

CPA ONTARIO WRITE TO IGNITE 2020

Choose a company that's inspired you based on their disruptive nature. What makes them a game changer in their industry?

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THE DISRUPTIVE NATURE OF INDIGO AG

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When the discussion of disruption comes up in conversation, most people's minds immediately turn towards the massive behemoths in Silicon Valley. But to me, a company is truly disruptive if its able to adapt to the unique struggles and challenges of its era, to innovate something in ways that people would never have thought possible. This not only creates a business model that maximizes profit but also strives to make the world a better place. Disruption inspires me because it is the undeniable proof that the opportunities that business can provide for growth and prosperity is only limited to how large you are willing to dream about what tomorrow will bring.

A prime example of disruption can be highlighted in an industry that many people are not even aware of, AgTech (short for agriculture technology). According to Forbes, "AgTech represents the application of technology - especially software and hardware technology - to the field (pun intended) of farming (Kobayashi-Solomon)." One of the leading companies in the AgTech industry is Indigo Ag. As a newly minted AI Unicorn, (a private Startup valued at over \$1B) and the #1 company on the CNBC Disruptor 50 list Indigo AG is using the power of microbiology and artificial intelligence to disrupt the agriculture industry, making crops more sustainable while also increasing profits for farmers.

As previously mentioned, a disruptive company is one that resolves the dilemmas of its current era. As the global population is rising, (projected 9.8B by 2050) the ongoing battle to feed the world results in the magnification of food production. Unbeknownst to most, this is terrible for the environment. Overproduction can lead to deforestation, a decline in soil and water health, along with an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Indigo AG tackles this issue by using the power of microbiology to engineer seed treatments, (without the use of GMOs) that increase the yield of crops harvested by farmers. These treatments are sprayed or powder on soil before planting and often consist of microbes, (that are all naturally occurring) like bacteria and fungi. These treatments are so important as they have been proven to increase the yield of crop growth which decreases the need of overproduction and using pesticides. This will help in part, to decrease the impacts of climate change through decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation. The company is currently focusing on developing treatments for grains, but plan to develop treatments for coffee, nuts, fruits and vegetables in the future (Koldony).

Apart from its efforts to decrease climate change, Indigo AG is also helping farmers increase their profitability. Because of issues regarding extreme and unpredictable weather along with ongoing tariffs U.S. farmers are facing hard times financially. According to the USDA, “the net farm income will be 49% its highest level of 131.6 Billion in 2013”. To combat this issue Indigo AG has created The Indigo Marketplace. An app used to connect global growers with buyers that can negotiate the exact specifications and prices on the app. The CEO of the Indigo AG, David Perry, says the marketplace has received 30 billion dollars worth of bids (Koldony).

In sum, this revolutionary company has inspired me because of how beneficial its innovation is in tackling some of the world’s most pressing issues.

Works Cited

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