

Skip “Failing Fast” – Learning to Last:

**A Study of the Success, Scale, and Lasting Impact of
American Social Enterprises That Have Operated for Over a Decade.**

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Introduction

- Entrepreneurship in the states has been in decline over the past 40 years (U.S. Census Bureau 2018)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ of the new ventures being founded globally are social ventures and that percentage is rising (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2015)
- The future of entrepreneurship is social entrepreneurship.
- There is a limited understanding of how scale operates differently in social enterprise.
- This thesis seeks to 1) Identify the contributing factors to the long-term success of social ventures and 2) Understand how scale functions differently within the context of social entrepreneurship

Methodology

Research

Comprehensive Literature
and Website Review



Individual Analysis

Analyze Each Venture with
The Depth of Attention of a
Case Study

Semi-Structured Interviews
with Social Entrepreneurs



Examine the Group of Social
Ventures for Common Threads

Qualitative Study

Cross-Comparison

Six Social Ventures Analyzed

Cafe Reconcile

Craig Cuccia | New Orleans | Founded in 1996
Youth Development | Restaurant



Seventh Generation

Founded in 1988 | Burlington | Joey Bergstein
Cleaning Products | Sustainability

City Fresh Foods

Glynn Lloyd | Boston | Founded in 1994
Employment | Catering



TerraCycle

Founded in 2001 | Trenton | Tom Szaky
Waste Management | Eliminating Waste

Rising Tide Capital

Alfa Demmellash | Jersey City | Founded in 2004
Economic Opportunity | Business Development



Thistle Farms

Founded in 1997 | Nashville | Becca Stevens
Personal Care Products | Gender Based Violence

Categorization of Social Ventures

	Cafe Reconcile	City Fresh Foods	Rising Tide Capital	Seventh Generation	TerraCycle	Thistle Farms
Social Enterprise	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Justice Enterprise	✓	✓	☐	☐	☐	✓
Socially- Focused Mission	✓	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓
Environmentally- Focused Mission	☐	☐	☐	✓	✓	☐
For Profit	☐	✓	☐	✓	✓	☐
Non Profit	✓	☐	✓	☐	☐	✓

Founder's Background

Relationship to the Mission

Most beneficial to ventures with socially-focused mission.

Relationship to the Community

Most beneficial to justice enterprise.

Founder's Motivation

Founders motivations range from religious to purely professional.

Business Acumen

Beneficial skill set for all founders of social enterprise.



Purpose Multiplier Effect

“In economics, the multiplier effect refers to the increase in final income arising from any new injection of spending. The Purpose Multiplier Effect works similarly, except instead of an injection of spending, it is an injection of impact. Social enterprises have access to resources and advantages that traditional enterprise does not merely because of the mission of the venture.”

Social Ventures Shared Challenges and Approaches



Similar Obstacles

All of the social ventures we analyzed face obstacles that are both enterprise-based and purpose-based.



High Value on Metrics

Social enterprises focus on the outcomes not just the outputs of their business.



Grit Over Agility

Valuing perseverance was found amongst all forms of social enterprise, justice enterprise, environmentally-focused, and socially-focused.

Approaches of Scale

Environmentally
Focused
Non Justice
Enterprise
For Profit



Socially
Focused
Justice
Enterprise
Non Profit



**Seventh
Generation**

TerraCycle

**Cafe Reconcile
City Fresh
Foods**

**Thistle Farms
Rising Tide
Capital**

Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

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