

# Portland State student a successful business owner

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## Ready Set Go Kits for emergency preparedness selected for a yearlong marketing lab

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A successful online business owned by Amy Sandoz, a Portland State student, was selected as the winner to participate in a yearlong marketing lab sponsored by Deluxe Corporation through Project Rev. Her business, Ready Set Go Kits, is an online retail store that provides disaster kits to schools, universities and families.

"I'm one of nine winners out of over 400 applications nationwide," Sandoz said.

Sandoz is excited about the opportunity offered by the marketing lab to learn how to reduce the amount of time and money spent on marketing to make it effective for her business.

However, she has been doing well building her business on her own. According to Sandoz, year-to-date figures show that the business' revenue has more than tripled since 2009, when she started the business.

Sandoz said she owes her business success to her focus on making emergency preparedness easy.

Sandoz came up with the idea for her business after working as a long time volunteer for the American Red Cross. As a volunteer, she spoke to community groups about how to build disaster kits. However, when Sandoz tried to purchase a disaster kit, she found it difficult and expensive.

Later, when brainstorming business ideas, she remembered her experience.

Ready Set Go Kits works hard to create a system that alleviates the barriers of excessive time and expense when purchasing emergency preparedness kits, she said. Sandoz decided on the business' name because she believes it is easy to remember.

"There were some pretty terrible names I came up with before thinking of Ready Set Go Kits," she said.

Sandoz built her business' website with help from many people—including a friend who designed her logo—and a tech support team at CoreCommerce, her e-commerce platform, Sandoz said.

Sandoz feels it is an advantage to be one of the few resellers of emergency preparedness kits in Oregon.

Sandoz makes it easy to replenish and update the kits by sending reminders to replace expired products as well as offering products with the longest shelf life to schools and universities that are required to have emergency plans and emergency supplies.

Sandoz works from about 20 to 30 hours per week on her business, depending on whether she is working on a new blog post, marketing ideas or working on her latest project, which is two new websites that are dedicated to providing emergency preparedness information interactively.

Her blogs cover a variety of topics, from how to prepare for winter weather to what to do in an earthquake. According to her website, she hopes to see Ready Set Go Kits' blog reach 10,000 viewers a month.

Research, as well as blogging and other social media such as Facebook and Twitter, are important to her business because it helps her

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learn and think about how to make preparedness easy for others and provides a good forum for people to learn and ask questions, Sandoz said.

Nicole Banta does freelance public relations work for Sandoz. The two met as students in the public administration masters program at PSU, according to Banta.

In order to get the word out about her company, Sandoz hired Banta to write press releases for her.

"[The business] has done better than Amy hoped and she did it all by herself," Banta said. "She has a really good head for this."

For more information about Ready Set Go Kits, visit [www.readysetgokits.com](http://www.readysetgokits.com) or e-mail Sandoz at [info@readysetgokits.com](mailto:info@readysetgokits.com).



MICHAEL PASCUAL/VANGUARD STAFF  
One year in business: Sandoz is one of the few in Oregon to sell emergency preparedness kits.