

Vancouver sisters turn a simple, effective idea into an international business



Kim Cassar Torreggiani and Vikki Olson

Vikki Olson and Kim Cassar Torreggiani have accomplished a lot in their careers. Between them, the sisters have worked for airlines, TV and radio, charities, politicians, major sporting events, international giftware companies, and Internet start-ups. All this, plus the hardest job of all, raising their families.

Today, their home-based company, That Marketing Ltd., has scored a hit with The Original Waspinator, an environmentally friendly wasp solution that mimics an enemy nest, keeping territorial wasps away. The product is being carried by big-name retailers such as Ace Hardware, Miegers, Home Hardware, Overwaitea/Save-On Foods, Shopper's Drug Mart, Pharmasave, Minter Gardens, Art Knapps, and Garden Works. It is also being sold in parts of Europe.

They knew they had the right idea when, while having a family barbeque, the wasps were so bad that Vikki pulled out her homemade version of the Waspinator and put it up next to the table. "It really worked," says Kim. "Then we had a

conversation about manufacturing and marketing it. We knew that if we didn't do it, someone else would, and we'd be saying, 'We could have done that.' We decided right then and there that we should go for it.

"Chemical sprays are terrible for the environment, plus they kill the wasps, which play an important role in nature," says Kim. "If you look at the label, it says to keep it away from children, dogs, cats, animals, water sources, and so on. Wasp traps involve a pretty disgusting clean-up process. Plus, pheromones from dead wasps attract other wasps from its group. The Waspinator is an environmentally safe deterrent. It's essentially a scarecrow for wasps."

Response to the product has been overwhelming. So far in 2006, sales have more than doubled and vendors are clamoring for shipments. The Waspinator has also been featured in media nationwide, including Shell Busey's HouseSmart home discovery show. Says Vikki, "Shell had us on his show the weekend after our US launch. He even gave out my cell phone

number! I got about 1500 calls and would spend hours calling each person back. It was a great experience—it was fantastic to speak to so many people across the country about their wasp problems and the solutions they've tried that didn't work. So many people wished us the best of luck because they loved the idea of two sisters making it in the business world."

Both feel that the dynamic is a large part of the company's success. "We were very happy to discover that we can do both, manage an international company and have a family life," says Kim. "There are so many advantages to working together. We can completely trust each other, and if we don't agree on something, we can easily voice it. The biggest disadvantage is that we can't get together—or even talk on the phone—without talking business!"

