

Entrepreneur Friday: Baking for Good

Posted by Jean



WHO: Emily Dubner

WHAT: [Baking for Good](#)

WHERE: New York, NY

WHEN: 2009

HOW: Emily Dubner, a Harvard graduate, has been baking since she was a little girl. From decorating sugar cookies with her mom for school bake sales, to baking cookies as gifts for her college roommates, Dubner knew that baking was one of her favorite things – but it wasn't until her mom received a gift basket of cookies from a friend that she ever thought of baking as a business. "I started thinking about the idea of an online bake sale," says Dubner, "a company that would not only offer delicious, high-quality treats, but that would also incorporate the spirit of

the bake sale by raising money for great causes."

Working full-time in New York for a management consulting firm, Dubner had experience working with business innovators, and was encouraged by the company to pursue her own ideas. However, the recession had taken a toll on her job and its security, and her future in the position seemed shaky. "I had an idea I believed in," says Dubner, "and while I knew it was risky to go off on my own, it wasn't all that much riskier than staying in my job." So,

using \$40,000 in savings, Dubner launched [Baking for Good](#) from her Manhattan apartment.



The business is based online, so customers can visit her website and order a batch of freshly baked cookies. Using organic, locally-grown products, [Baking for Good](#) features a lineup of not only cookies, but granola and nut snacks, and allergy-sensitive, gluten- and dairy-free products. Sugar cookies are

decorated and personalized by hand before being packaged and shipped to any location in the U.S. Since the business launched last fall, they've delivered to all 50 states. Keeping up with her "bake sale" inspiration, when customers order from the website, they can select one of the 100 charities that Dubner has partnered with, and 15% of their purchase will be donated to that organization.

While she hasn't yet made back her initial investment in the first 10 months of business, [Baking for Good](#) is self-sustaining. By re-investing their profits, they're seeing steady growth, and this year, they're on track to make \$20,000 in donations. They're looking to expand the business by adding more bakery locations around the country to create a regional shipping model – all, of course, using their exclusive recipes. Dubner also hopes to add more partnerships, as well as work to provide treats for weddings, corporate events, and more. In the end, however, she's glad to have a business that allows her to do something she loves. "I was committed to the idea of starting this company," she says, "and the other rewards — meeting so many interesting people, learning about such incredible nonprofits — have kept me from ever really looking back."



HER ADVICE: "Start small. If possible, test out your ideas in small ways that don't require a lot of investment," says Dubner. "All new businesses grow and change, and by starting small, you can adapt more easily and not have to go back and fix things that you already invested a lot in."