

KILLER VARS

SPECIALIZING IN SUCCESS

Capitalizing on Compliance

Linda Bryan

Terrorism put a hold on much of the manufacturing industry's production following September 11. At the time, Tamlin Software Developers only had about three customers for which it customized accounting software, and Linda Bryan needed to find a way to keep her Dallas company afloat.

Because one of her customers was a tortilla manufacturer with three locations, she decided to concentrate on the food industry, reasoning that even in troubling times people have to eat.

The software Tamlin had developed to integrate with AccountMate's inventory and accounting databases, Manufacturing Conductor, contains features that allow companies to trace the ingredients in food products as well as produce audit trails and inspection records.

Linda Bryan

Tamlin Software Developers

Dallas

Founded: 1991

Offices: 2

Employees: 12

Revenue: \$3.2million (AT estimate)

Products: AccountMate, Manufacturing Conductor, Profit

Tips for Success: Know your niches' problems better than they do.



On day she met a food science doctor who informed her that the software was "bioterrorism compliant."

As luck would have it, the U.S. government, fearing terrorists would poison this country's food supply, in December 2004 had signed new legislation into the Bioterrorism Act of 2002 requiring food manufacturers to keep records tracing food sources and their recipients and maintain them for up to two years depending on the product. All but the smallest of businesses had one year to adhere to these rules.

So Bryan decided to capitalize on her already compliant product. She slowly began adding a total of six resellers, which allowed her to increase sales without hiring additional staff. In August 2005, Tamlin conducted a seminar about bioterrorism compliance, and the response was so overwhelming Bryan had to stop marketing to keep up with all the business she had closed.

Tamlin's concentration on this niche has proven advantageous when competing for deals.

"Food manufacturers are not nearly as knowledgeable as we are about the bioterrorism laws, so we're a huge value-add. When you walk in and the competition is there, you're the one that has a product that can really solve the problem," Bryan says. "We usually get the competition off the table pretty quickly in the food arena, even against the bigger manufacturing packages."

Another field where traceability is important is high-end jewelry manufacturers who want to know the history of the precious metals in their

wares. Following the September 11 attacks, Bryan learned that sales of high-end jewelry tend to increase in tough economic times because wealthier people have to work harder and therefore buy more for their spouses. So she decided to make that another key market.

Tamlin's growth has earned the business AccountMate's top Sales ward for the Midwest Region for the past three years, and in 2007 it earned recognition as the No. 1 seller of maintenance agreements and SQL installations worldwide.

Bryan anticipates her company will double its revenue this year and says Tamlin will continue to focus on the food industry and conduct several mini-seminars given the positive responses and intense interest.

Now, she's ensuring she can support the growing demand. In February 2006, she acquired one of her resellers, Sacramento, California-based MKT Software Designs, recruiting that company's president as Tamlin's chief technology office to handle the growth. The move added 15 large customers to the roughly 135 she had and about 180 users of MKT Tolls, a set of add-on programs for VisualAccountMate.

She also purchased an enterprise revenue management software program called Softrax to assist with scheduling and billing issues specific to the software industry.

"The real trick for us is to be able to staff up and manage our internal systems and our internal quality to keep up with the opportunity that we have now," Bryan says.

By Alexandra DeFelice