

Quality ? and a bit of magic and nostalgia ? are formula for young entrepreneur?s success



By Brock Weir

?We just decided to put a modern spin on it,? says Viktor Grabovskyy.

Followed by a pause and a slight chuckle.

The laugh is followed by a ?no pun intended,? but when you're making a luxury spinning top for the masses, it's hard to avoid the obvious pun, so you might as well embrace it.

The 23-year-old Aurora resident, co-founder of Forever Spin, is basking in the success of his start-up company's latest Kickstarter campaign, which raised over \$735,000 over a 35 day span before concluding last week.

The partners, who have taken a turn in Dragon's Den with their product have come a long way since first getting their hands dirty laying the groundwork on a start-up software company before their orbit wobbled in a different direction.

?We were looking to start the software company about three years ago but realised we didn't have the funding necessary to sustain it and really sustain the goals we had in mind,? says Mr. Grabovskyy, adding they decided to focus on their passion.

Some might question how one can get passionate about a spinning top, but consider this: chances are, it is one of the first toys you remember playing with. The same can probably be said of your parents, grandparents, and a generation or two before them.

There is a timelessness about a spinning top, he says, but there is room for, yes, that all-important new spin.

They launched their solid metal product in the middle of 2013, first as a novelty item. They wanted to launch a high quality product that was both memorable and embodied with just a little bit of magic.

?It would have to be something that was genuinely enjoyable, something that was beloved and with a dedication to quality and nostalgia,? he says.

?Those three elements together, we came up with a shortlist of about 20 different ideas. We remember that the first toy we recall playing with was a wooden spinning top. With that information, we just decided to put a modern spin on it and we decided to have a metal spinning top collection and we haven't looked back.

?In fact, we have completely forgotten about our software start-up and we are making tops full time. I am very passionate about business and making sure that any company, any venture, any activity I get into has some element of growth associated with it. This has been quite exhilarating and fun as we have gone and, as we have expanded our business. I am very happy with where we are and what we have been able to accomplish.?

In the future, however, they are looking to do a lot more. While they bill their product as a ?luxury? spinning top, they hope to have their tops in the hands of a many more Canadian students within the next year in the form of a ?metal museum.? The company wagers students have probably not had the chance to hold a chunk of solid tungsten or titanium in their hands. But honing tops out of those metals, and a host of others, can create a set both entertaining and educational.

?It is a smaller set of the collection, but taking it into schools and really witnessing a child's firsthand experience when they feel the sensation of a copper top in their hand, or when they feel the weight of an aluminum top and compare it to the resilience and the massive weight of tungsten is something we hope will inspire young individuals to learn with tactile experiences versus being taught in textbooks.

?It is something we are very excited about.?

Mr. Grabovskyy moved to Aurora with his family in 2000. As a youngster, he attended George Street Public School before moving on to Aurora Senior Public School, graduating from Aurora High before doing a double degree in computer science and business at Laurier and Waterloo.

?This has been a path that is very unpredictable,? he says. ?There are projects I am passionate about, there are ventures I look forward to getting back into and taking another look at, but at the start of last year with the conclusion of our second campaign, that is when I really started to see the potential of what we are doing and the bigger picture of what we can accomplish outside of just selling tops and getting the sensation to our customers.

?The spinning tops themselves, it is something that we'll never not enjoy. It is something that is magical and something that resides in the background of your mind. Give it the chance to resurface again, and you'll be pleasantly surprised. That is the feeling we get, that is the feeling our customers get, and that is something we are very happy to provide.?

For more on Forever Spin and their latest campaign, visit www.indiegogo.com/projects/foreverspin-world-famous-spinning-tops--3#/.