



MORRISON & COMPANY

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Business Lessons From Grumpy Cat

Managing Principal Brent Morrison's take on what we can learn from the internet phenom.

Morrison Client Corner

Exciting things are happening for some of our current clients and we welcome some new clients too!

Morrison Snapshots



Whew! What a winter we've had so far. Check out our team's escapades these last few months.

Oregon Cherry Growers:

Sweet Success



One of the mantras here at Morrison & Company is that chocolate makes anything better. And we've found that there's no better way to get our daily fruit servings than by snacking on dark chocolate covered cherries grown and produced by Oregon Cherry Growers.

Founded in 1932, Oregon Cherry Growers is a grower-owned cooperative of family farms cultivating, processing, and marketing the finest fruit from orchards in Oregon's bountiful Willamette Valley and Columbia River Gorge. They supply fresh, maraschino, dried and frozen sweet cherries, blueberries, strawberries, and other fruits to customers worldwide. Packing and processing an average of 25,000 to 30,000 tons of cherries annually, Oregon Cherry Growers is the largest producer and processor of sweet cherries in the world.

Their processed fruit is sold to restaurants, bakeries, and confectioners around the globe, and used to flavor well-known products from companies such as Haagen-Dazs, Ben & Jerry's, and Russell Stover. The company also sells maraschino cherries and dried fruits, including the chocolate covered cherries that are a hit in our office, under the Royal Harvest brand. Products are sold online at oregoncherryonline.com and select WinCo and Sprouts Food stores.

Oregon Cherry Growers was one of the first to perfect the revolutionary preserving method that is now standard in maraschino cherry production, and today continues the tradition of innovation. In fact, they were recently recognized



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as one of Oregon's top 13 manufacturers at the Portland Business Journal's 2014 Oregon Manufacturing Awards ceremony for their new, innovative Royal Harvest branded line of dried fruits. The product line, which includes strawberries, blueberries, and cherries, was highlighted for the proprietary drying process Oregon Cherry Growers uses to protect the natural sweetness of the fruit, ensuring perfect texture and moisture. In addition, all Royal Harvest dried fruits are Non-GMO Project verified, natural,

preservative-free, sweetened with Fair Trade certified pure cane sugar, and kosher and halal certified.

Morrison & Company was blessed to work with Oregon Cherry Growers to prepare a competitive grant proposal that allowed the cooperative to educate and train their growers on good agricultural practices. We look forward to working with them in the future and in the meantime will continue to enjoy their tasty treats.



GRUMPY CAT'S BEST BUSINESS ADVICE EVER

Owner Tabatha Bundesen says her cat's earnings are nowhere near \$100 million, though business manager Ben Lashes reports that's about her total revenue. If that's true, my best guess is that Grumpy's take-home pay is in seven figures, which is still a lot of figures.

There will probably be a Grumpy Cat course at Harvard someday but until then, what can we learn?

Some opportunities smack you in the face so hard you can't see them. We have worked with several businesses that were pursuing a variety of opportunities while not seeing the ones right in front of them. I can't share those stories but I'll tell you one of ours: we spent several months some time ago researching possible new service lines while the phone kept ringing for new recruitment projects. Every time we do a search we send hundreds of emails looking for candidates, which would be kind of weird for our interim/outsourced or planning projects. The side effect is that hundreds of people are reminded we have a particular specialty in recruiting every time we do one. We stopped looking at other opportunities to focus our efforts on the one that kept calling us and have multiplied that business several times over.

Strike while the iron's hot. Grumpy got her start when Bundesen's brother posted the cat's picture on the social networking site Reddit. Grumpy's popularity moved to other sites like Facebook, where she has over seven million likes (George

Clooney has just over a million). At the ripe old age of six months, Bundesen signed Grumpy with a professional "Internet meme talent manager" (yes, that's a thing).

My guess is that Grumpy Cat will be a Trivial Pursuit question before long but she has the public's attention now and Bundesen didn't let grass grow on the opportunity. Remember Pet Rocks? This 70s marketing marvel, basically a rock in a box. It made originator Gary Dahl a millionaire in less than a year, after which the fad died of public boredom. If Dahl had dawdled while interest grew, he'd have hit rock bottom instead of gold.

Find the right resources. Grumpy's manager is Ben Lashes, whose other clients include Keyboard Cat, Nyan Cat, Ridiculously Photogenic Guy, and teenager Rebecca Black (famous for the highly mockable Internet hit song "Friday"). This is Lashes' sweet spot. Grumpy Cat is his Beatles but he already had a pretty good record in this new field. I don't know who approached whom but Bundesen, then a waitress, at the very least understood the opportunity and that while she had the cat, she didn't have the business/marketing capability. Lashes plugged that hole nicely.

I'm sure there's more; flea collar and hairball analogies come to mind. For now, Grumpy Cat says watch for opportunities in unexpected places, move fast when you find them, and find the right help for things that aren't your expertise.

Advice from a cat? I'm happy if mine takes out the occasional gopher but this one might just know something. Internet phenomenon, Grumpy Cat, recently starred in the movie *Grumpy Cat's Worst Christmas Ever*; fronted her own coffee line, "Grumppuccino"; signed an endorsement deal with Friskies; starred in a Cheerios commercial; was featured in *The Wall Street Journal* and *New York* magazine; and appeared on television shows including *Today*, *Good Morning America*, *CBS Evening News*, *VH1's Big Morning Buzz Live*, and *American Idol*. Not to mention the Grumpy Cat products: Christmas ornaments, toys, iPhone cases, tote bags, purses, greeting cards, T-shirts, posters, mugs, keychains, mouse pads (naturally), and more. Grumpy was reported by Britain's *Daily Express* in December 2014 to have earned about \$100 million.

Morrison Client Corner

In our last issue, we debuted a new feature to our newsletter, the Morrison Client Corner. It was such a hit that we decided to make it a recurring section.

Here, you'll find updates on what a number of our clients are up to, their achievements and milestones, and the generally great things happening in their companies or organizations.

If you're a client of ours, we'd love to stay up to date with what is going on in your company or within your organization and invite you to share your highlights in this space. Feel free to send any press releases, newsletters, or just random ideas to tscott@morrisonco.net or chogan@morrisonco.net and we'll be sure to spread your news!

- San Miguel Produce** is currently underway with a tremendous two-phase expansion that will triple the current growing and production capacity of the fresh specialty greens company. The first phase includes the addition of a new facility in Georgia through a partnership with Herndon Farms in Lyons, GA. The second phase, which is aimed to be completed in 2016, will include expanding the company's flagship processing plant in Oxnard, CA by 40,000 square feet. Both facilities will be adding new advanced technologies and processes designed for the many innovative products the company continues to offer and grow. In addition, their farms and facilities expect to continue to add many new jobs in each region, enhancing the communities they serve.



In addition to the construction projects, San Miguel also recently completed a redesign of their Cut 'N Clean brand of organic and conventional nutrient dense specialty greens, just in time to celebrate the brand's 20th anniversary. The new packaging features a smaller bag size specifically targeted to meet growing mainstream consumer preference and demand. The bags are also 100% recyclable, micro-perforated, and highlight easy and fun new contemporary recipes to promote consumption, quick tips on how to incorporate flavorful greens into any diet or dish, and enhanced prominent color coding for variety recognition.

- Butte County Rice Growers Association (BUCRA)** recently celebrated their 100th anniversary with the cooperative's original board of directors having signed the organization's bylaws Dec. 29, 1914. The century-old grower-owned organization honored their milestone with an event in January, which Morrison Managing Principal and former BUCRA President Brent Morrison attended. Here he is pictured with Carl Hoff, current BUCRA President, at the event.



- Universal Huntress**, which features **Girls with Guns** owners and founders Jen Adams and Norissa Harman, debuted on the Sportsman's Channel in late December. Check your local listings for up to date airing times and visit www.facebook.com/universalthuntress or www.universalthuntress.com to learn more about Jen and Norissa and their adventures. See our Snapshots page in this issue to see a photo of Morrison Principal Geoff Chinnock and the girls at their premiere party.



- California Olive Ranch**, the largest American olive oil producer, recently acquired Lucini Italia, a producer and importer of Italian extra virgin olive oils. California Olive Ranch and Lucini Italia will continue to operate under their own labels. California Olive Ranch states that the combined shares of the companies make them the fourth largest brand in the country among both American and foreign olive oil brands in terms of revenue.



Welcome New Clients





Morrison & Company Snapshots



Brent Morrison, Managing Principal, volunteered with the Chico Rotary Club to bell ring for The Salvation Army over the holiday season. Here Brent is pictured with fellow Rotarian Les Heringer of M&T Chico Ranch.



We were excited to once again celebrate with the Chico Chamber of Commerce at their annual dinner in January. Tim Peters, Camille Hogan, Colleen Souza, and Brent and Sibyl Morrison pose on the red carpet at the event.



Morrison Principal Geoff Chinnock joined Girls with Guns owners and founders Jen Adams and Norissa Harman at the premiere party of their new television show "Universal Huntress," which airs on the Sportsman's Channel in late December. Check out our Morrison Client Corner inside for more on the show.



Morrison & Company was proud to participate in the Butte County Farm Bureau's Grower Day, held in early December. In addition to learning about issues impacting regional farms and producers, Morrison & Company was also an exhibitor. Here, Morrison consultants Colleen Souza and Ryan Cheung man our booth.



The Morrison & Company team and our families gathered together for a Christmas lunch in December. We continue to grow each year! New faces include Camille Hogan, who officially joined the Morrison team in January and Karamlea Peters, daughter of Tim and Jaime Peters, attending her first company luncheon at four months old.

Morrison & Company specializes in planning and feasibility, interm/outsourcing assistance, recruitment, special projects, and grants.