

Client Spotlight: Winnipeg Francophone Start-up aims to Make One Billion People Smile

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VidDay's video gifts are a great Holiday gift option for those who can't see family and friends due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

VidDay began in 2015 when Denis Devigne wanted to make a surprise birthday video for a friend. Going through the video production process of crowdsourcing video messages from friends and family, Denis quickly realized that this type of gift idea was very time-consuming and difficult to execute. Denis says, "It was not an easy task, but my friend cried tears of joy when he saw everyone come together in a birthday video made especially for him. I had never seen this guy cry tears of joy before." Denis adds, "My friend said the video was the best gift he had ever received."



From that point on, Denis set off to develop an **easy-to-use collaborative video maker** for people who have no editing skills, called VidDay. Denis says "that everyone should experience the love and appreciation that these videos generate." In the early start-up stage, Denis says, "I recall that tears of joy and comments like 'this is the best gift I've ever received' were consistent themes." Denis adds, "It made me feel good to make other people feel good."

Denis started making videos for weddings, retirements, baby showers and other special occasions, while working on streamlining the video making process. Then he started to build the team to take VidDay to the next level. First, a graphic designer, Jeffrey Laxson, joined in 2016, and in 2017, Kyle Sierens, an in-house developer. Throughout the next few years, the VidDay team grew with motivated individuals inspired to impact the world positively.

Denis says, "Growth was organic. Our marketing was by word-of-mouth." The business continued to progress and later in 2019, VidDay had blue chip global clients like Nike, Capital One and LinkedIn, well-known Canadian brands like Via Rail, and celebrated Winnipeg

businesses like Princess Auto.

Fast forward to 2020, and the global pandemic hits. Denis says “COVID-19 definitely accelerated the awareness of our collaborative video maker, as people needed to get creative about how to celebrate special occasions virtually.” The cost for the service is based on the length of the video. The pricing starts at \$12 USD for a 10 minute video. The average length is approximately 15 minutes and the longest to date is 185 minutes!

Today, VidDay has customers in over 185 countries around the world. The company’s mission is to make one billion people smile. VidDay’s success has allowed it to **give back to communities in need**. For example, one dollar from every video was donated to a local charity **SKL** (School for Kids in Laos). Denis says, “We’ve raised enough money to build a classroom, build the electric and water infrastructure, the sanitary washroom, text books and furniture.” VidDay’s newest community giving initiative is where one tree is planted for every video sold. To date, VidDay has been responsible for over 20,000 trees being planted in British Columbia, California, Australia and the Amazon Rainforest. Plus, Get Well videos are free because support from loved ones can make a difference when fighting through or recovering from an illness.

In the next five years, Denis sees VidDay as a global multi-lingual business that has achieved its one billion smiles goal, while employing many more people right here in Winnipeg. Denis says, “We see VidDay having a positive ripple effect, be it helping build a brighter future for kids, or supporting global reforestation efforts. As global warming becomes more severe, VidDay wants to remind people of the real reason we give gifts – to show the people around us that we care.” Denis adds, “It will be great to see people using VidDay in their everyday conversations, saying things like ‘Let’s make grandma a VidDay.’”

With the December 2020 holiday season approaching, VidDay’s video gifts are a great option for those who can’t see family and friends due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. When it comes to gift buying, those with ‘pain points’ of not knowing what to get the ‘hard to buy for people’, or ‘the person who has everything’ should look at VidDay. The videos are an ideal option because the gift is personalized, eco-friendly and meaningful, and can also quickly and easily be sent anywhere in the world with no shipping cost.

When asked if Denis has any final thoughts, he says, “We have now processed over 3 million pieces of media, responsible for making thousands of people cry tears of joy around the world. I couldn’t have done any of this without our other talented team members, including Will Robinson, Greg Stevenard, Ross Sabourin and our amazing customer care team. Externally, I’d like to recognize the legal advice and support from Danielle Grzybowski of TDS and Amazon Web Services for its reliable, scalable, cloud computing services and support.”

VidDay’s success during unprecedented times stems from having more than just a dedicated team. Denis adds, “We rely on people like you to help share our story. Each person that joins

us in our mission creates a positive ripple effect in the world. And the world can always use more positivity and optimism.”

Videos:

Reaction: <https://youtu.be/eg1FgHG-Px8>

App promo: https://youtu.be/_HfHN3Q9N7E

Video promo: <https://youtu.be/wc4fkGf0buw>

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