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How to Start a Small Business While You're Still in College - *By Claire Davidson*

In December, 22-year-old Tanner Agar wasn't just writing his graduation thesis — he was also filling a record number of product orders for his specialty food startup, The Chef Shelf. But all that extra work didn't discourage the former chef and recent Texas Christian University alum.

"To be tired because of all your sales is the best problem ever," Agar says, adding that seasonality plays a large part in his business. "All the sleep I didn't get in December I can catch up on in January."

This December, The Chef Shelf, which ships foods from Texas chefs to consumers across the U.S., had 11 times more sales than the previous year.

It's difficult to balance entrepreneurship with studies, but many students like Agar are eager to take on the challenge. About 46% of millennials (PDF) said that they're interested in learning about starting a small business, according to 2014 study by the Independent Community Bankers of America and the Center for Generational Kinetics.

"Balancing it all is really hard," Agar says. But, he says, it's well worth it.

If you're eager to get a start on your small business in college, here are some tips:

Go to an entrepreneurial college

At Texas Christian University's Neeley School of Business, which was named the No. 6 top undergrad business school for entrepreneurship by Bloomberg BusinessWeek, students like Agar can headquarter their businesses at a tech incubator in Fort Worth, which gives them access to lawyers, marketers, conference rooms and other resources, all for free.

If you want to start a business while you're in school, going to a university that offers lots of resources for young entrepreneurs can give you a competitive edge. Rice University, for instance, hosts an annual business plan competition with more than $1.5 million in prizes, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology hosts a business plan competition that awards $225,000 to the grand-prize winner.

Qualify for free money

If you're in college, it might be difficult to qualify for a small-business loan or self-fund your venture. But don't use your student loans to fund your entrepreneurial visions. Instead, think outside the box.

Start by applying for awards for budding entrepreneurs, like the Hult Prize, which provides up to $1 million in seed money to the winners. If you're majoring in business, ask the faculty in your department about local programs and grants you could qualify for. Many schools have business plan and elevator pitch competitions to help give new startups an extra boost.

Set up a website

You don't have to be a programming wiz to set up a sleek website. Through platforms like SquareSpace, Wix and WordPress, you can easily customize a template without knowing any code. While you'll have to pay an annual fee for hosting and a domain name, the overall costs of creating a small-business website are generally minimal — especially if you can find a free template. If you're interested in building a more complicated site for your small business, consider taking a programming course at your college.

Build your community

For Agar, creating personal connections through food has always been a focus at The Chef Shelf. "My goal was never to build a website where we simply sell product, because I'm fairly sure someone like Amazon could do a much better job selling product much more cheaply than we can," he says. "But what we can do is build a community around food."

To foster a loyal following for your small business, start by talking about your venture with friends and family and refining your company's social media presence. Figure out who your audience is and find ways to reach them directly, whether that means booking speaking engagements, buying advertising or simply going out for coffee with potential clients.

Think big

You might have the largest student-run enterprise on campus — but don't stop there. The more you work on expanding your business while you're in college, the easier it will be to build on your success after graduation.

Agar, who just graduated a few weeks ago, says the Neeley School of Business is giving him another year to operate from the Tech Fort Worth incubator rent-free. During that time, he hopes to expand his customer base, hire employees and find angel investors. He explains it all with a food analogy, of course.

"I'd rather have a large percent of a whole watermelon than 100% of a grape," he says.

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Increasing Supply of MBA Programs in Supply Chain Management - *By Seb Murray*

As global supply chains become more of a focus in companies in diverse industries, business schools have delivered a range of courses that service supply chain management.

Yet complex and fast-moving supply chains have been given "late recognition" at business schools, says Kasra Ferdows, professor of global manufacturing at Georgetown McDonough Business School.

But chains' growing importance in the corporate world means there is a problem of supply and demand.

"Supply chain efficiency is becoming an increasingly significant issue for a widening pool of organisations," says Sara Williams, MSc careers relationship manager at Cass Business School.

"Most sectors recruit supply chain managers, including FMCG [fast-moving consumer goods], energy and

Cass is one of a growing number of top business schools to offer a specialist master's program in supply chain management. The course, MSc in Global Supply Chain Management, which costs £18,000 in fees, is based in London and is spread over 12 months, full-time.

The UK-based business school's course is one of relatively few offered by top institutions in Europe, alongside those at Cranfield SOM and Warwick Business School.

Most are clustered in the United States. This includes at W.P Carey School of Business in Arizona. It offers an MS in Supply Chain Management, which costs up to $46,700, with the option of adding engineering.

Rutgers Business School was one of the first in the US to launch an undergraduate program in supply chain management. It now offers an MBA in Supply Chain Management, a specialization within the full-time MBA program.

Other business schools have similar specializations: Houston's C.T Bauer College of Business offers a global supply chain certificate within its MBA – and will launch an MS in Supply Chain Management in 2015 – and Bryant University's College of Business runs a global supply chain management concentration within its MBA.

For MS degrees, there are now plenty of options: Michigan's Ross School of Business, MIT's Sloan School of Management and the **Neeley School of Business in Texas all offer master's programs related to supply chain management, among others.**

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10 Investment for High Rollers - *By Lou Carlozo*

It you're looking to gamble and place your bets on a high-roller investment, who better to talk to than a financial advisor based in Vegas, baby?

"As an investor, looking at situations where the risk-reward possibilities are dramatically in your favor can result in some potentially lucrative results," says Yale Bock, founder and president of YH&C Investments in Las Vegas and a manager of two portfolios on Covestor, an online investment management platform.

Note the words “can result.” Bock and other investment mavens caution that there’s never a sure thing when it comes to big returns. But if you have the stomach for rolling the dice, you might just reap returns that are nice – really nice. Here are 10 investments primed to either rock your portfolio or sink it like a stone in 2015:

1. Liberty Broadband (symbol: LBRDA). This spinoff of Liberty Media has a 25 percent stake in Charter Communications, and that’s where it gets interesting. “Charter has an agreement with Comcast to buy and swap cable assets, as long as Comcast’s buy of Time Warner Cable gets regulatory approval,” Bock says. “If it goes through, Charter will eventually become the second-largest cable company in the U.S., and their subscriber numbers will nearly triple.” If it doesn’t go through, Bock thinks Charter may look for another acquisition opportunity, but it will also face the risk of erosion in its core cable business.

2. Energy-related junk bonds. The bonds of many exploration and production companies are selling at huge discounts, says David Twibell, president and founder of Custom Portfolio Group in Englewood, Colorado. “Buying these bonds now at discount prices not only locks in their high yields, but provides an opportunity for capital appreciation when oil prices recover. Don’t expect energy bonds to recover overnight. You’ll likely need to hold onto these for a year or more. But for capital gains that could top 10 percent, along with a similar yield for the duration of the bond, that’s not a bad bet.”

3. Bet the dollar against the yen. Foreign exchange is always trickier than it looks. But the Japanese currency is in crisis, says John O’Donnell, chief knowledge officer of the Online Trading Academy, based in Irvine, California. “I think the yen is going to decline, so I want to be short on the yen and long on the dollar,” he notes. “Japan’s in deep, deep financial trouble. They’ve been in and out of serious deflation pockets for 24 years. Their total debt as a percentage of [gross domestic product] is a disaster. We’re now at about 115 yen to the dollar, and I see no reason why we won’t go to 200. The Japanese economy is a bug in search of a windshield.”

4. Bet the dollar against the euro. The hot news is that the European Central Bank will begin quantitative easing. And that presents a hotter opportunity, says Jeff Sica, founder, president and chief investment officer of Circle Squared Alternative Investments in Morristown, New Jersey. “With the U.S. already finished with its own easing program, I expect the dollar to gradually strengthen, especially versus the now-weakened euro,” he says. As for the time frame, “I see this short of the euro working now and throughout 2015,” Sica says.

5. Gold, silver and platinum. These precious metals are already conducting a stealth rally in 2015, says Paul Irvine, the Kleinheinz endowed chair in international finance and investments at Texas Christian University’s Neeley School of Business. “As ‘permabear’ [and Swiss fund investor] Marc Faber puts it, he’d like to short central banks in 2015 but can’t do that directly. The best way to short central banks is to own gold, silver or platinum. You should already be positioned,” Irvine says.

6. Alibaba (BABA). The $25 billion initial public offering of China's biggest online commerce company made history in 2014 as the largest on record. But there’s more history to be made, says Ron Weiner, founder, president and CEO of the RDM Financial Group in Westport, Connecticut. and Boca Raton, Florida. “Alibaba is the next Amazon on The Street, without having inventory,” Weiner says. While it’s a mid-term investment, he still thinks Alibaba could see “returns in excess of 30 percent over the next 12 to 24 months, and there could easily be more."

7. Seventy Seven Energy (SSE). When you're making a gamble, it’s hard to resist betting on sevens. Heavy insider buying of stock in this oil field supply and services firm is the key here, according to Jim Osman, CEO of The Edge Consulting Group in London and New York. “Insiders continue to accumulate SSE at lower levels,” Osman says. “But the market is valuing SSE more in relation to the steep fall in the crude oil prices and expectation of even lower prices in the near future.” His advice is to ignore the naysayers and trust the insiders, who’ve paid as little as $6.18 a share in December for a stock he predicts could hit $16.37.

8. Classic cars. Who says high-rolling can’t be fast-rolling, too? “Classic cars are a passion investment likely to produce enormous returns,” says Paige Stover Hague, a principal in Crowninshield Consulting in Boston. Data from the Historic Automobile Group International shows that “rare historic” cars appreciated by nearly 16 percent in 2014. “This large appreciation rate is thought to be due simply to supply and demand. The amount of classic car investors is on the rise, and the amount of collectible cars is staying pretty much the same,” she says.

9. Biglari Holdings (BH). Do you like Steak ’n Shake or Cracker Barrel? You may want to take a bite out of this San Antonio company, which owns all of the former and 20 percent of the latter. “The interesting part of this position is you’re aligning with CEO Sardar Biglari, who has built a very good short-term record with undervalued companies," Bock says. "But many investors don't like his compensation structure and his absolute control of capital allocation." Characterized as combative and controversial – his move to standardize Steak 'n Shake menus prompted lawsuits from some franchisees, for example – Biglari is also a Warren Buffett acolyte. So perhaps some of that Omaha Oracle pixie dust will supercharge his holdings, which also include Maxim magazine.

10. Contemporary art. You don't have to be an art lover to fall for the potentially enormous returns. Hague points out that the market came off a record-breaking stretch in 2012 to 2013, when sales rose 33 percent. Over the last 10 years, the market has seen a 1,078 percent increase, according to Hague, who cites Artprice's Annual Global Index report for 2013-2014. But you have to be very wealthy to afford the work of established artists such as Jeff Koons. That could mean speculating on lesser-known names. "Just as with any form of investment, good decision-making requires a great deal of research and consultation with key people who have their finger on the pulse of the market," Hague advises.