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Limitless potential

AFTER SEVERAL YEARS LOOKING FOR EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS FOR HIS MOTHER WHO HAD MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, **JAY DHALIWAL** STARTED HIS OWN COMPANY, VOXXLIFE. HE SHARES WHAT THE TECHNOLOGY INVOLVES AND HOW IT HAS HELPED MANY THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA WITH PAIN RELIEF AND IMPROVED MOBILITY.

WORDS SHARON MASIGE • IMAGES NICK IWANYSHYN

VoxxLife Founder and CEO Jay Dhaliwal built his business on the Japanese principle of *ikigai*. The concept translates to a person's 'reason for being' and encompasses the key to happiness and fulfillment in life. "There are four pillars to *ikigai*," Jay explains. "Offer the world something it needs; love doing what you do; commit to continual self-improvement; and be compensated for doing so. Everything we do needs to meet these criteria."

VoxxLife is a tech company that develops socks and insoles for pain relief and improved mobility. Looking at its history, it's no wonder Jay uses the principle of *ikigai*. The company was the result of years of effort Jay spent trying to find ways to help his mother, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 1983. In turn, its 'human performance technology' has helped millions of people.

Meaning 'many scars', MS occurs when the immune system begins attacking the covering around the nerves of the central »

nervous system. Because of this damage and related scarring, the brain cannot communicate with other parts of the body, often resulting in the loss of motor function, muscle spasms and pain.

Jay was still a teenager when his mother was diagnosed with the disease but from that point onwards, he was determined to find a solution for it. "Dealing with neurodegenerative conditions has been a big part of my life for 35 years," Jay says. "In the hope of getting my mother the best possible care over that time, I exhausted every possible treatment for MS, only to find dead ends."

He spent his career investigating treatments in science and technology that could prevent the symptoms of MS. "What I quickly realized was that treatment of neurodegenerative conditions is primarily limited to electrical stimulation or drugs and these solutions were not always effective," Jay says.

"That led me down a rabbit hole of neural coding and decoding." Neural coding is the study of how information is processed by neurons. It aims to see how behavior arises from neural activity in the brain.



"The VoxxLife philosophy of creating wellness extends far beyond their customers and associates and positively impacts their entire supply chain. ByDesign Technologies are proud to be partners with this innovative team and share in their incredible journey and rapid growth." – Daryl Wurzbacher, CEO, ByDesign Technologies

"We have solutions that people need without the side effects of drugs or invasive electrical stimulation."

In 2008, Jay encountered his first breakthrough. It was through his meetings with neuromuscular scientists who were looking to treat temporomandibular joint disorders – conditions that cause extreme pain in the face and make the jaw lock. The scientists had developed an orthotic to alleviate the pain. This was a fascinating idea for Jay as it was a non-electrical and non-chemical way to generate a neural response. From there, he began to research the many ways the body responds to neural stimulation.

"As a 30-year veteran in textiles, it is challenging and rewarding working with VoxxLife. For two years, VoxxLife and Aikon International have worked together to evolve the traditional sock business with new ideas. Socks are not only basic commodities but a quality improvement of life." – David Lau, Managing Director, Aikon International

Then came Jay's second breakthrough, in the form of brainstem research done by Australian professor Dr CJ Griffin in 1964. It highlighted the importance of having brainstem homeostasis (balance) to improve overall brain functionality. Jay combined this knowledge with evidence that showed how soothing the nerve muscles in the soles of the feet could reduce pain and inflammation in the brainstem.

After a six-year journey of experimentation and observation, Jay and his team came up with a solution. "We were able to develop vibro-tactile patterns that could activate skin receptors to trigger a neuro response," Jay says. These patterns are at the center of the company's technology. They are woven or molded into the company's socks and send signals that aid the brainstem in reaching homeostasis. "It helps a person's health and wellness through enhanced pain management, better postural stability and balance, and increased mobility," Jay adds. "We have solutions that people need without the side effects of drugs or invasive electrical stimulation."

Since the company opened shop in Ontario, Canada, in 2016, Jay says the response from the »

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As a 30-year veteran in textiles, it is a challenging and rewarding experience working with VoxxLife. For two years, by combining VoxxLife HPT Technology with Aikon's Innovative Manufacturing Expertise, we have successfully revolutionized the traditional socks business with new ideas. Socks are not only basic commodities but also improve the quality of our lives.

By David Lau, Managing Director of Aikon International Ltd.



VOXXLIFE power by Aikon technical innovations
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public and healthcare practitioners has been overwhelmingly positive and supportive. The VoxxLife product range includes Stasis Wellness Socks for pain relief and balance, and Stasis Liner socks that are thinner and more breathable. The company's insoles are slip resistant and have a heel impact pad for more comfort. In addition, it produces the VoxxLife Athletic Stasis Socks to improve athletic performance for both amateurs and professionals.

Jay adds that independent studies done on VoxxLife products found they produce 15 degrees more range of motion, have a 22 per cent increase in power when used in a Wingate cycle test and have an eight per cent improvement in the time taken to execute force. "To date, we have helped three million people with their wellness and quality of life."

Research and design are at the core of VoxxLife. Jay continuously invests in product development to realize his goal of helping one billion people. "We cluster health and wellness issues that impact the largest number of people," he says. "We look for overlapping issues between different demographic

The best business and life advice Jay Dhaliwal has received:

- The return on investment from helping others is infinite;
- Action supersedes strategy;
- Aim for progress not perfection;
- Hire for integrity, IQ and energy;
- Before anyone will believe in you, you have to believe in yourself.

groups and overlay our solutions to help the greatest number of people. Once we are confident that our technology can help, we move to product development. We test efficacy of the technology first, then viability of the final product."

In addition, the company has assembled a world-class medical advisory board to assist in product development. It is currently in clinical studies with institutions such as Cedars-Sinai in



"My job is to inspire the team to excel in their roles."

Jay sees numerous opportunities for VoxxLife in the future. "There is seemingly no limit," he says. "We have just started. We are focused on developing and growing our professional healthcare channel. We ultimately see doctors and other care providers working with us on a global scale. That said, the opportunity for growth in North America is boundless due to the benefits our tech provides and the market space our products occupy."

Jay is passionate about his role and the work he is doing. "My job is to inspire the team to excel in their roles," he says. "It is also to anticipate the business landscape going forward to make sure we have the people, products and infrastructure in place to meet our objectives and overcome challenges.

"Every one of our team members knows how and why their role is critical to our collective success and their personal growth. That alignment allows us to delegate and achieve incredible things as a team and as individuals. Our growth has only been possible because of this synergy."

To keep the business flourishing, Jay says his main priorities are its people and processing aspects. "We have been fortunate to recruit and retain world-class talent in operations, manufacturing and research," he says.

"We will rapidly scale up operational infrastructure beyond North America. We are going to focus on IT and supply chain expansion to respond to global demand. At the same time, we will engage with the right people on the parameters of integrity, IQ and energy. However, we will never lose sight of the primary ethos on which our work culture thrives."

At the end of the day, Jay feels energized by seeing people overcome their challenges and reach their goals. "It's that decision someone makes to not settle with their situation," he says. "Whether it is health or business, when someone takes personal responsibility to meet the challenge head-on, that is the human spirit behind all discovery, all progress and all success. When I see it manifest, it reminds me that whatever I may want to see in life or business, starts with me." ■

Los Angeles, Applied Neuroscience, Inc. in Florida and the Brantford General Hospital in Ontario.

VoxxLife provides opportunities for direct selling. While this is another avenue for expansion, it also presents one of the company's greatest obstacles. "The entire direct sales industry faces challenges from ecommerce giants like Amazon," Jay says. "These enterprises have incredible resources and infrastructure to step into any industry and disrupt it. We believe the best strategy in this regard is to have bulletproof intellectual property and strict channel guidelines that do not allow sales of our products on these other platforms."

In light of this competition, Jay believes that executing a well-thought-out plan is critical to success. "Businesses or people that can overcome challenges can pivot as needed, deliver projects of high quality on time and on budget, giving them an immense competitive advantage. Companies that struggle to execute will eventually fall to rival forces. Leaders need to recognize this ability, or lack thereof, in themselves and their organization and make the necessary changes."

"VoxxLife is an ever-changing and evolving company with amazing growth and future potential. Jay Dhaliwal has instilled a passion and a vision in his team and FORMCOR is thrilled to be along for this amazing journey and continued success." – Darren Sketchley, President, FORMCOR

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