

It all begins here: expert tips,
inspiration and ideas for
your business

START

STRONGER THAN STEEL

Bamboo bicycles? For \$6,000 a pop?

INNOVATION NATION

Generate money-making ideas

ASK A PRO

How to pass on your family business

GOING STATESIDE

Advice for an ambitious startup

CRIME PAYS

Jad Saliba created the Internet Evidence Finder program while he was a cop with the Waterloo Regional Police. Before long, the software was helping law enforcement agencies around the world — including the FBI, the CIA and Homeland Security — catch bad guys, and Saliba had turned in his badge to run Magnet Forensics full-time.

VITALS

MAGNET FORENSICS

Waterloo, Ontario
 Founded 2011
 23 employees
 Customers in 92 countries

TIPS

- Focus on something you're passionate about and have experience in.
- Surround yourself with people who have skills that complement your own.
- Protect your time. A lot of entrepreneurs want to have a hand in everything. Hire people you trust, so you can give them the responsibility and leave it with them.
- Paying attention to every transaction you make is key to how well things will work out.
- My accountant once told me, There are a lot of people who own 100% of a company that's worth nothing. Being willing to share your success and bringing on people who can help you get there is really important.

“ I was on general patrol when I was diagnosed with Hodgkins lymphoma. I was off for a year doing chemo and radiation, and when I came back, the force needed help in the technological crimes unit. We would examine computers, hard drives, tablets, cellphones and thumb drives, to try to find relevant evidence. The software we had didn't help much with the newer types of evidence — online chat, social media and social networking. I had a background in software development, and I started doing some research on my own time. I learned that a fair bit of data gets left behind when you're using Facebook and other online sites. And I found a way to recover it.

Take Facebook. When you use the chat feature or post on your wall, traces of data get left behind. If you know what these traces look like, you can find patterns. From there, it's just a matter of figuring out if it's valid data. People used to discuss this kind of stuff on the phone or in person, but these days, it doesn't seem odd for them to talk about a robbery they just committed over MSN chat or Facebook. There is a wealth of information to be found.

The policing community is tight-knit, and I wanted to help out other officers, so I released the software as a free tool. It spread by word of mouth, and it got picked

up pretty quickly by bloggers. In 2011, I started charging for it, and I started seeing potential for this to be a real business. I had the technical skills, but I needed help on the business side. I met Adam Belsher, who was a vice-president in sales and marketing at Research In Motion. I'm a big believer in first impressions and gut feelings, and it just felt right. In September 2011, we quit our jobs and went full-time on this.

We increased the price early on, to get it closer to what it would be if it had just been released as a commercial product. And we didn't get a lot of pushback — people saw the value. From there, we started figuring out where we needed to advertise, and which conferences and tradeshows we needed to be at. We've hired a number of very smart programmers, and we've added a lot of features, streamlined the program and accelerated how quickly we're able to iterate on new versions, because things are changing so quickly. One example: Craigslist was used a lot in the past for fraudulent-type interactions, prostitution, that sort of thing. But it's come under some scrutiny, so a lot of people are moving to a new site called Backpage. We're also helping users analyze data faster. It's one thing to uncover 500,000 records, but then someone has to go through all those

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records to find the relevant stuff. We're selling the software in 92 countries, and people who use it tell us they use it on every case — it's part of the process. You get it going before you leave for the day, and you have the data when you come in the next morning.

We really feel there's a lot of runway with our current products, but our new products are opening us up to new markets. Our goal is finding the truth, whatever that may be — whether it's getting to the bottom of a child exploitation case or in a corporate setting. We're also expanding into the mobile market, adding support for smartphones and tablets. We've got a lot of work ahead of us.

I do miss being a police officer, though — the camaraderie, the impact you can have. I kinda thought when I got hired that policing would be my career for life. But I didn't expect to get cancer. It's kind of funny where life takes you.
 — AS TOLD TO DAWN CALLEJA

TECHNOLOGY

FOUR APPS TO DOWNLOAD NOW



DROPBOX

The app that made e-mail attachments obsolete lets users create a folder and then drop in files, photos and other documents that can then be shared with others

EVERNOTE

Think of Evernote as a digital Post-it. Users can type notes, take photos, clip online stories and record audio across multiple platforms and save it in the cloud. There's also Evernote Business, which allows employees to share content with their team or organization

ASANA

A group communication and project management tool that provides a single spot for employees to view a project's tasks and deadlines, ask questions and get instant updates on everyone's progress

EXPENSIFY

This mobile app lets users take pictures of receipts and then shoots it to the cloud, where the items are categorized into an expense report