



K.TEK NAVIGATES THROUGH TOUGH TECHNOLOGY TIMES

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Pamela Griner Leavy - Staff Writer

CLEARWATER -- Kim During has taken K.Tek Systems Inc. in a different direction in the midst of what she calls the current "economic turnaround."

Instead of closing down the Clearwater Internet business solutions firm she founded in 1995 or reorganizing -- the euphemism for layoffs and budget cutbacks -- During, president and chief executive officer, expanded.

Within the past five months with the help of Heather Donaho, chief operating officer, During has established a holding company, K.Tek International Inc., and created two technology subsidiaries.

"K.Tek managed to stay afloat by initiating some powerful Tampa Bay (area) partnerships, allowing us to form K.Tek International," During said.

"During the economic downturn we used our time wisely and put it into our business plan. We developed companies and found customers. Now we are ready to bring them to market."

One of her new subsidiaries, TrafficTek Inc., focuses on Internet marketing and Web site analysis. During said survival is all about marketing Internet presence, drawing traffic to sites, giving people a return on their investment and showing bottom line profitability.

Utilizing a search-engine process During hopes to patent by the fourth quarter of 2001, TrafficTek provides Web research through a dedicated network for Internet traffic only.

During's other new subsidiary, Interactive Agent Inc., markets a business-to-business software application to Fortune 500 insurance companies designed to distribute insurance products and manage agent relationships.

Flexible joint partnerships instead of venture capital funding are on During's agenda, she said.

During said TrafficTek already has 38 customers -- from established real estate firms to manufacturing companies -- but declined to give names.

Companies stung by Web shutdowns also have become K.Tek Systems Inc. site development customers, said During.

"A lot of customers have come to us who were with Web companies less than a year old and are in Web hell," she said. "Now we are bailing them out and picking up the pieces. Put it together right, and they are a customer for life."

One of the partnerships During formed is with Foley & Lardner technology specialist Marty Traber.

Traber has represented K.Tek for less than a year.

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"Kim is back in the saddle with sales, and she and Heather are two powerful sales engines," he said.

"They have altered their business modules to provide a diversified group of tools. I am happy for them, believe me. Kim can get in any door."

During plans to set up a shop in Canada during the third quarter of 2001, and long range projections call for K.Tek International services in eastern Europe.

Lauren Shiner, owner of Lauren Shiner Marketing Strategies and president of Internet Business Association International Inc., knows During. Last year the IBAll nominated K.Tek as information technology company of the year.

"She's a risk-taker, innovative and daring, and just goes for it," Shiner said. "She constantly keeps churning the ideas and looking at them this way and that way. She's aggressive about going out and making things happen, and that takes chutzpah." c Copyright 2000 American City Business Journals Inc.

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