

The Gift of Entrepreneurial thinking

by Lauren Allen



My mom and I love a company named Strawberry Tree Farms, so we thought that we should find a way to get more people to fall in love with it, too. Strawberry Tree Farms is a packaged food company that sells pancake mixes, soup mixes and seasonings, among other items. Decorating and packaging is a passion of mine, and I love to add my special flair to everything I decorate. My mom and I decided to make gift baskets that include food from Strawberry Tree Farms. Once we found an investor, my dad, we began researching where we were going to get the baskets, merchandise, and supplies to start our company.

The biggest challenge we have faced is making the purchasing decisions of buying retail or wholesale. Retail would cause us to charge higher prices to our customers for our gift baskets. Wholesale would cause us to get large quantities of everything we purchased. It is also difficult knowing that we will not receive much of a profit after our first party since we have to first pay back our investor before we share the profit. It might be a while before it becomes worth it.

I have grown up in a house of entrepreneurs—my mom is a director for Mary Kay cosmetics and my dad has a consulting business with his friend. My dad has given me a lot of advice on how to run the business. My business, Gifts & Gourmet, is still just starting out. We are in the executing stage where we are getting all of the products and accessories that we need to put the baskets together. We have an open house on December 5th that is going to show off all of our hard work and we hope it will be a good start to our business. I do not like planning anything; I would prefer to act rather than thinking and deciding on all the details. My mom and I are perfect business partners because she would plan for months if she could and I am fast to rush into things. I plan to have this business on the side to do when I get the chance. School and swimming take priority at this point in my life. That is one reason why it is great to be an entrepreneur.

My website, laurenallen.com, is being used for Gifts & Gourmet to showcase products, baskets, and gift ideas for all occasions. My dad is using his consulting ideas to put my website together and have a place to order online before the open house. We plan on sending out emails every six weeks to customers, telling them of more gift ideas and current holiday gift baskets. My mom has found that it is good to keep the product in front of them so that they do not forget about it. However, there is a fine line to not bombard them with information and scare them away. I am hoping that this business teaches me a lot of life skills and hope to benefit greatly from the opportunities it hands me. □

