

Nancy Kelly & Enjay Enterprises

Nancy Kelly graduated from St. Lawrence College in 1992 and after working in clinics for many years she started her own company in August 2005. Enjay Enterprises specializes in manufacturing and selling unique and highly innovative odour control products that are non toxic, bio degradable and totally Canadian made. The first year since launching the company last August has been a steep learning curve and not one dull day!

Nancy has already expanded the line to 9 products and she is working towards having 12 products by the end of this year. A new retail line will be launched by the end of the year with a different line of products.

Presently Nancy is finalizing distribution deals across Canada and is researching the potential of exporting into US by the end of this year although production will remain 100% Canadian. She already has 2 part-time employees and many volunteers with family and friends that are as excited as Nancy about the company.



*Nancy Kelly
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The Veterinary Technician as an Entrepreneur

Why did you start the company?

Many members of my family are entrepreneurs so the concept of doing this came quite naturally. After working in clinics for many years I felt that I had reached my career potential as a vet tech, I was turning 40 and thought this was a perfect time to make a change!

I didn't want to leave the animal health field altogether and knew I could put my years of knowledge and experience to good use. I was looking for a different approach and I took a hard look at what was happening in the industry and what was happening in my career and decided that I had good ideas, a strong work ethic and was ready to take my future into my own hands.



What are the most difficult things that you found in starting your own business?

I actually took a formal course on entrepreneurship, on how to start your own business which helped tremendously. Running your own business is a huge responsibility and sometimes that becomes daunting. It was a difficult step to give up a reliable income and step into an unknown future. Everything that I had known in my work of 15 years was over and I walked into a steep learning curve. There are no benefits, no guaranteed pay and no security. It's a completely different way to live your life.

What are the good parts of running your own company?

It's quite different. I don't have to work for anyone and can run the company how I choose using my knowledge and experience from my past work history.

The company is ahead of where it should be statistically which is very satisfying and it is a great feeling that we are further ahead than where we should (or could) be. Unwavering support and encouragement from veterinary staff, friends, family and business coaches in why Enjay Enterprises is achieving this level of success. I am very fortunate.

Based on this experience, do you have recommendations for other technicians who may consider starting their own company?

You have to fully arm yourself with a good education. Taking extra business and marketing courses is very beneficial. It is proven that 80% of small companies fail in the first year and half of the companies that make it through to the second year fail. You cannot go into starting your own company without having solid knowledge behind you, know the field thoroughly and have the support of the people around you.

My advice is: don't burn any bridges during your career. You don't have to be best friends with everyone you work with but you do have to be professional at all times. I run into people now that I went to school with or worked with years ago. They remember me and want to do business with me because I left every situation on good terms and this is now paying dividends as I promote my own business.

*Nancy was interviewed by Cass Bayley, Editor
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