

Entrepreneurs part 2

Starting a Small Business in Taipei

Make Your Dream a Reality!

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IMAGES: VARIOUS SOURCES

Out of the group of people I have met over the last three years in Taipei, about half of them have come because their work brought them here. If you are one of them, you are blessed because you are able to track a career across countries and continents. When you repatriate, you will have added an invaluable new dimension to your work experience. On the other hand the other half (to which category I myself belong) has come to Taipei as a trailing spouse (the new buzzword is trailing talent), and may have given up a career to support their partner as their career takes them abroad. Most I've met from the latter group seem satisfied with their new life, but there are some others who cannot help but wonder if they are a 'significant other' anymore; their absence from the workforce as a result of expatriation may have left them feeling somewhat less 'significant' than before.

All these thoughts led me to write an article for an earlier issue of *Centered on Taipei* about four outstanding women who have turned their circumstances in their favor and started small businesses successfully in Taipei. Regardless of their age or background, starting their own business gave them immense satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment. Over the summer I spoke to another four expats, who passed on some tangible tips as to how to make their dream a reality.



CHRISTINE MANN:
GRANOLA HOUSE

What is the secret recipe for converting a financial analyst from a business-consulting firm in the U.S. into the owner of a granola company in Taipei? It's interesting to learn that Christine and her husband came to Taipei from the U.S. in December 1996 to open a different kind of food store - Subway sandwich shops. It wasn't until August 2008 that she started developing business plans to introduce one of her favorite healthy snacks, granola, to the market. Her granola (to her own recipe) is fresh roasted, all natural and handmade. Developing and testing it on her family and friends, it met with instant success, and this popularity motivated Christine to take a step further and turn it into a business. Thus, Granola House was born.

Christine says that her product was well received by expats and locals alike. According to her, good organizational skills and goal setting were crucial in starting her business. Besides a fantastic product, what really made her successful is her patience and perseverance. From developing a recipe and a good product to achieving a meaningful logo, from finding reliable local suppliers to keeping up with the ever-increasing demands on production, her persistence has kept her moving forward. She makes three different varieties and you can find these at several locations in Taipei (and, since August, in Taichung) or purchase from her online store.

