

How to Start a Vegan Business

December 2012 Twitter Chat transcript

Wednesday, December 5 @ 6pm PST/9pm PST

We'll talk with successful vegan business owners about how to launch and run your own vegan enterprise.

Special Guests: Eat Pastry ([@Eat_Pastry](#)), Vegan Essentials ([@VeganEssentials](#)), VegNews Media's Colleen Holland ([@ColleenHolland](#)), and Veggie Grill ([@VeggieGrill](#))

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

(beginning of chat starts at the end)



- [about 3 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A7: Veggie Grill guests are omnivores...critically important given the relatively small # of vegans (2-4%) [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 9 hours ago](#) RT [@ColleenHolland](#): Keep up the amazing work, [@VeggieGrill](#), [@VeganEssentials](#), [@Eat_Pastry](#). Vegan businesses ROCK! [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 9 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): We were frustrated with our inability to find delicious, convenient, wholesome food [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A5: This does not feel like work to me...When someone tells you "thank you for opening", that's not work! [#vegnewschat](#)



- [mushaboom](#) [about 14 hours ago](#) Giving vegans another food option & happy customers :)“[@VegNews](#): What's been the biggest reward of starting a vegan business?” [#vegnewschat](#)



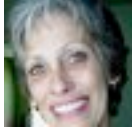
- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A7: Veggie Grill guests are omnivores...critically important given the relatively small # of vegans (2-4%) [#vegnewschat](#)



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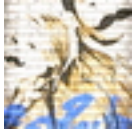
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@ColleenHolland](#) : Keep up the amazing work, [@VeggieGrill](#), [@VeganEssentials](#), [@Eat Pastry](#). Vegan businesses ROCK! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) [@ColleenHolland](#) Congrats on your success. Great market you're serving for years to come. [#vegnewschat](#)



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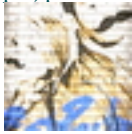
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) [@VeggieGrill](#) you just gave me chills with that one. Seriously <3 [#vegnewschat](#)



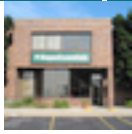
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Loved being here with all of you...have a terrific Holiday! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) LOVE MT [@VeggieGrill](#): Biggest reward: my children are proud of what I have co-created, which helps people, planet & animals. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) we're honored to have shared this space with you all today [@VeggieGrill](#) [@VeganEssentials](#) [@VegNews@ColleenHolland](#) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) [@VegNews](#) Thank you for having us! We appreciate the opportunity! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) A14: Biggest reward: my children are proud of what I have co-created, which helps people, the planet and the animals. [#vegnewschat](#)



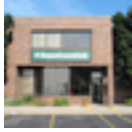
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Keep up the amazing work, [@VeggieGrill](#), [@VeganEssentials](#), [@Eat Pastry](#). Vegan businesses ROCK![#vegnewschat](#)



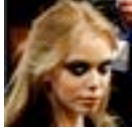
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) It's time to wrap up the [#vegan](#) business chat. A transcript will be posted at noon tomorrow. Thanks again and good night! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A13: We also intend to eat plenty of [@Eat Pastry](#), shop [@VeganEssentials](#), and read [@VegNews](#)! [#vegnewschat](#)



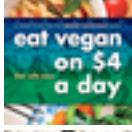
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) A14: Another vote for being able to turn your passion into a career, that's something few people get to know the pleasure of. [#vegnewschat](#)



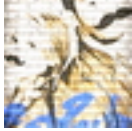
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A13: We also intend to eat plenty of [@Eat_Pastry](#), shop [@VeganEssentials](#), and read [@VegNews!](#) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@bordenteam](#): Hey [@VegNews](#) - did you hear that [@SFTEBakery](#) just launched their [#vegan](#) cookie dough in Canada? Incredible!!!! [#vegnewschat](#)



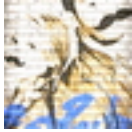
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@VeganEssentials](#): A14: So many great rewards, it isn't easy to pick! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) [@VegNews](#) thank you so much for having us! It's been a blast! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) A14: A big one, of course, is knowing how many animal-based products were NOT purchased because of what we have sold over time. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A13: We also intend to eat plenty of [@Eat_Pastry](#), shop [@VeganEssentials](#), and read [@VegNews!](#) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#) A10: The vegan business consultant Lisa Shapiro ([@allthingsvegan](#)) in Boulder is a font of great data & advice [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) A14: So many great rewards, it isn't easy to pick! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) RT [@ColleenHolland](#) :Biggest reward? Turning my passion into my livelihood and (hopefully) making a difference every single day. [#vegnewschat](#)



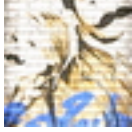
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) A13: We also intend to eat plenty of [@Eat_Pastry](#), shop [@VeganEssentials](#), and read [@VegNews!](#) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Many thanks to [@VeggieGrill](#) [@ColleenHolland](#) [@Eat_Pastry](#) [@VeganEssentials](#) for their sage advice and for everyone who joined! [#vegnewschat](#)



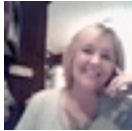
- [about 14 hours ago](#) Q14: Biggest reward? Turning my passion into my livelihood and (hopefully) making a difference every single day. #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) @VegNews Q14: biggest reward is definitely the enjoyment people get from something we take so much pride in #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @VeggieGrill: RT @ColleenHolland_: A little cash + perseverance goes a long way. #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @VegNews: Q5: In response, how do you avoid burnout? MT @VeganEssentials: A4: When in doubt, start slowly. #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @VeggieGrill: Q13: ... ALL people can enjoy every day without feeling that they have sacrificed enjoyment. #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @ColleenHolland_: A little cash + perseverance goes a long way. #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @Eat_Pastry: Q13: our future plans are to keep grinding and working at what we love. Probably eat a lot of cookie dough too #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) A13: Continuing to showcase the vegan lifestyle as one that's positive, fun, enriching—with zero deprivation. #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @ColleenHolland_: Great ideas dont always need oodles of cash to turn into a successful business. #vegnewschat



- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @VeggieGrill A8: Constant vigilance, testing, reading, communicating with our guests #vegnewschat <http://t.co/rqOilTsy>



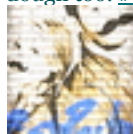
- [about 14 hours ago](#) RT @VeggieGrill A8: Constant vigilance, testing, reading, communicating with our guests #vegnewschat <http://t.co/3XHRk3uw>



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Q13: ... ALL people can enjoy every day without feeling that they have sacrificed enjoyment. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) YES! MT [@Eat_Pastry](#): Q13: our future plans are to keep working at what we love. Probably eat a lot of cookie dough too. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) [@VegNews](#) Q12: let's just say a lot of rice in beans in our life the first few years. Who am I kidding. We still eat that [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) A13: Our plans are to grow as much as possible, and to keep the vegan community happy with what we supply to them for products! [#vegnewschat](#)



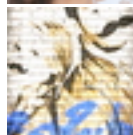
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Great ideas don't always need oodles of cash to turn into a successful business. A little cash + perseverance goes a long way. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Q13: We intend to redefine the way people eat, talk & think when it comes to vegetarian food by offering options that ... [#vegnewschat](#)



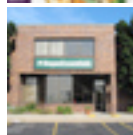
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) [@VeggieGrill](#) Congrats! Was thrilled to see you nab the award! Much deserved win! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Q13: our future plans are to keep grinding and working at what we love. Probably eat a lot of cookie dough too [#vegnewschat](#)



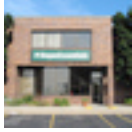
○ [about 14 hours ago](#) Q14: What's been the biggest reward of starting a vegan business? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 14 hours ago](#) A12: Precisely why we worked day jobs for the first 4 years before we quit! We lost money for many years when we started. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@VegNews](#) Q12: It's important to have enough to get you going, just to start at least (at least for us it was) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A12: We were lucky to be able to start low-cost, but today, it would be much more difficult. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q12: 12 years ago, we had no money. Just an idea and unwavering passion. Would I do it that way again? No, but ... [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q13: What future plans do you have for your business? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A12: Depends on how capital intensive your chosen business is. In our business it is VERY capital intensive. \$ are critical [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@ColleenHolland](#) : Q11: And know your strengths! If someone can do it better/faster, let them. Focus on what you do best. [#vegnewschat](#)



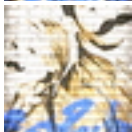
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@ColleenHolland](#) : Q11: And know your strengths! If someone can do it better/faster, let them. Focus on what you do best. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A12: Depends on the business and how fast you plan to start out the gate. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@ColleenHolland](#) here here! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@VegNews](#) Q11: it's important though to always work together, no matter how separate the tasks [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q11: And know your strengths! If someone can do it better/faster, let them. Focus on what you do best. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q12: How much is money a factor when starting a business? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@ColleenHolland](#) : Q10: Have a great idea, work tirelessly, and make smart decisions. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@ColleenHolland](#) : Q10: Have a great idea, work tirelessly, and make smart decisions. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A11: Part of picking the right partner is identifying where your weaknesses lie, and fill that void with the correct person. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A11: My strengths are in marketing and business development, so I know where I'm needed most and where I do the least damage :) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A11: We came to the table with different skill sets and easily settled into our respective roles. Specializing = key. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@VegNews](#) Q11: at first we would both do everything which was a bad idea! Eventually we figured out who did what well [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A11: We both fell into our roles based on our strengths. Courtney is great with numbers and organization, me, not so much. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VeganEssentials](#): [@Eat_Pastry](#) Very true, it seems 99% of people underestimate how expensive it can be to get started. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@Eat_Pastry](#) Very true, it seems 99% of people grossly underestimate how expensive it can be to get started. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A10: Try hard not to preach [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q11: You all started your businesses with partners, how did you figure out who worked on what aspect of the company? [#vegnewschat](#)



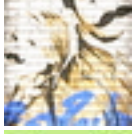
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A10: Try hard not to preach [#vegnewschat](#)



○ about 15 hours ago RT @Eat Pastry: Q10: 2. Find someone that really truly believes in you, and dont let anyone else bring you down. Stay focused #vegnewschat



○ about 15 hours ago RT @VeggieGrill: A10: The vegan business consultant Lisa Shapiro (@allthingsvegan) in Boulder is a font of great data & advice. #vegnewschat



○ about 15 hours ago Q10: 3. What @VeggieGrill said: find twice as much \$ as you originally thought! #vegnewschat



○ about 15 hours ago RT @VeggieGrill: A10: And don't let the naysayers talk you down. #vegnewschat



○ about 15 hours ago A10: And don't let the naysayers talk you down.#vegnewschat



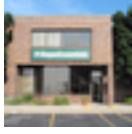
○ about 15 hours ago Q10: Have a great idea, work tirelessly, and make smart decisions. #vegnewschat



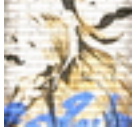
○ about 15 hours ago You are what you eat. What have you eaten lately? #Vegan #vegnewschat #natural #Organic #nogmo #nomsg#makeourfoodnatural #GoGreen #poison



○ about 15 hours ago @mentortexts tell all of your friends about them! :) #vegnewschat



○ about 15 hours ago A10: Go beyond what others are willing to do, keep your faith even when things are tough, and never give up!#vegnewschat



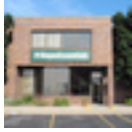
○ about 15 hours ago Q10: 2. Find someone that really truly believes in you, and don't let anyone else bring you down. Stay focused#vegnewschat



○ about 15 hours ago A10: The vegan business consultant Lisa Shapiro (@allthingsvegan) in Boulder is a font of great data and advice #vegnewschat



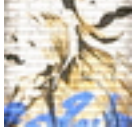
○ about 15 hours ago @VegNews Wish a small veg-friendly cafe near me did more marketing...don't want to see them go. Wish I cld jump in. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago @ColleenHolland](#) Thanks, Colleen! We can't wait, the draft looks fantastic, hopefully just 2 more months to completion! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @VeganEssentials](#) Can't wait to see your new website! I'm so proud of you guys! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q10: 1. Make sure you are willing to work harder than you thought humanly possible to bring your idea to fruition [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago RT @ColleenHolland](#) : A9: Your brand is like a person. Be trustworthy, ethical, and unique. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A10: Find a partner, find a passion, find twice as much \$ as you first thought! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago RT @ColleenHolland](#) : A9: Your brand is like a person. Be trustworthy, ethical, and unique. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago RT @VegNews](#): Q10: What are 3 key tips you can give VN readers for starting a vegan business? [#vegnewschat](#)



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○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A9. We are now find it increasingly important to build a strong marketing plan specific to the vegan market. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A9: Your brand is like a person. Be trustworthy, ethical, and unique. [#vegnewschat](#)



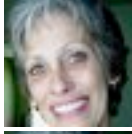
○ [about 15 hours ago RT @ColleenHolland](#) : Q8: oassion is everything. I live and breathe VegNews+veganism, staying on top of vegan trends is a dream! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q10: What are 3 key tips you can give VN readers for starting a vegan business? [#vegnewschat](#)

Rabbit
Food
Grocery

- [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): Grinding through a business plan forces you to examine yr values, mission and purpose which leads to yr brand [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VegNews](#): For a media brand like [@VegNews](#), how do you find your content? [#vegnewschat](#)



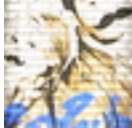
- [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VegNews](#): For a media brand like [@VegNews](#), how do you find your content? [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) A9: Grinding through a business plan forces your to examine your values, mission and purpose which leads to your brand [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) A9: But, our new website coming this winter should help considerably with our branding and image, definitely long overdue! [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) Q9: it was a year long process where we explored and got really creative. It was fun! still is [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) A9: Believing in your brand, being an ambassador for your brand, and making your brand look good. Hire a professional! [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) A9: What speaks most to our customers is what they receive in the mail, so effort has been service/selection based over image [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VegNews](#): Q6: How important is marketing and social media in growing your business? [#vegnewschat](#)



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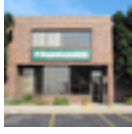
- [about 15 hours ago](#) Q9: we worked with [@moxieso](#) to create our brand. They knew us from the very beginning and knew our personalities [#vegnewschat](#)



- [about 15 hours ago](#) A8: Constant vigilance, testing, reading, communicating with our guests [#vegnewschat](#)



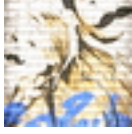
○ [about 15 hours ago @VeggieGrill](#) Well-deserved, Veggie Grill! You guys are changing the world with your burgers, sandwiches, and sweetheart fries. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago A9:](#) We're still working on it :) That's been the long part, we spend most time on service/growth, our image has been secondary [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) We really knew we were on to something when ColleenHolland_ and [@joeconnelly @VegNews](#) named us Restaurant of the Year! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago A8:](#) Alfredo is always researching trends. Most trends start early, you just have to be on top of it [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago Q9:](#) How did you develop your business' image/brand? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago Q8:](#) Again, passion is everything. I live and breathe VegNews + veganism, so staying on top of vegan trends is a dream! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago A8:](#) Reading blogs, being active in social media, going to events, building relationships, and having a great editorial team! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago A8:](#) But, we also get great product leads from our shoppers, who often turn us on to things we might not have otherwise found. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Plant-based cuisine. Which was only through doing the leg-work, asking people what they wanted. U do need to be 100% committed [#vegnewschat](#)



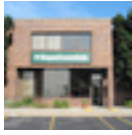
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Yes, have done 4 pub startups, whatever it takes to get to press by deadline RT [@VegNews](#): Does every business start this way? [#vegnewschat](#)



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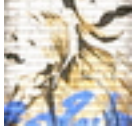
○ [about 15 hours ago @ColleenHolland](#) Do it!! I'll come write for you! :D [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago A8:](#) It takes constant scouring of every bit of info out there to keep on top of what's new. Daily checking on dozens of sites [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @EverydayRevelry:](#) Very tough to make that leap, but for us we became some convinced that there was a need and desire for... [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @BuddyRhodesDog](#) we try to use the most local suppliers for ingredients possible, and compare pricing [#vegnewschat](#)



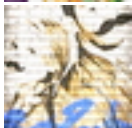
○ [about 15 hours ago @VegNews](#) My biz partner and I were full-time from the get-go. We lived simply and believed in our business. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @EverydayRevelry](#) Leaving a day job can be scary, but much less frightening when you aren't terrified of how to make ends meet. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago Q8:](#) How do you stay on top of the trends in your industry? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @ABCVegan](#) got to believe!! :) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) We always joke that we could produce a daily magazine if we wanted to—there are so many wonderful stories out there! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @VegNews](#) When you have been consistent in your sales and know you can sustain yourself without it causing too many difficulties [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @EverydayRevelry](#) that is tough. I was once told, if you have something to fall back on you will. That is when I quit my day job [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Good question! RT [@EverydayRevelry:](#) How do you know when it is time to make leap from side job/hobby into a full-time gig? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @VegNews](#) Some items just beg to be added, but sometimes, there are things that seem great until we try them, and then we pass. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago Q7:](#) We're on the cusp of an exploding vegan market. In 2011, plant-based milks were a \$1.3 billion industry. So exciting! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago RT @ColleenHolland](#) : Q6: And a good marketing plan doesnt require a huge budget. Just a lot of passion + creativity! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @VegNews](#) to gain distribution you first need to gather commitments from retailers [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @VegNews](#) We choose based on what we like, and what we think our shoppers will like. We try EVERYTHING before we sell it! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago RT @VeggieGrill:](#) A7: Veggie Grill guests are omnivores...critically important given the relatively small # of vegans (2-4%) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago A7:](#) Veggie Grill guests are omnivores...critically important given the relatively small # of vegans (2-4%) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @Eat Pastry](#) I love that thought. I love the element of compassion, and belief in our fellow humans. [:#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago RT @VeggieGrill:](#) A3: plant-based diet. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago @VeganEssentials](#) I agree. More and more non-vegans are opening their minds and mouths to the great vegan food out there [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) For a media brand like [@VegNews](#), how do you find your content? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) For a store like [@VeganEssentials](#), how do you choose which products to carry? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q6: And a good marketing plan doesn't require a huge budget. Just a lot of passion + creativity! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) How do you know when it is time to make leap from side job/hobby into full-time gig? [#vegnewschat](#)



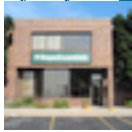
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) :) RT [@Eat_Pastry](#) vegan market is definitely growing & will continue to. Human compassion will reach an all time high, in time. [#vegnewschat](#)



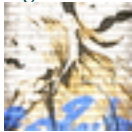
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) For a [#vegan](#) food product like [@Eat_Pastry](#), how do you get distribution? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A7: The vegan market is in its infancy, and the key here is focusing on the crossover market. As I said, the vast majority of.. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A7: Major retailers moving into catering to veganism have changed the game drastically this past few years, both good and bad. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@MelanieStOurs](#) I would say it's an asset. It is who we are and we believe in it, so it has to work! [#vegnewschat](#)



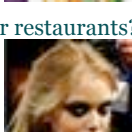
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A7: It seems to be growing, but is less confined in the bounds of the vegan community as it once was. [#vegnewschat](#)



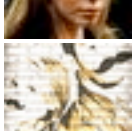
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q6: Marketing + social media is vital to building your brand. We've exhibited at 100s of shows and are active on social media. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) For a restaurant like [@VeggieGrill](#), how do you develop your menu? And how do you decide where to open your restaurants? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A6: But remember: we all get one chance to make a first impression! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q7: the vegan market is definitely growing and will continue to grow. Human compassion will reach an all time high, in time. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VeggieGrill Very, very true! Never let a problem go unanswered - ALWAYS correct mistakes, even if it doesn't seem big. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A6: But remember: we all get one chance to make a first impression! #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) We're on the same page! RT @MelanieStOurs How strongly does the vegan msg play into your marketing? #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VeggieGrill When are you guys opening a location in Salt Lake City? We have a lot of vegan establishments here. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) #vegnewschat How strongly does the vegan msg play into your marketing? Is it an asset, a liability, or both?



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q7: What's your assessment of the vegan market? Is it growing? #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A6: Pay very close attention to Twitter, Yelp, Facebook, etc. If there's a problem, address it immediately, and empathetically. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @Eat_Pastry: Q6: For a start up social media is extremely important b/c we usually don't have the \$ to spend on marketing #vegnewschat



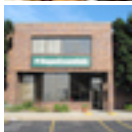
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Love 2! RT @VegNews Love! @VeganEssentials Take care of urself. If u have right plan, a few rest stops won't derail the journey! #vegnewschat



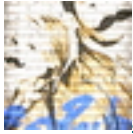
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Great advice! MT @VeggieGrill: A6: Your best marketing is via word of mouth, and social media turbocharges that WOM. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) I love this quote >> "If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life." #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A6: VERY important! Both paid marketing and word of mouth from positive shopper feedback is our best ally in growing business. #vegnewschat



about 15 hours ago Q6: social media is great tool for any start up and it's free! Hopefully it stays that way [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago A6: Your best marketing is via word of mouth, and social media turbocharges that WOM. It is VERY important to us [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago Love! MT [@VeganEssentials](#): A5: Take care of yourself. If you have the right plan, a few rest stops won't derail the journey! [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago Q6: For a start up social media is extremely important b/c we usually don't have the \$ to spend on marketing [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago Lots of great business advice for vegan entrepreneurs right now! [#vegnewschat](#)



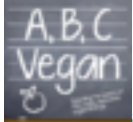
about 15 hours ago RT [@VegNews](#): Q6: How important is marketing and social media in growing your business? [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago A5: This does not feel like work to me...When someone tells you "thank you for opening", that's not work! [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago Q5: Working around the clock in the start-up years isn't sustainable. Find balance in work/life; your biz will benefit! [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago <3 RT [@VeggieGrill](#) Avoid burnout by finding something that u r passionate about; so that Mondays are not dreaded [#vegnewschat](#)



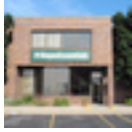
about 15 hours ago RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A5: Avoid burnout by finding something that you are passionate about; so that Mondays are not dreaded [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago Q6: How important is marketing and social media in growing your business? [#vegnewschat](#)



about 15 hours ago RT [@VeggieGrill](#): A5: Avoid burnout by finding something that you are passionate about; so that Mondays are not dreaded [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A5: But critical to take care of yourself. If you have the right plan, a few rest stops won't derail the journey! #vegnewschat



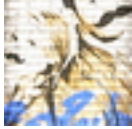
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A5: Avoid burnout by finding something that you are passionate about; so that Mondays are not dreaded #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) . @VeggieGrill are we getting one of your restaurants in NYC? :) #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @VegNews: Q5: In response, how do you avoid burnout? MT @VeganEssentials: A4: When in doubt, start slowly. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q5: yoga. I make sure to make time for me no matter how tired or how busy. No buts #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @VeggieGrill We were frustrated with our inability to find delicious, convenient, wholesome food #vegnewschat <http://t.co/dSZ54Mbo>



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @VeggieGrill We were frustrated with our inability to find delicious, convenient, wholesome food #vegnewschat <http://t.co/9gZDbEak>



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A5: Pace yourself, and when your mind/body tell you to take a break, be sure to listen! It's easy to get caught up in momentum #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: And then take your time. We took 4 years to open 4 Veggie Grills, and we'll open 9 in 2012, after we had it dialed in. #vegnewschat



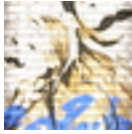
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VeganEssentials Great advice, VE! There's nothing wrong with organic growth and building your business slowly and wisely. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VeggieGrill That's why I'm a fan of your stuff. good food, good service. #vegnewschat



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q5: In response, how do you avoid burnout? MT @VeganEssentials: A4: When in doubt, start slowly. #vegnewschat



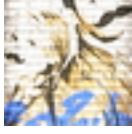
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VeggieGrill also agree with that! A terrific partner is KEY!:) [#vegnewschat](#)



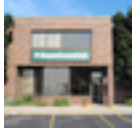
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q4: Research the market, raise some money, hire a designer, and believe in yourself. Be a positive ambassador for your brand. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Sadly amazing how many veg restaurateurs don't make sure to regularly eat at other veg restaurants [#vegnewschat](#)



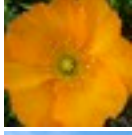
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: It's important to get a grasp on what's out there and what makes you different, but can't focus on others either [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: Work with your strengths, but don't be afraid to get help in your weak points. You can't do it all, better to get help! [#vegnewschat](#)



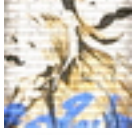
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: And then research the market top down and bottom up. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Fellow veganpreneurs---check out [#vegnewschat](#) right now!



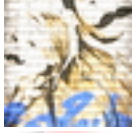
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: And, when in doubt, start slowly. Too many people go all-out from the start and overextend, better to take your time. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @ColleenHolland_ completely agree Colleen [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: Find a terrific partner! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: Research research research. Research your market [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @VegNews: Q4: If you have a great idea and want to turn it into a business, what is the first step? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q3: Also, ignorance can be bliss. We really didn't know what we were doing in those early days, but we believed in our idea. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A4: Brainstorm, talk to others about your idea, get lots of feedback, do plenty of research - all very important in starting up [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VegNews](#): Q4: If you have a great idea and want to turn it into a business, what is the first step? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A3: plant-based diet. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A3: resonates with our guests. We are passionate about what we do, and truly believe in the compelling advantages of a ... [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q4: If you have a great idea and want to turn it into a business, what is the first step? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@Eat_Pastry](#) That seems to be the case for just about all of us! I think it wouldn't be as gratifying if it came easy :) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) We can attest to VG's deliciousness! MT [@VeggieGrill](#): A3: Delicious food that people can feel good about eating. [#vegnewschat](#)



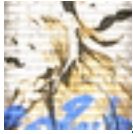
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) [@VegNews](#) [@VeganEssentials](#)...it must always start out a struggle! W/o struggle there is no gain right? [#vegnewschat](#)



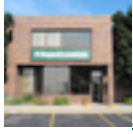
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Interested in starting a [#vegan](#) business? Check out [#vegnewschat](#) NOW w/ [@VegNews](#) [@Eat_Pastry](#) [@VeganEssentials](#) [@ColleenHolland](#) [@VeggieGrill](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A3: Delicious food that people can feel good about eating, delivered by friendly people in an attractive, clean environment... [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A3: We make all the cookie dough ourselves and test each batch. We wouldn't have it any other way! [#vegnewschat](#)



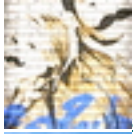
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A3: Our commitment to offering the best service possible has been our greatest success. Treat others well at all times! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Does every business start this way? [MT@VeganEssentials](#): A2: The early years were definitely a struggle... Lots of long nights! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q3: Launching a product that people wanted, a tireless work ethic, and a passion for veganism. We love what we do! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A3: I think our success has been due to our dedication and devotion to a good product. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A2: The early years were definitely a struggle, working full-time day jobs while building our dream. Lots of long nights! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q3: Why do you think your business has been successful? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A2: we also worked a lot on perfecting our product to make it the absolute best it could be. And long (fun) hrs![#vegnewschat](#)



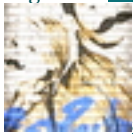
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) We have gotten where we are by always treating our shoppers the way we'd want to be taken care of. Top-level service is a must! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A2: majority are not vegan. We opened our first location in 11/06 [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q2: Those early years were excruciating, but I wouldn't change a thing. We worked 24/7 and lived and breathed VegNews! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A2: may sound cheesy but it's true...[#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A2: ...we weren't certain that people would embrace our concept. But they did come in, and they did come back. And the vast... [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VegNews A2: The early years were tough! What kept us going was our belief in each other and ourselves. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q2: We began in VegNews in 2000—from my childhood bedroom in Los Gatos, CA. We shared one computer in 12-hour shifts! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Currently checking out a [#vegnewschat](#) -- lots of [#vegancompanies](#) participating. -Keith, Bud's dad.



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A2: We spent a year researching the market, and putting together a business plan. When we opened the door of our first Veggie.. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Not to mention, catalogs are expensive and tough to keep current! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Q2: What were the early years like when launching your companies? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A1: so we decided to create it [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @VegNews: Welcome to Kevin Boylan, co-founder of the @VeggieGrill, a fast casual [#vegan](#) restaurant chain with 16 locations. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) We moved from print to web format in 2000 after realizing that printing catalogs was far from effective for marketing. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VegNews A1: We started EP out of my parents basement, eventually moving to San Diego to make vegan cookie dough full time. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) We were frustrated with our inability to find delicious, convenient, wholesome food [#vegnewschat](#)



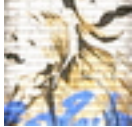
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) A1: My business partner had the idea, and we made it happen. There was no vegan publication, so why not start one? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Courtney founded our company soon after going vegan in 1998, originally as a printed catalog company. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Happy to be here with all of you! [#vegnewschat](#)



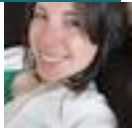
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) @VegNews hello! I'm very happy to be here tonight! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) So excited to be on this chat tonight! Looking forward to meeting everyone and learning! :) [#vegnewschat#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Thanks, VegNews. :) I am happy to be here with my esteemed colleagues from the vegan world! [#vegnewschat](#)



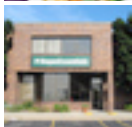
○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @VeganBodega: Hoping to catch some of the vegan entrepreneurs chatting tonight. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Hey @vegnews - did you hear that@SFTEBakery just launched their #vegan cookie dough in Canada? Incredible!!!! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Let's get this chat started! Q1: How did you start your vegan businesses? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Thank you, glad to be here! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT @VegNews: Welcome to Jessie Williams, CEO and co-founder of @Eat_Pastry, a #vegan cookie dough company! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) so there's no sound right, just chatting? [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) RT [@VegNews](#): Tonight's [#vegnewschat](#): How to Start a Vegan Business with [@Eat_Pastry](#) [@VeganEssentials](#) [@ColleenHolland](#) [@VeggieGrill!](#) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Welcome to Kevin Boylan, co-founder of the [@VeggieGrill](#), a fast casual [#vegan](#) restaurant chain with 16 locations. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Welcome to Ryan Wilson from [@VeganEssentials](#), an online [#vegan](#) shop opened in 1998, based in Waukesha, WI! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Welcome to Jessie Williams, CEO and co-founder of [@Eat_Pastry](#), a [#vegan](#) cookie dough company! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Welcome to our very own [@ColleenHolland](#), associate publisher & co-founder of VegNews Media, an independent publishing company. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) Tonight's [#vegnewschat](#): How to Start a Vegan Business with [@Eat_Pastry](#) [@VeganEssentials](#) [@ColleenHolland](#) [@VeggieGrill!](#) [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 15 hours ago](#) My first time chatting tonight, I'm so excited! [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 16 hours ago](#) Hoping to catch some of the vegan entrepreneurs chatting tonight. [#vegnewschat](#)



○ [about 17 hours ago](#) in about an hour we'll be tweeting quite a bit for the [#vegnewschat](#) so if you want to mute us, use this link :) <http://t.co/DCUy3SOO>



○ [about 18 hours ago](#) Excited for tonight's [#vegnewschat](#) with some great [#vegan](#) business owners. :) [#vegnewschat](#)

○ [about 19 hours ago](#) Tonight at 6pm PT we'll be talking about how to open a vegan biz with [@VeggieGrill](#) [@VeganEssentials](#) [#vegnewschat](#)