are You Using the Power of Referrals for Your Business?

Word of mouth is still one of the most important factors in creating a successful business. Whether that's raving to your friends about a fabulous meal you enjoyed at a new restaurant or posting an endorsement on social media, people trust the opinions of other people. This is commonly known as peer-to-peer marketing. So how can you use this to your advantage?

Referrals are king

Referrals are the best way a business or freelancer can use peer-to-peer marketing. In fact, according to the 2022 Mailchimp & Co. Benchmark Report, 48% of freelancers said that "client referrals are—far and away—the best way to bring in new clients."

So how do you get referrals?

First, create a strategy for retaining clients. One way to do this is by making sure you are authentic. The ease of the internet has meant that empty promises and fraudsters are easier to find than ever. Cut through the noise. Focus on what you do well and make that your USP (unique selling proposition).

Listen to your clients

Client feedback is one of the best ways to make sure you're improving year over year. Also, if

your clients feel heard and respected, not only are they more likely to become lifelong clients, but they will also be much more likely to recommend you.

Offer a referral program

Appreciate your clients if they go out of the way to recommend your business. Offer them a perk or reward. That way, not only will you get something out of it, but they will too.

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Links You Can Use - Content Creation

Creating content is such a major theme when it comes to marketing we almost forget to keep up to date with the latest trends. Here are some links that can help refresh your memory.

Content Creation: How to Create Great Web Content

If the idea of content creation is new to you, take a peek at this helpful article from Conductor that runs through all the basics.

[Read More](#)

Content Writing: How to Write and Order Different Types of Content

Writing content is one of the main pillars of marketing. Read this piece from SEMrush for all the good tips.

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7 Easy Tips for Effective Content Writing

Writing good content is what search engines use to drive traffic to your site. Here are seven tips on how to make the best of it.

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Creating Original Content For Social Media: Photography Tips & Tricks

A picture paints a thousand words, so here are some photography tips to create an eye-catching social media grid.

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Start Your Fourth Quarter with These 5 Things

Believe it or not, the fourth quarter is officially upon us, which means it's time to start prepping for the new year and the final quarter of this one. As a business owner, this time might feel a bit

overwhelming, but don't fret. We've compiled this handy checklist to make sure you get your fourth quarter started right and prepare you for all 2023 has in store.

Profit and loss statement

Arguably one of the most important things to do during this period is check where you stand. If you're lucky enough to have made a profit on your endeavors, you may want to consider making a cash purchase that can be depreciated. Speak to your accountant about depreciation.

Create budgets for the new year

While this may feel like a first-quarter job, it's actually much better to be prepared and get them out of the way this quarter. While looking through your profit statement and your spending, you'll be able to put together a detailed plan for your business. This also makes a lot of sense if your fiscal year coincides with the calendar year.

Perform a website audit

If you're planning to obtain new clients in the new year (and keep your current ones) it's best to factor in an end-of-year website audit. Make sure all the links are working, no error pages crop up anywhere and all the information you display is up to date. You don't want potential clients trying to contact an out-of-use email address.

Backup your files

There would be nothing worse than losing a year's worth of client information and data. Even though it's a good idea to regularly back up all your files, making a habit of it in the fourth quarter can do no harm.

Hold a strategic planning session for the new year

The best way to do business is not to do it alone. Hold a planning session with your leadership board, management and key employees, staff and even customers to best figure out what works and what you shouldn't bring into the next year with you.



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