



**18 SMALL BUSINESS LEADERS
TELL YOU *WHY* THEY BECAME
CERTIFIED BENEFIT CORPORATIONS**

Are you curious about why a small business with less than 10 employees decides to certify their business values? Why it is so important for them to put their commitment to being a purpose-driven business out there for the world and everyone to see? To their customers, their employees and their communities? Well, then, read on.

As of this report in first quarter 2021, we have certified 55 *Benefit Corporations for Good*. It's a milestone we are proud of.

These small businesses that come from many industry sectors are all being measured by their practice of the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit. These include law firms, wine bars, manufacturing companies, financial planners, tattoo artists, plant shops, management consulting companies, natural food producers, retro clothing companies, promotional marketing companies, print shops, and many others across the spectrum of industries.

Our family of purpose-driven businesses in Oregon, Arizona, Colorado and New York are doing a lot of good in the world through their business practices just as they explain in the annual benefit reports found on their websites. You'll find them advocating for climate change solutions. Marching for social justice. Cleaning up the litter in their cities. Volunteering with community environmental organizations. And doing good things for their employees, their customers and their communities.

While their approach to doing good varies, their beliefs in being a force for good are consistent. It's what makes them a Benefit Corporation, pure and simple.

What follows are the reasons they chose to become a triple bottom line business, why it matters to them and what it's meant for their business.

How a Eugene Plant Shop Found the Ideal Growing Conditions in an Oregon Benefit Company



Here are co-founders Adrian Mendoza and Lukas Robuck in their shop, Stingray Botanicals, a certified triple bottom line business.

The founders of Stingray Botanicals tell you they don't just sell high quality plants in Lane County. As a registered and certified Benefit Corporation for Good, they are also committed to advocating for social justice and taking hard stances on human and environmental rights. They aim to be a catalyst for change by engaging the community and other businesses on various socioeconomic issues.

They've also taken a sustainability pledge to source goods and services locally whenever possible and to choose products that are made regionally by local artisans. You see, being transparent is vital to being authentic, and that's why Stingray believes in keeping their customers informed of their products source.

We recently interviewed Lukas Robuck about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what he had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it's helping grow Stingray Botanicals.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? As someone who has seen and experienced multiple perspectives of businesses, it is apparent that most companies do not care about their communities, employees, or the planet. Decisions are often solely based on what will build shareholder value, and unfortunately our capitalistic system encourages and, in some instances, mandates that this be the case. I knew I couldn't end capitalism by myself, but I saw an opportunity in using the tools meant for financial gain to improve the lives of those around me, starting with my employees and local community. Being a certified benefit company means considering the needs of all stakeholders, not just shareholders.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? Not at all. In fact, it was never a question of if we should pursue this model. It was more a question of how we can make it happen. From the very beginning, my leadership team has facilitated, and often times led, the move towards a triple bottom line business model. We know that this is the model of the future, because it is the most sustainable model available. No business will see sustained growth and innovation over time if it does not begin to implement more sustainable systems, both in terms of material and human resources.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? Since we knew from before the inception of our business that we wanted to be a Benefit Company, it did not take much time at all. We filed our LLC in September of 2019 and were certified by December of the same year.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? The culture of Stingray Botanicals was built on the promise of the triple bottom line and the Benefit Company vision. As a small team, we work closely together to take care of each other, our customers, our community, and our planet. Our company culture prioritizes the team above all else, because we know the team is what makes the business successful. That's why all team members are paid at least \$15 an hour, full-time employees are offered generous health care benefits, and we provide earned PTO to all. When the team is taken care of, they can be their best selves at work and at home. This leads to increased productivity, lower turnover rates, happier employees, and happy customers. Further, a happy and productive team is able to innovate and create more effectively and freely- bringing fresh ideas to the company about how we can further our promise to support the community through partnerships, fundraisers, and more.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Absolutely. Many of our most loyal customers have become evangelists for our company and our brand because they know who we are and what we stand for. They know we are a company that values its people and community, and they are more than happy to support us over larger competitors who may have cheaper prices. We have also seen our employees take ownership over their roles because they know they will be supported by leadership.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Yes, unequivocally. I would encourage small businesses and startups to seriously consider joining the Benefit Company movement. It places small businesses at an advantage over larger companies who lack a moral compass and provides a strategic advantage. With that said, the movement is not exclusive to small businesses. Any larger company that desires to see sustained, long-term growth should engage in thoughtful conversation about the triple bottom line model and how it may benefit their organization. However, I would note that the triple bottom line model and the benefit company movement are absolutely not tools to be wielded for the sole purpose of increasing profit. It is a mindset, a culture, a practice, and a vision of how we, the business community, can do better and how we can make a positive impact. It should be undertaken with the utmost seriousness and care.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? A willingness to listen and learn. I would recommend this trait to any business leader, but particularly to leaders of Benefit Companies. The entire model is based on the premise of community and teamwork. To be considered a leader at all, and not just a boss, requires a strong level of emotional intelligence and a true desire to understand others (alongside the patience to see this through). This is a skill that must be practiced. Many think listening is easy, and that may be the case. However, to listen with the intent to understand and not just the intent to respond is a key differentiating lesson that separates bosses from leaders.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? Ask questions. Really, ask questions and ask them all the time! And don't just ask easy questions, ask difficult ones. Ask questions that make people uncomfortable and challenge their worldview. Ask questions that reveal peoples' true colors and intentions. In relation to asking questions, vet all of your partners by asking them questions about their beliefs, value, and practices. There's nothing worse than starting work with a partner, only to find out their values run counter to your own organization's values. And last, practice honesty and transparency. Admit when you make a mistake or don't get something right- and then do better. Don't be a politician and try to slither your way out of a hole by talking around an issue. Just face things head-on with humility and honesty.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? Yes, all the time. Our brand does not exist separately from our status as a Benefit Company. The two are intertwined so tightly at Stingray Botanicals, that we often don't even think about being a Benefit Company because it is just who we are and what we do.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? Do it for yourself, your people, your community and your planet. We've got enough companies doing business as usual. What is needed in this moment is to pivot away from the old models and fully embrace the models that will help us manifest the future

we all want, for ourselves and the generations to come- a future where the planet is taken care, a future where workers don't have to live paycheck to paycheck, and where businesses make decisions that better all stakeholders.

You can [learn more about Stingray Botanicals here](#).

Why a Portland Mission-Based Botanical Shop Chose the 3 P's Over 501(c)3



*Here are Kailia Wray and Kasia Bilhartz, co-owners of Larkspur Botanicals Portland,
and a certified Benefit Corporation for Good.*

When Larkspur Botanicals was in the pre-launch stage, its two conscientious leaders believed they would become a 501(c)3. After all, mission-driven businesses like Larkspur almost always choose non-profit as a business structure.

But along the way, co-owner Kasia Bilhartz got exposed to the Oregon Benefit Company and saw it might be a better fit. During her work with many nonprofits, she saw how the majority of them were competing for the same funding pie. She recognized the freedom and ease to finance their business and community work other than through grant-writing for foundation dollars. It's no wonder choosing the [benefit corporation route for mission-based business is trending](#).

Now Larkspur is off and running in the Foster-Powell neighborhood of Portland. The shop not only offers healthy, resilient and verdant plants for homes and business but also provides monthly therapeutic horticulture group sessions with local partner organizations.

We recently interviewed Kasia about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it was right for Larkspur.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? Larkspur was initially intended to be a non-profit/501(c)3 organization, with a mission to provide low and no cost therapeutic horticulture programming to the community. As part of my professional development, I worked and interned with some fantastic local non-profits whose missions aligned with equitable nature access and environmental education. The knowledge that my non-profit would be competing for some of the same funding pools as these orgs was the biggest influence in my changing course to operate under an LCC/Benefit Company structure. I liked the freedom and ease of starting a partnership LCC and the ability to raise our own resources/funds (to fund the community horticulture therapy programming) more directly through sales at our shop than through grant-writing and fund-raising.

I wanted to have the accountability of maintaining status as a Benefit Company as a way to communicate to the broader community that we are a mission-based business.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? Not at all. My partner Kailia was 100% on-board with certification from the moment I pitched the idea.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? Due to Covid, there was an unexpected delay of several months between our initial contact with Tom (late 2019/early 2020), which also halted our pop-up markets and our HT programming until summer when we were able to participate in outdoor markets. Once we finally signed up for the exam/application, we were processed and certified within about a month.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? We were certified a month prior to opening our brick & mortar shop and doing this full-time, so being a Benefit Company is part of our foundational bedrock. As such, our culture is built on these principles.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Yes, absolutely. We have had many customers inquire about our work and mission after seeing our signage or seeing on our website that we are certified. These inquiries give us a natural opportunity to talk about therapeutic horticulture, and about the programming that we provide. It also opens discussions about the healing power of plants and nature. These conversations often lead to smiles, offers of support, and meaningful participation.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Yes, we would recommend it! If a business is at all inclined to be a benevolent presence in their community, becoming certified as a Benefit Company provides guidance and support on how to do so, and communicates those intentions and practices to the public, which is meaningful to customers and collaborators.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? We believe the most important trait is a firm commitment to amplify goodness, and in that, to limit harm.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? We have learned that, even with a physical presence in an urban area, it is really vital to engage our community online, a lesson that we've been grateful to get as a part of our certification process with Tom and Mary Anne of Benefit Corporations for Good. We are still working on this lesson!

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? Absolutely. We are very proud to share that we are certified. We share our badge on our website, in our store, on our business cards, and in all applicable communications. It is a big part of our identity.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? There is a quote by Marshall McLuhan that provides a beautifully concise answer to the "why." It suggests that all hands are needed to help the planet and people right now. We all have skills and talents to contribute to lifting one another up. Becoming a Benefit Company is a step in becoming a part of the solution.

The quote:

"There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. We are all crew."

You can [learn more about Larkspur Botanicals Portland here.](#)

How Two Wine Afficionados Uncorked Beaverton's Sustainable Wine Bar



Here are David Anderson and Angela Anderson, owners of Syndicate Wine Bar in Beaverton, Oregon and a certified Benefit Corporation for Good.

Angela and David Anderson know a thing or two about grape juice for adults. You see, the two of them have been involved in the Oregon wine business enjoying noteworthy pinot noirs and other delectable wines from the region. They've also helped design engaging websites for some of the state's finest wineries. All while becoming one of the first Oregon Benefit Companies believing in and practicing the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit.

When they founded Syndicate Wine Bar in the second half of 2019, they brought that passion and sustainable leadership to their wonderful wine bar on First Street in Old Town Beaverton. Now they are creating some of their own vintages to help local community causes such as the Patricia Reser Center for the Arts as well as offering more than 240 other carefully selected wines from around the world that will make even the most particular wine palette happy.

Recently, we interviewed [Angela](#) about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it was right for Syndicate Wine Bar.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? We felt that this was the only option for us as a purpose driven company. All aspects of the Benefit Company philosophy are a direct reflection of who we are as a company and what we find important to our business.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? No. My husband and I (owners) also owned another company that was an Oregon Benefit Company, so we had some experience with this business model. Our team has also been with us for a long time, so they were familiar with the principles, adhering to them even before we became a certified Benefit Company.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? Not long at all. Once we completed the "Benefit Corporations for Good" online questionnaire, co-founders Tom and Mary Anne got back to us within the week for our assessment results.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? No, rather it reinforced the values our team believes in all things that we do. We want to make sure we are never losing the vision of balancing people, planet, and profit.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Being a Benefit Company in a district that is unfamiliar has given us a great opportunity to educate and lead through a different way. Our undeniable stance on community building in times of strife have propelled us forward and helped us gain customers looking for something more than the average business.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Absolutely. Right now, especially as consumers are extremely selective with the merchants, they choose to give their dollars to. They want to know about a company's ethics, principles, and socially conscious values. They want more than capitalism. They want a small business they can relate to that is personable, transparent, and passionate.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? Transparency. We feel that by trying and failing, there is a learning process. One thing we all have in common is that we are all imperfect beings. By being transparent in our learning process, our mistakes, and our efforts, we are showing our customers that it's okay to fail. Through failure and mistakes, we push ourselves for resiliency and growth. Growth is never ending.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? Our biggest lesson in the last year as a Benefit Company is that we can't do everything all the time. We have to take time for ourselves. It isn't all about the business. Though we stand by the principles of balancing people, planet, and profit in our business, we also must live by these standards in our own lives by balancing ourselves and taking time away to recharge. As small business owners, we want to do everything we can to grow the business and provide an establishment that our customers feel welcome and respected. Running ourselves and health down for the sake of the business was the hardest lesson to learn this last year and it came at a huge cost.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? We don't state it enough with the exact words "Benefit Company", but we make sure that our messaging always balances the principles for which we were formed.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? It is the right thing to do for your community! Becoming a Benefit Company is an outward sign to yourselves, your employees, and your community that you believe in a bigger picture in how you run your business. It isn't all about profit and it isn't all about community. It is about the combination of people, planet, and profit and how they can all come together in a cohesive mix to create a business that reaches higher, stands taller, and strives passionately.

You can [learn more about Syndicate Wine Bar here](#).

Why a Nutraceutical Products Manufacturer Added Benefit Corporation Certification To Its Formula



Here are Joe Stipek, Sarah Vito and Jessica Stipek of Yellow Emperor, a certified Benefit Corporation for Good and practitioner of the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit.

If you're in the custom liquid manufacturing business, you know your tasks are varied. Such is the case with Yellow Emperor of Eugene, Oregon. From custom vitamin formulation and liquid dietary supplement manufacturing to organic supplement private labeling and nutraceutical products manufacturing, their menu of services can accommodate a multitude of custom manufacturing needs.

But not all responsibilities fall under manufacturing. Last year, the business felt the time was right to show their stakeholders that Yellow Emperor was in business as a force for good. So, they decided to certify their beliefs and practices of serving People, Planet and Profit by becoming a Benefit Corporation for Good.

We interviewed Director of Business Development, [Sarah Vito](#), about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it was right for Yellow Emperor.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? We were motivated to become a Benefit Company for a number of reasons. We are already a certified Green Business and a certified Organic Processor, so we were looking for other ways to develop our business that lined up with our company culture. Also, the trends inspired by Millennials and Gen Z made it clear that if we wanted to be ahead of the curve and remain successful in our industry, becoming a Benefit Company was the way forward.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? Getting internal support to move towards this model was thankfully very easy. Becoming a certified Benefit Corporation was simply a formalized reflection of our company.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? From initial research into becoming a Benefit Company to becoming certified was a matter of months. Much of what we already had in place made the process simple.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? As a result of becoming a Benefit Company, we have recruited and hired employees that are drawn to our sustainability efforts, which has brought up more ideas on how we can do more for our community and the planet. We have also experienced more potential clients citing our sustainability efforts as what drew them to us and inspired them to reach out to find out more about our services. It's been great!

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? We have experienced many positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company. Specifically, since we have a dedicated section on our website to sustainability, we have attracted like-minded clients and employees. We have also connected with our community in ways we had not previously, like volunteering for local charities. We also increased our community donations.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? This business model will work for any business. The steps towards increasing sustainability do not need to happen all at once. If the steps are taken one at a time, the process is suddenly manageable and empowering. This business model is where the next generations are heading – folks want to know that they are supporting the planet and people regardless of when they purchase an item or a service.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? The most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company

is listening. It is fine to have ideals, but it is more important to listen to the folks around you so that they are included in discussions and decisions that impact their work life.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? I re-learned the value of patience in the process of becoming a Benefit Company. There is a powerful urge to do everything all at once, but it simply can't all be done at once. Same can be said for much of life, it is important to focus on one thing at a time and work on that, then take the next step. Another key lesson is that great ideas can come from anywhere and the paths to share ideas must be clear and visible. That said, it's important to not get discouraged when many folks simply want to treat their work as "just a job."

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? Yes, being a Benefit Company is a part of our brand messaging.

10. What is the single best reason you would give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? The best reason for another company to become a Benefit Company is that it is a simple process and attractive to clients and customers.

You can learn more about the [work of Yellow Emperor here](#).

How an Award-Winning Marketing Expert Told the World What She Stands Up For



Here's Charlotte Chipperfield, Founder and President of Chipperfield Media, a certified triple bottom line business.

Charlotte Chipperfield and her award-winning marketing consulting firm know how challenging it can be to get your message heard in an information-overloaded world. She helps conscious business leaders and companies integrate an intentional and sustainable marketing framework that saves time, energy, and money to be seen and heard in the digital space. That sustainability carries into her own personal values as she believes a business must do more than just make a profit. It must serve people and planet as well.

Enter certification as an Oregon Benefit Company practicing the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit. These forward-thinking businesses are all aligned in their belief of doing business for the greater good.

Recently, we interviewed [Charlotte](#) about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it was right for Chipperfield Media.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? From the time I launched my company in 2014, I knew I wanted to create more impact than just generating sales. It has always been a part of my DNA to give back and contribute to my community. However, as a business owner, it was challenging to find examples of how this could be incorporated into my business that wasn't seen as a PR stunt. As I began to do more research, I realized that there were many business owners who also shared similar values and when I learned about the Benefit Company certification, I didn't hesitate. I had found my tribe.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? As a solopreneur, it was pretty easy to get myself onboard 😊 With that being said, I did have to carve out the time to learn more about the process and gather the information to ensure this was the right process for me and that it matched the overall vision for my company. It didn't take long for me to recognize that both my personal and company values were strongly aligned. Becoming a Benefit Company was the right next step.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? The process was straightforward and didn't take long. Tom and Mary Anne were wonderful at answering questions and laying out the path to certification clearly.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? I've noticed a change in the way people engage with me and my company. There is a sense of curiosity to learn more about why I became certified and why that is important to me. It has been a great connection tool for building rapport with potential clients who are building companies focused on the triple bottom line whether they are certified or not.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? As I mentioned in the question above, it's been a great opportunity to connect with other industry leaders and connect with potential clients who share a similar value system.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? I would absolutely recommend this business model to others. I believe this is the future of business to create real, sustainable change.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? The most important trait for a conscious business leader is to lead with their heart as much as they are leading with their brain. When strategy meets empathy, the possibilities expand creating more opportunities over the long-term.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? I don't know if I've learned any lessons but rather found validation that I'm not alone in my approach to business. When you live and operate in a capitalist society, it's easy to get caught up in the hustle of making more money or becoming so focused on getting your business to a specific revenue mark. At the end of the day, money does matter, but impact matters more. For me, having a community that keeps

me accountable and serves as a reminder that I am not alone in this philosophy towards business has been empowering.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? It is a part of my messaging but as a marketing and brand messaging expert, I need to lean into this more!

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? I would invite someone considering the certification to think about their bigger vision and consider how they are building something bigger than yourself? Think about how can you create more impact that benefits all stakeholders from employees, investors, customers, the community and the environment?

If you can create value above and beyond just dollar signs, it might be time to consider being a Benefit Company.

You can [learn more about Chipperfield Media here](#).

Why a Growing Community Bank Adopted a Triple Bottom Line for Its Financial Business



*Here are Bob Harding President, Chief Operating Officer of Pacific West Bank and
Lisa Fajardo Faust, Senior VP Relationship Banking Team Leader.*

With community banks few and far between in this merger era of financial institutions, Pacific West Bank found itself joining a different group of companies. These forward-thinking businesses are all aligned in their belief of doing business for the greater good. That's why the bank decided to become an Oregon Benefit Company.

Recently the team felt the time was right to certify their beliefs and practices of serving People, Planet and Profit by becoming a Benefit Corporation for Good.

We interviewed senior vice-president [Lisa Fajardo Faust](#) about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it was right for Pacific West Bank.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? At our core, Pacific West Bank's values of being a community partner connected us to the BCFG values of People, Planet, Profit. It was time to embrace a formal process and support our employee's commitment to the Benefit Company model as we plan for our continued growth.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? Not at all. Our decision to move forward was driven and celebrated by our staff, senior management, and our board of directors.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? We took the time to talk to our staff, to make sure that our company culture matched the commitment. The beauty about taking this time was we found both long-term employees and new employees to the bank were all committed to the cause; to making an impactful difference in our community. Once we made the commitment, working with Tom and Mary Anne was quick and efficient.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? We have seen newly dedicated efforts by our employees to look through the BCFG lens. This is true with vendor management, creating sustainable work environments, and looking internally to becoming a more diverse workforce.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Absolutely. Internally we continue to see positive outcomes, and we have seen like-minded businesses want to work and collaborate with us. We also enjoy spreading the word of what it means to be a Benefit Company.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? We have had the opportunity to share this business model to others. We are proud to discuss how the core of being a Benefit Company matches our values as a company and as individuals.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? To be open-minded, to embrace change as new opportunities arise and to continue to challenge the status quo.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? That change for the good does not always need to be big. Every little step matters.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? Yes, we are proud to share our certification. It has elevated our presence in our community, and it has afforded us to the opportunity to work with other like-minded businesses.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? You get to walk the talk! Welcoming the opportunity to improve your business practices for the good, is a gift.

You can learn more about the work of [Pacific West Bank here](#).

Why an Outdoor Adventure Planning App Trekged To Becoming a Triple Bottom Line Business



Here's Matt Smith, Founder of Tribe Pilot of Bend, Oregon and a certified triple bottom line business.

When Tribe Pilot decided to become an Oregon Benefit Company, it was not a deviation from their business map. The founders of the Bend, Oregon company had always focused their mission on becoming a force for good being inspired by the purpose-driven work of outdoors brands like Patagonia.

Recently they felt the time was right to certify their beliefs and practices of serving People, Planet and Profit through Benefit Corporations for Good.

We interviewed Tribe Pilot founder [Matt Smith](#) about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what he had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it was right for his business.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? Brands like Patagonia have always been leaders in this field of the triple bottom line and as a company with a conscience there

was never an alternative for us. The vision for Tribe Pilot was always to be a benefit corporation as we aim to be a leader among our peers on how business can be a force for good.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? Absolutely not. The Board of Directors was all in on this decision from first mention all the way through registration.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? Total process was less than 3 weeks to become certified, then it took another 60 days to file our paperwork with the state.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? We have not, as we were already largely operating under these values.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Yes, we have been able to recruit some great talent based on our dedication to the triple bottom line. It is a badge that everyone wears proudly.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Absolutely! Getting into the movement early paves the way to a brighter future. Soon a day will exist where the values in this movement are the rule rather than the exception.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? Dedication to fiercely defending your company values. Being a benefit corporation lets you demonstrate the commitment to those values.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? Unfortunately, a lot of work needs to be done. The people who know what benefit corporations stand for already value them. The bigger work is in educating the rest of our business community that this is an important movement to join.

9. Is being a Benefit Corporation part of your current brand message? Yes. As a mobile app with national marketing campaigns, we integrate our benefit corporation messaging in most everything we do. It is a badge we wear proudly and loudly.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? It's the right thing to do. It will not affect your profits except for the better.

You can [learn more about Tribe Pilot here.](#)

Why an Innovative Wellness Company Committed To Improving More Than Its Customers' Health



Here's Jacoba Gundle, co-founder of Mindful Proteins and a certified triple bottom line company.

When Mindful Proteins decided to become an Oregon Benefit Company, they knew that a Triple Bottom Line approach to their wellness business was non-negotiable. You see, the company's co-founders believe their brand should not only encourage their customers to pursue a more mindful life centered on wellness and balance. But those same principles must be applied to their community and planet as well.

Recently they felt the time was right to certify their beliefs and practices of serving People, Planet and Profit through Benefit Corporations for Good.

We interviewed Mindful Proteins co-founder [Jacoba Gundle](#) about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, the motivation for doing it and why it was right for her business.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? When Sean (co-founder and CEO) and I decided to start Mindful Proteins, we did it with the full intention to be as sustainability-focused as possible. At the time, we had no fixed ideas on what resources would help us accomplish this goal. It did not take us very long to discover Benefit Corporations for Good and realize the positive impact its standard would offer our company.

The certification was a way that we could easily demonstrate our commitment to clients, stakeholders, peers, and the public that we were squarely focused on people, planet, and

2. Was it difficult getting internal support to moving toward this model? It was not difficult to get internal support to become a Benefit Company. With our background in climate finance and policy, being responsible denizens of the world was ingrained in us. We set out on a mission to find an organization that could help us document and certify our business practices and we found BDFG.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? The questionnaire took only a few hours to complete and we had our certificate in-hand less than a week later.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? Taking the care and the time to complete the Benefit Corporations for Good questionnaire and commit our values and approaches to writing our responses has been quite beneficial. The BCFG engagement brought much of values into acute and concise focus such that we are well equipped now to educate future new hires on the elements we take as important in our company culture.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? We have connected with a few other Benefit Companies and commended them on their certification approval. As a start-up business, we are carefully choosing our new vendors based on both their ability to provide appropriate service and their alignment with our values. Noting the Benefit Corporation sticker vendors post is an easy way to signal that these are companies we want to consider doing business with. For example, while we know good people there, we sought out [Pacific West Bank](#) specifically as our corporate banking partner due to their BCFG certification.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Absolutely. Even if you are not ready to take the leap to become a certified Benefit Company, going through the questionnaire as a team exercise helps align the collective vision for the organization. One can use the questionnaire as a guide to help change and grow the organization en route to achieving certification. We recommend this business model because it publicly demonstrates company values relating to the triple bottom line of People, Planet and Profit, and consumers increasingly care about that.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit

Company? To implement the changes that are required for a Benefit Company certification, leadership needs to be open to creating new policies that prove to be beneficial for all. Obtaining the certification shows that there are more important factors than simply profit. Leadership needs to place a high value on commitment for good and real transparency. If leadership places high emphasis on the values needed to become a Benefit Company, so will the rest of the organization. This leads to a better company, better products, and a better value to consumers and the environment.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? The biggest thing we have learned through this process is identifying where the areas for improvement exist. We are very strong on certain aspects of the certification, but now see the path forward on where we need to strengthen our efforts.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? Yes, we are proud to be a Certified Benefit Company. We have the Benefit Corporations for Good logo on our website, our email signatures, and on our office door. We want as many people as possible to know that we align with the values of a Benefit Company. It is part of our company ethos!

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? Why would you not become a Benefit Company? Other than a small initial financial commitment, I can't think of a substantial reason not to become, or work to become a Benefit Company. By getting certified, you let everyone know that protecting the planet, diversifying your team, and treating people well is a priority for your business.

It helps signal and provide common language for companies committed to decisions and actions intended to achieve a much more expansive notion of positive impact and sustainability – for the good of employees, clients/stakeholders, community, and the environment.

You can [learn more about Mindful Proteins here](#).

How a Strategic Financial Services Firm Found Its Purpose Far Beyond the Bottom Line



Here's founder Colleen Ruhlin of Tailwind PDX, a certified triple bottom line business.

As the founder and CEO of Tailwind PDX, Colleen Ruhlin brings a Fortune 100 financial and accounting skill set to her clients. Her strategic thinking and ability to see beyond a company's financial statistics can do much to improve the performance of a business.

But when she made the decision to become an Oregon Benefit Company, she knew it wasn't solely about the numbers. It was based on the practice of a Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit where a business focuses on its employees, its clients, and its communities in addition to making a profit.

We recently interviewed Colleen about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, her motivation for doing it, and why it was right for her business.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? I was fresh out of the corporate world when I met Mary Anne Harmer at the Oregon Small Business Fair. Her message about business being a force for good resonated deeply with me. I sort of filed it away for future reference. Later, when I worked with attorney Michael Jonas (of Rational Unicorn Legal Services LLC) on my business formation and saw that he was a certified Benefit Company – well, the light bulb came on. I had found my people!

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? No...I talked it over with myself, and I agreed. (I'm a single member LLC 😊)

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? It took about a month from application to certification.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? I've been an Oregon Benefit Company since business formation, so this was really baked into culture from the start. What I appreciate is the accountability – so that my commitment to the Triple Bottom Line stays front and center as I'm making day-to-day business decisions.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? I find I'm attracting prospective clients who are also focused on the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit. I love that we're reinforcing one another's values – it really feels like a virtuous cycle.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Absolutely, yes. As an accountant, I'd say there's no downside, only upside. This is not about demonizing profit. It's about being attentive, innovative, and making fully informed decisions ... really, it's combining people, planet, and profit thinking.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? I think it's humility. The more I learn, the more I appreciate how much I don't know – so being willing to set ego aside, listen to different viewpoints, and see where my thinking was flawed or incomplete.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? I've gained an understanding of where I'm naturally strong, and where I can focus to continually improve as a conscientious leader.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? Yes! Being a Benefit Company helped me put into words something I would have otherwise struggled to articulate. It's really helped paint a fuller picture of who I am and what my company is all about.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? This really is the way of the future. Increasingly, consumers are looking

for a broader sense of purpose and meaning from those with whom they do business. It's pretty awesome to do this along with a group of like-minded fellow travelers.

You can [learn more about Tailwind PDX here](#).

How a World-Class Research Firm Found its Big ‘Aha’ in Becoming a Force for Good



Here are leaders of Marzano Research with their certification as a certified triple bottom line business.

From left to right: Joy Bell, Danette Parsley, Jennifer Norford

When Marzano Research decided to become an Oregon Benefit Company, they knew that a Triple Bottom Line approach to business was the only way for them. After all, they believe that a business must go beyond just making profit to be of value in the eyes of their employees, their clients and their communities.

Recently they felt the time was right to certify those beliefs and practices of serving People, Planet and Profit through Benefit Corporations for Good.

We interviewed Marzano CEO Danette Parsley about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, her motivation for doing it and why it was right for her business.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? It's really important to us that we run our company in a people- and purpose-centered way, applying values and principles that are traditionally associated (in theory, not necessarily practice) with running a nonprofit

organization. Becoming a Benefit Company allows us to formally signal to employees, clients, partners, and the community that we are dedicated to and willing to be held accountable for the Triple Bottom Line.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for embracing this model? We (the executive team/owners) knew from the beginning that we wanted to be a benefit company – we had researched the options when we started talking about forming our company. So, we elected *benefit company* when we registered the company in the State of Oregon. We have found that the model really resonates with our colleagues and they are excited to help the company continue evolving in that direction.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? For the certification process, we reviewed the options available to us as a new company and chose Benefit Corporations for Good (BCFG) because we thought it was a good fit for us and where we were as a company. We dedicated a few hours of uninterrupted time to work through the assessment together. We used the time to take stock of where we are and discuss areas where we want to strengthen our efforts. After completing the assessment, we spent about 30 minutes on a call getting feedback from BCFG, which was another valuable component of the process.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? It's too early to gauge. It has definitely influenced our decision-making on many fronts – from setting up employee benefits to planning for paperless systems.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? In addition to generating internal excitement, we have had a really positive response from industry peers and partners.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Absolutely! Just this weekend I was talking with an industry colleague who was thinking about starting a new business as a nonprofit to send the “right” signal to education clients and stakeholders, even though she didn't think nonprofit was the right fit. I suggested looking into establishing a benefit company as an alternative structure. I think it's really important to dispel the myth that for-profit companies are inherently bad, and nonprofits are inherently good. What really matters are the principles underlying the way the organization is run and how it conducts its work.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? I think the interrelated traits of humility and an improvement-oriented mindset are really important. When it comes to striving for Triple Bottom Line outcomes, you never really arrive at a final destination. Rather, it's an ongoing process of purposeful experimentation and continuous improvement. We recognize that we will make some mistakes along the way; the key is making timely course corrections. And we recognize that

brilliant ideas are more likely to emerge from engaging the collective rather than originating from the top.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? Even as a new, small company, you can choose the path of a benefit company and become certified.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? We are in the beginning stages of (re)branding, so being a Benefit Company will definitely be an important part of our messaging moving forward.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? It helps signal and provide common language for companies committed to decisions and actions intended to achieve a much more expansive notion of positive impact and sustainability – for the good of employees, clients/stakeholders, community, and the environment.

You can [learn more about Marzano Research here](#).

How an Organization that Helps Businesses Raise Funds Raised its Own Profile



Here's Nathan Gustafson, founder of GiveMore and a certified triple bottom line business.

Early in 2019, founder Nathan Gustafson launched [GiveMore](#) to help businesses and people donate more to worthy causes. His company does this by providing tools and services that enable charitable giving, matching donations, and the socialization of causes.

As a certified Benefit Corporation for Good, he believes and practices the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit.

We interviewed Nathan Gustafson recently about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what he had to say about it, his motivation for doing it and why it was right for his business.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? GiveMore is a fundraising platform that helps individuals and organizations raise funds more effectively by enabling donations, pledging, and the sale of sponsorship to supportive businesses. As such, I believe being a benefit company is a big part of our brand. It is also part of my identity as a founder. I believe in Social Capitalism and that it is our responsibility to do business in such a way that leaves our community and environment in better shape. For me, owning and running a benefit

company is an outward expression of my commitment to be a social and economic force for good.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? When I started GiveMore, one of my founding goals was to become an Oregon Benefit Company. From day one, I had the legalese written into my operating agreement, but thought it was going to be years before I could officially become certified. Then one day I attended a seminar on the certification process and learned how easy it was to take the next step and immediately took action. It was a no-brainer.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? It didn't take long to become a benefit company because I was already acting as one. BCFG confirmed this and gave me additional suggestions that made sense for my company.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? Since taking the plunge and officially becoming an Oregon Benefit Company, we decided to embrace the philosophy and take it to a whole new level. At GiveMore, we are willing to try new things. Everything is a test and if it works, we keep it. We set about to test our pricing model by eliminating our platform fee altogether in favor of tipping. While we have other revenue sources, this was our primary source of income and I am proud to say that the community has welcomed this decision and the financial results speak for themselves. Needless to say, this pricing model is here to stay.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Aside from our pricing model changes, I feel that being a Benefit Company has strengthened our brand and reinforces that we are here to be a force for good within our community.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? I would absolutely recommend that other companies join the movement and become benefit companies. It helps to set a clear expectation to customers and investors that people and planet matter and while it is important to be profitable, it is also important to do it in a way that respects everything in the value chain.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? One of the major characteristics of a leader is communicating the vision. By doing it well, you will rally your staff and customers and create and nurture motivation. Selling a vision that resonates will extend the reach of your influence and building that vision around being a benefit company will help ensure decisions are always held in perspective of the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet, and Profit.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? My biggest lesson was that I didn't have to wait as long as I thought I needed to. The process was easy and now I am benefiting from stronger brand alignment.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? As part of our branding efforts, we communicate our certified benefit company status on our “about page” as well as occasional communications to our customer base.

10. What is the single best reason you’d give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? Being a benefit company helps communicate to your investors and customers what is important to you and your organization. Set the tone now, get certified, and join the rest of us in this movement.

You can [learn more about GiveMore here](#).

How an Oregon Winery Created Real Wines of Distinction



Here's Sarah Jivangee, general manager of Archer Vineyards and a triple bottom line business.

Finding great growing conditions, harvesting the right grapes and overseeing it all with the artistry of a seasoned winemaker usually gets a winery noticed. But in the case of [Archer Vineyard](#), the winery went a step beyond.

Not long ago, it became a certified Benefit Corporation for Good. Which means Archer is now guided by the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit. So, you'll see those values in their award-winning tempranillos, pinot noirs and roses.

We interviewed General Manager Sara Jivanjee recently about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, her motivation for doing it and why it was right for her winery.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? I was motivated to become a “Benefit Corporation for Good” (BCFG) based on the core values that are reflected with this certification. At Archer, we work to be genuine and transparent in our business practices

which were directly aligned to BCFG. The process also gave us a better understanding of the B Corp requirements and improvements we could explore as we grow our business.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? We have a strong foundation set within our family's business practices, so becoming a Benefit Company was a natural next step for us. We are a multi-cultural, social justice and purpose-driven family. I am open-minded in changing practices and creating more transparency in our processes with our customers, employees, and vendors.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a certified Benefit Corporation for Good? Around 2 hours total from deciding to do it, to being certified. Not difficult and worth every minute.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? Our customers are intrigued when they see our seal as a certified "Benefit Corporation for Good." Many in our community of supporting businesses and vendors have shown interest in the process and how it relates to "B Corp," so it is nice to share what I have learned through the process.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Not directly but it heightened our focus for the opportunity to become a B Corp after seeing our positive results from completing the BCFG process.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Yes. Since we were practicing many of the core values of BCFG it made sense for our business to complete the certification process. We have implemented several strategies recommended after the completion of the survey in areas where we could use improvement. For example, we have added a comment card drop box and guest book for our customers to leave us feedback on their experience, either anonymously or publicly. And since our certification with BCFG, many people have expressed interest when seeing the window cling we proudly display on our door.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? The most important traits for a conscientious leader are to be purpose-driven and practice inclusiveness. The Triple Bottom Line, People, Planet, Profit is part of my everyday awareness now!

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? I didn't learn anything new rather it was more about confirming that we are on the right track as we grow and explore ideas to add to current practices.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? *It is a part of the story we share with customers when they visit us.*

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? Just the simple assessment of current practices. And to understand and focus more on B Corp requirements and direction if that is the goal beyond BCFG certification.

You can learn more about [Archer Vineyard here](#).

How a Purpose-Driven Consulting Firm Took It Up Another Notch



Here are co-founders Brian Stinson and Jennifer Coyne of The Peak Fleet along with Tom Hering of Benefit Corporations for Good.

Change is the new normal. Resilient, agile and adaptive organizations stay ahead of the competition. And while The Peak Fleet co-founders [Jen Coyne and Brian Stinson](#) help prepare organizations for dealing effectively with such organizational change, they've also embraced a transformation of their own by becoming a certified Benefit Corporation for Good.

For the past 3 years, their firm has modeled the principles of the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit. No doubt those values have been part of their careers and business from the get-go. And recently they felt the time was right to certify those values and practices through Benefit Corporations for Good.

We interviewed Jen Coyne recently about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what she had to say about it, her motivation for doing it and why it was right for her business.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? We started The PEAK Fleet with the intention of being about Purpose even more so than Profit. We are striving to create engaged workforces that thrive together. For us, it's about the People first. That's why we started out of the gate with a triple-bottom line focus. Becoming a Benefit Company is the formal recognition of that for us.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? We're a small growing company right now. This was the perfect time to establish our principles, priorities, and practices aligning with being a Benefit Company. As we grow, we now have the framework in place to screen employees and contractors for alignment to a purpose, people, and planet-driven company.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? When we started our business 3 years ago, we had many of the principles of Benefit Corporations for Good baked into our business model. So, the certification process was quick once we discovered BCFG and saw the value and differentiation in its certification process. It was a few weeks from that point to submitting our information and receiving official certification.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? I think the biggest reminder to us is that this is a living process that has to be embedded in the fabric of what we do every day. And you make progress on things you set goals for and measure progress. So, we make sure that as part of our strategic vision and goals for the long-term, we include areas that specifically focus on Benefit Company considerations. We want it to be front of mind with progress measured frequently.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? We are fairly new to being certified, but the first unexpected outcome which is very positive is being part of a BCFG community. It's wonderful to make connections with like-minded business leaders and support for each other's businesses. I believe there are many more positive outcomes ahead of us because of our certification and connection to values-driven businesses.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? One of the main reasons I recommend this business model to others is that not only is it the "right thing" to do, but research shows in the long run, you'll have more success financially as well. Most importantly, it's because of the sense of satisfaction and the joy of running a purpose- and people-driven company we get every day.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? I think one of the most important traits of leadership is HUMILITY. It serves you well in realizing that your organization is but a small part of a larger system and you need to make decisions that support the greater good...of the environment...of society. Humility also ensures that you are always seeking diverse and different perspectives as you set a vision,

strategy, and goals or solve problems. You realize you don't have all the answers, or always the right ones, but combine that with a growth mindset, and you can transform yourself and the organization to do wonderful things for the world.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? Through the assessment process, we learned how with small perspective changes and some small actions, we could have an even more significant impact to the triple-bottom line than we imagined. These things...the Three P's of People, Planet and Profit, are definitely not mutually exclusive. Focusing effort on where we give back, and highlighting it in the right way, will bring rewards in terms of profits as well. In my experience, a business with a balanced approach wins out in the end.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? YES! We have always promoted our "for purpose," values-driven message and the fact that we provide discounted and free services for many non-profit organizations and schools. Now, we have an official certification that we are proud to promote! Our marketing materials now include the BCFG logo; it creates a common language understood across industries.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? It's easy to say that it's absolutely the right thing to do, and it gives you a sense of satisfaction. But the realities of business today are that we still have an uphill climb to change companies from a single "P" focus to the triple-bottom line. It's great to be armed with the research around things like employee engagement which show evidence that focusing on people and the planet is also great for the financial bottom line.

You can learn more about [The Peak Fleet here](#).

How a Portland Creative Services Firm Found Its Big Idea in Legalese



Here's Julie Eickhof, founder and owner of Eickhof Creative Shop and certified triple bottom line business, along with her HR Director Jake.

Never underestimate the power of an idea whose time has come. And that time was just three weeks for creative wizard [Julie Eickhof](#) of Eickhof Creative Shop. You see, while changing her business structure to an LLC, her legal advisor Michael Jonas of [Rational Unicorn Legal Services](#) suggested she consider also becoming an Oregon Benefit Company.

Now this is something the attorney knew a little bit about since he'd gone through the same process three months earlier. He told Julie that she and her values-driven creative shop already modeled the principles of the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit. So why not codify her existing commitment and practice for all her stakeholders to see.

And so it was as she certified those values and practices through Benefit Corporations for Good.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? We've always taken a progressive, principled approach to operations and client services, including giving back to the community through ongoing pro bono work and rejecting the notion that profitability requires the exploitation of people and resources. We've also been watching the groundswell of the B Corp movement for years and recently learned that Oregon has set an important precedent by allowing LLCs to earn Benefit Company status. Given our company ethic, we immediately jumped at the opportunity to formally demonstrate our commitment to a better way of doing business.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? Not at all! Our Director of Human Resources, Jake, loved the idea of officially changing our business model to the Three Ps of People, Planet and Profit. As a rescue dog, he's already made it his personal mission to promote self-care and wellness within our company; it's only natural that he would want to extend that same consideration and kindness to our community and environment.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? Just two weeks! We learned that we were a viable candidate while working on our LLC formation with Rational Unicorn Legal Services LLC, another certified Benefit Company. The application process was satisfyingly rigorous, and we were beyond impressed when Tom and Mary Anne took the time to discuss our strengths and identify areas for improvement. Since we don't see our certification as the destination but rather the roadmap, their feedback has been invaluable to our company's evolution.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? Our culture is still as passionately progressive as ever, but there's been an obvious shift in the way we make decisions, evaluate prospective clients, and plan for the future. Doing good in the world is great, but doing it with greater consciousness, purpose, and deliberation is even better. We've also become more vocal about encouraging our clients and fellow businesses to implement and promote Benefit Company values.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Definitely, even in the very short time that we've had our certification. We've found awesome new opportunities to collaborate with other Benefit Companies and grow our referral network. We're also hearing that our Benefit Company status resonates deeply with new and existing clients, who enthusiastically support our certified commitment to honesty, transparency, and empathy.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Heartily! Everything about the People-Planet-Profit model sits squarely on the right side of history, and we sincerely hope that, within our lifetime, it becomes inconceivable to do business any other way.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? Being outcome-oriented, not ego-driven. Effective leaders and their teams stay focused on "why" and "how," not "who." They encourage collaboration, innovation, and respect – and strive for collective success.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? During the certification process, we learned that it's okay to not be perfect in all areas, as long as our hearts are in the right place and our actions keep us moving in the right direction. We learned that remembering why we started the business in the first place can be a powerful source of joy, meaning, and

motivation. And we learned to truly appreciate that having Benefit Company values isn't just a part of what we do – it's who we are.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message? Absolutely! To bring us into better alignment with our Benefit Company values, we're currently refining our brand messaging, reconfiguring our service offerings, and rolling out some cool new features.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company or peer to become a Benefit Company? You can sleep at night with a clean conscience. Is there any greater legacy than to leave the world a little nicer than we found it?

You can [learn more about Eickhof Creative Shop here](#).

How a Portland Video Company Told a Powerful Story without a Camera



*Here's Erik Croswell, founder and director of Bridge City Media,
a certified triple bottom line business.*

When done right, video creates memorable, powerful and lasting impact. The same can be said for the story founder Erik Croswell of [Bridge City Media](#) told us as he articulated the reasons why he and his company became a certified Benefit Corporation for Good. We believe you will find his answers as impactful as the purpose-driven content he produces for his clients.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? I wanted to join a business movement that values standards for how we treat our employees, our community, and our Earth. Being a Benefit Company gives me the opportunity to spread the word about this movement to consumers and other businesses as well as make a promise to myself to live up to virtuous standards.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? The transition to becoming a Benefit Company felt seamless. It's been a part of our foundation from the beginning to be a social and environmental force for good.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? The entire process took only a few days. [It was very easy.](#)

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? The greatest change has come from the community that I'm now more connected to. As a Benefit Company, I feel like I'm a part of a growing family of support.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Being certified and having the stamp posted on my website gives me the opportunity to speak with curious prospective clients about our business ethics, which I feel have been an important factor in the buying decision of those that have gone on to sign contracts with us.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? I would definitely recommend this model to others because significant trends in consumer behavior are showing a mounting importance to have a positive-outward alignment with your community. A certification through Benefit Corporations for Good is a great way to demonstrate it.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? The most important trait is transparency. I believe that if you follow an etched-in-stone creed to be honest and open with your stakeholders, then you're only going to make decisions that will be conscious and kind.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? I've learned that having a third-party audit your business practices really help you keep promises that you want to make for yourself in how you intend to grow your business.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current Brand message? Absolutely! It's very important to me to be an outward advocate for socially-conscious and sustainable business initiatives.

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company/peer to become a Benefit Company? To join the family! It's really such a loving and helpful community that is working toward one central goal to create a better environment and community for us all to live in.

You can [learn more about Bridge City Media and its work here.](#)

How Kayaking in the Sea of Cortez Turned a Vegan Shake Creator into an Oregon Benefit Company



Here's David Cascadden, founder of Bend, Oregon's [Left Coast Raw](#),
a certified *Benefit Corporation for Good*.

Let's say you create hand-crafted, certified vegan shake blends. They're dairy-free, soy-free and gluten-free. Oh, yes, they also taste delicious according to the fans of said vegan shake blends. But then you also decide you want to mix in social and environmental impact.

Well, that's what has happened with David Cascadden, founder of [Left Coast Raw](#) in Bend, Oregon. Not only has he brought a delicious organic shake blend to market, but he's also become a practitioner of the Triple Bottom Line.

We interviewed him recently about becoming a certified Oregon Benefit Company. Here's what he had to say about his motivation for doing it and what it's done for his business.

1. **What motivated you to become a Benefit Company?** I met [Mary Ann Harmer](#) this past spring while on a kayak excursion in the Sea of Cortez. She talked to me about Oregon Benefit Companies. Up until then it was only a concept on my periphery. She filled in the gaps and it made sense for me as the structure's values aligned with my personal values. It presented the opportunity to give my company the depth I felt I wanted for it.

2. **Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model?** Not at all. I have a partner, who once was presented with the specifics of the Benefit Company and its focus on the Triple Bottom Line, was 100% behind it.
3. **How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company?** Actually, it didn't take long at all. I started with the application and things moved along smoothly. I have tons of daily business stuff to attend to so when you initiate something like this you hope it glides along without too much difficulty and that was most certainly the case.
4. **Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company?** Since my business partner Dale is not involved with the day-to-day activities of Left Coast Raw, the change of culture is in myself and a renewed enthusiasm for our business.
5. **Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company?** Our first mission was to change our packaging from plastic tubs to commercial compostable pouches. Of course, that is the "planet" component of the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit. Needless to say, our customers really appreciate this change and support for the environment.
6. **Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not?** Absolutely. It makes your business relationships richer and opens your business up to a new, impassioned customer base.
7. **What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company?** Let me answer that with two words: transparency and inclusiveness. "We" rather than "I."
8. **What lessons have you learned in the process?** To not be so self-centered. And to simply listen to what people have to say.
9. **Is being a Benefit Company part of your current brand message?** A definite yes. We use the BCFG "certified" logo on our site and packaging. This past weekend we proudly wore our pins while serving samples at the Portland Vegfest and let people know we were members and what our mission was. The people we talked with had a very positive response to our support of the Triple Bottom Line.
10. **What is the single best reason you'd give for another company/peer to become a Benefit Company?** The feeling that you can do more than turn 1 dollar into 2. That your business can have a positive impact on people and planet and still make a profit.

You can [learn more about Left Coast Raw here](#).

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? No. When my partner, Michelle Janke, and I brought the idea to our team there was no hesitation. Everyone knew becoming certified was right for our firm and would only reinforce the values and commitments we've been living since our founding.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? The process of becoming certified was seamless. It took about six weeks. Tom and Mary Anne were outstanding coaches and advisors and were with us from start to finish. We did the initial 'sniff test,' which affirmed for us that we were a good candidate. The certification questions definitely had some rigor to them for sure. We knew that, even if we didn't achieve certification, the questions presented would serve as a good framework for making improvements in a few areas—which we've already started doing.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? Becoming certified has been a shot of adrenaline in many ways. It has positively reinvigorated our internal discussions about our values and how we live them. We've redoubled our efforts around our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This has impacted how we think about growth, how we honor one another's differences and have become more aware of the impact of our words and behaviors.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Though we're fairly new to becoming a Benefit Company, we have taken steps to promote our certification—for example in our new business pursuits and firm collateral. At this point, the outcomes have been more internal. I believe the conversations we're having have been elevated a notch or two in terms of our collective sense of responsibility and where we want to point this wonderful thing called Coraggio.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? Without hesitation. We do what we do because we believe that higher-functioning organizations lead to a higher-functioning world. It's a perfect win/win outcome. The principles the Benefit Company model is based on providing a valuable framework for organizations to imagine and then take steps toward realizing their full potential. If leaders everywhere embraced this "rising tide lifts all boats" concept, the world truly would be a better place.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? The most important leadership trait is altruism. For us, this means having a deep commitment to impacting others and the world around us in a positive, lasting and meaningful way. If a leader doesn't believe in this at their core, then becoming a Benefit Company is simply an empty marketing tactic.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? We've re-learned the importance of keeping the "why we do this" conversation alive within our firm. It's important to give the

“why” a voice in every meeting and every interaction we have with one another, with our clients and world around us.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current Brand message? We’re in the process of becoming more deliberate about this now. In many ways, it has been over the years, however the process of becoming Benefit Company has given us new context and clearer perspective on how to express our values and beliefs.

10. What is the single best reason you’d give for another company/peer to become a Benefit Company? Becoming a Benefit Company is one of the most important steps founders can take to cement their legacy. My business partner and I intend for Coraggio to be a very special organization well beyond the years we spend in the firm. For us, making the decision to become a Benefit Company makes this intention very clear to future leaders of our firm. Selfishly, long after I’ve moved on, I expect to hear about the good work and positive difference Coraggio is making. And I look forward to telling all who will listen that I started that place.

You can learn more about [Coraggio Group and its work here](#).

Why a Strategic Consulting Firm Used Certification To Leave the World a Better Place



Here's Kim Allchurch-Flick, founder and owner of Mighty Epiphyte, a certified Benefit Corporation for Good dedicated to the triple bottom line of People, Planet and Profit.

If you listen to the founder of Mighty Epiphyte, you hear a common thread in all her communication. That commonality? Leaving the world and her community a better place. As a firm believer in the Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet and Profit, [Kim Allchurch Flick](#) is a connector and collaborator who catalyzes good business. Her passion lies in years of cultural learning and experience woven through marketing, consultative selling and account management.

1. What motivated you to become a Benefit Company? The opportunity to demonstrate that the values and mission of Mighty Epiphyte and my personal drive to leave the world a better place, or at least make positive impact. The third-party objective assessment that is recognized by the state is an important source or proof.

2. Was it difficult getting internal support for moving toward this model? I am a solopreneur so I had 100% support.

3. How long did it take you to officially become a Benefit Company? In total including the time to register with the state, it took just a couple of days. Working with Mary Anne and Tom made the certification process very simple. And their feedback to making my business even stronger was invaluable.

4. Have you seen any change in culture since you became a Benefit Company? I'm proud to show the badge everywhere. The outward facing marketing and discussions help clients, stakeholders and partners understand the dedication to social and environmental good.

5. Have you experienced any positive outcomes since becoming a Benefit Company? Always positive, but it has not increased revenue as of this interview.

6. Would you recommend this business model to others? Why or why not? I think a company must be value- and purpose-driven first, not try to fit into a mold just to get the certification. Once there is that commitment, it makes great business sense to become a Benefit Company.

7. What is the most important trait to have as a conscientious leader of a Benefit Company? Always walk the talk. Always look for opportunities to serve, speak, lift up and do better.

8. What lessons have you learned in the process? It's great to give and motivate others. Strong business fundamentals are paramount.

9. Is being a Benefit Company part of your current Brand message? YES!

10. What is the single best reason you'd give for another company/peer to become a Benefit Company? It's the third-party objective verification that you are doing what you say you are doing. In the future, there will be more ways for customers to search for and seek out Benefit Companies. There's no downside only upside.

You can [learn more about Mighty Epiphyte and its work here](#).

~~~

If you would like to see if your business is a good fit for becoming a benefit corporation, you can [take our free sniff test](#).

Please know that we offer BIPOC businesses a 15% discount on certification fees.

Questions? Simply email [tom@benefitcorporationsforgood.com](mailto:tom@benefitcorporationsforgood.com)

