

Press Release

Turning obstacles into tools to redirect your company, career

Part of the small business survival kit: have the ability to respond to situations

Cindy Kent, Sun Sentinel

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Who: Jennifer Green



What: Green is founder of Gift Xpressions and Lasting Impressions, LLC in Plantation a provider of all-occasion centerpieces, gift baskets and party favors; DJ/karaoke services and floral delivery.

Back story: Originally, Green launched a baby gift company in 2007 under another business name. But when another company claimed the same moniker, she saw opportunity to move forward.

When she really thought about how she had grown beyond just providing baby gifts, the set back was, well, a gift to her. She didn't initially see it that way, though.

"At first it was devastating," said Green. "I had invested a lot of money in branding, and for a small business, that was substantial." She also learned from her mistake of not properly registering and trade marking her business name. "But coming up with a new name gave me the opportunity to rebrand and remarket myself."

Along with advertising her company's new name – she showcased new products and services. She partnered with a DJ company. "I realized how much I'd really grown," Green said.

In fact, diversifying helps, 'bridge the slow times,' Green said. "I emphasize to corporate clients to send customer or employee appreciations at times other than holidays, because the general idea is to be remembered."

While accepting change and rolling with the punches in some areas, Green is steadfast in others. She's a member of her local chamber of commerce. She joined an NPI networking referral chapter. She volunteers and donates to local charities.

Green participates in business expos. "This is a very visual company," she said. "People who see my work get a chance to ask questions."

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Green says consumers should expect a seamless gift-giving experience as part of their customer service. The company should be able to work with your budget, she says. Can you reach the owner? How easy is the process? Green is accessible online, through Facebook and by phone.

She's methodical and deliberate about marketing so she doesn't over-reach her abilities. "I don't like to be aggressive, it's a turn-off," Green said. "But it's important to have that elevator speech ready too, I have to be able to put it out there that I do have these services and products."

Take away: Bumps in the road create opportunities to refocus and re-energize the business, says Green. Planning ahead, staying close to clients and people who can recommend you helps pave the way when times are rough and business is slow.

Protect your reputation, says Green. Don't spread yourself too thin, especially as a one-person business. To be thought of as that go-to person, you can't be frazzled or disorganized.

Resources:

Have a reading library. Business owners should develop their own shelf of resources and materials they can refer to from time to time. Green started hers with business start up books from the "For Dummies," series.

Get business advice. Ask your local bank for business financial planning material; or new business start-up kit, or pamphlets on banking tips for businesses.

Use analytical tools. They help you measure your success. Find ways to get customer feedback from surveys, follow calls and letters.

Details: MyGiftXpressions.com 954-475-1328.

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