

My Favorite Entrepreneur Resolutions for 2013

By Kelsey Meyer

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Happy 2013! It's now time to make some changes to your organization. Whether you decide to make a personal resolution or one for the whole company, a purposeful New Year's resolution can make all the difference for your 2013 success. I spoke to entrepreneurs with unique resolutions to get some inspiration for my own. While the resolutions were all unique, they hit a few key areas.

The Fun Resolutions:

It is important to remember the fun when setting goals for the new year. These entrepreneurs are doing it really well. My Social Cloud is a company that allows you to manage your online life by keeping your passwords and important URLs in the cloud.

"As my company has grown, it has been difficult to scale the fun. This year we are resolving to have more fun," said founder Scott Ferreira.

Some examples Scott gave included plans to host movie nights in the office and taking the team on a retreat to Arizona.

Cacey Holloran, founder of Costa Rican Vacations, is resolving to bring the fun back to their organization. He started Costa Rican Vacations nine years ago, and as their company has grown to more than 85 employees, he says that their mission for fun has been put on the back burner.

Casey plans to re-vamp the fun by going all out with their Funny Money auction this year. Employees are given Funny Money throughout the year for doing good things. It's a way to recognize employees who are not always the standout stars but who are putting in good work. Once a year, they host an auction where people can use their Funny Money to purchase awesome items like iPads. I loved this idea so much I decided we would start to implement it with my company Digital Talent Agents (resolution inspiration No.1).

Even companies that can't have in-person experiences are hoping to increase the fun in 2013. Benji Rabhan, founder and CEO of MorrisCore, said his New Year's resolution is to continue working at perfecting his virtual company culture.

The Giving Back and Growing Resolutions:

Another common trend in the entrepreneurs' New Year's resolutions was companies resolving to give back and grow their business simultaneously.

Chris Peacock, creator of HandSteady — a cup that makes drinking easy again for those with medical conditions like arthritis — has resolved to begin partnering with not-for-profits in an affiliate relationship so that the not-for-profits could raise funds by raising awareness for Hand Steady. I found this really intriguing as I'm familiar with affiliate marketing but had not heard of it being used by not-for-profits to raise funds. Since the not-for-profits he is targeting have members who could really benefit from HandSteady, it seems like a match made in heaven!

Chris Luck, founder of Appiteks, wants to give back by teaching others. He's built a successful app company and now wants to pass on that knowledge.

"My New Year's resolution for 2013 is to teach as many people as I can to build a successful app business in this tough economy," he said.

Another entrepreneur who is resolving to grow by giving back is Joe D. with Yellow Leaf Hammocks. Joe had a rather lofty resolution of completely ending dependence on slash and burn agriculture for 100 people in Thailand. Joe's company works with people in Thailand who weave the hammocks and make 600 percent more doing this than their family would performing slash and burn agriculture for a month. He hopes to provide steady work to 100 people in Thailand through their new partnership with Kiva. Now the workers in Thailand can raise loans through Kiva to purchase the materials, and Yellow Leaf Hammocks will sell the hammocks for them and pay them for the continued work.

The Slowing Down Resolutions:

The previous companies' resolutions have all required a lot of action and work. The last two entrepreneurs I spoke with are resolving to change something small in the way they or their companies work in order to spark bigger changes within the organization.

Elle Kaplan, founder of Lexicon Capital — an investment firm owned 100 percent by women — is resolving to take more walks in Central Park with her dog. She says the time she takes on a walk gives her the opportunity to think strategically about the company and make major moves forward. She believes that the fresh air and the action of walking are great for creativity.

UrbanBound.com is a web-based platform that helps companies offer a comprehensive transition system to their newly hired and transferring employees. CEO Michael Krasman has resolved to listen more than he speaks in 2013. Michael told me that he resolved to do this in 2012 and made great strides, but there is always room to improve, and he wants the rest of his team to improve with him.

While Michael will be listening to others, Nicole Cook is resolving to listen to herself.

"In 2013, my resolution is that no matter where I am or what I'm doing, I want to listen to the voice that is in my heart and recognize that opportunities that seem to come out of nowhere aren't just coincidence," she said.
