



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Coral Wells

Tel: 441-704-3677

Email: bermuda@startupweekend.org

Email: coral@wwslbda.com

Web: <http://www.up.co/communities/bermuda/startup-weekend/5529>

NINE BUSINESSES STARTED UP THIS PAST WEEKEND THANKS TO HELP FROM STARTUP WEEKEND BERMUDA!

Hamilton, Bermuda – March 11th 2015. That's right, under the global banner of Startup Weekend, nine businesses out of 23 were formed in the span of 54 hours. Startup Weekends are intensive sessions that have existing and potential entrepreneurs working together in teams to create a minimum viable product (MVP) for a business.

The weekend started on Friday evening with networking and refreshments provided by local entrepreneur, Kenneth Rawlins of Kenny's Kitchen. Over 40 people came together to find out what Startup Weekend was all about. At 7:30 attendees were revved up by entrepreneur and philanthropist, Kim Perdikou, who shared her story of retiring as EVP of a billion dollar company only to invest in the start-up of another business, REBBL, working with entrepreneurs in Peru to provide a wholesome beverage option that is currently available in Whole Foods in the US. Kim encouraged participants to fully engage in the weekend and keep an open mind in order to receive the benefits of using the business model canvas to stimulate, create, and iterate.

Following Kim's inspiring speech, people were invited to pitch an idea. Of the 42 registered participants 22 pitched, including 10 year-old Zaire Lodge who was part of a father-son team. Whilst Zaire's idea to create "Readerz", an App that would allow young people to receive payment for reading to Seniors, wasn't selected, nine other ideas that ranged from a local health & wellness retreat to a motorized bike taxi were peer-selected to proceed through to Startup Weekend. Once selections were made, remaining attendees had to determine which idea they wanted to support and as a result teams were formed. Over the next two days teams worked together to build on and rearrange ideas until they came up with a MVP.

Under the stern but passionate facilitation of Ethan Bagley of Startup Global, teams immediately began working with most staying until 11pm on the Friday evening. The work began again the following Saturday at 8:30am with breakfast, lunch and dinner being served by local entrepreneur, Anthony Belvedere of Peppinos, to keep teams fed and motivated. Providing support to the teams were a multitude of local coaches who are entrepreneurs and business leaders, in their own right. On both Saturday and Sunday,

teams had the opportunity to get specific support from the coaches which included members from BEDC, the Department of Ecommerce and local entrepreneurs to help them as they progressed through several iterations of their respective business. The Chair of BEDC, Nick Kempe was on hand the entire weekend to provide support and guidance to those who needed it. Nick stated “it was truly inspirational to share in the experience of helping entrepreneurs bring their ideas to life.”

On Sunday, the teams began finalizing their ideas, pulling together apps, social media pages, and websites and practicing their pitches. At 5:00pm teams began pitching to the audience before a panel of judges that included Brett Henshilwood of Deloitte, Connor Burns of Bermuda Aerial Media, Kim Perdikou, Don Mackenzie of Suite Solutions and Sophia Araujo of A.F. Smith. The final pitching teams were: Bermuda Wellness Retreats, Moto-Taxi, Bermuda Hacks, Think, The Kitchen, TechChoppers, K.I.M.S. List, DeeTails, and SMILE Bermuda.

After some deliberation and a delicious meal prepared by local entrepreneur, Dianne Estis owner of Toma La, judges handed in their picks. Third place winner was Bermuda Hacks an online platform and App for making life easier in Bermuda. The second place prize went to K.I.M.S. List, which provides online educational resource for parents of children aged 5 – 16 years old. Not to be left out, the public selected 16 year-old Dahji Grime’s business, TechChoppers – custom-built gaming computers, as People’s Choice.

The first place prize went to The Kitchen, a commercial shared kitchen concept for home cooks and chefs on the Island. Business idea owner, Nakia Smith was overjoyed at being selected as the winner and everyone shared in her enthusiasm with one attendee remarking “It was an awesome experience to see the transformation that this business underwent.”

Startup Weekend Bermuda was coordinated by a team of local entrepreneurs Coral Wells, Nhuri Bashir and Courtney Bushner, and supported by The Department of E-Commerce’s Inspire eBusiness initiative and the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation. This event brought together developers, designers, marketers and entrepreneurs to share ideas, form teams, build products and launch startups all within 54 hours! Said one participant of the weekend, “Even though my idea wasn’t selected, it was most satisfying to help someone else realize their dream of starting up their business.”

Closing out the night, Ethan, our Bermudianized facilitator (with pink Bermuda shorts and pink bow tie) couldn’t stop thanking Bermuda for holding the event because he considered it a reprieve from his snow-ridden Boston home. Ethan shared his experience over the weekend and indicated that in all his years of facilitation he had never witnessed teams working to support opposing teams. Well Ethan that is just the Bermudian way. Ethan also provided some words of wisdom offering “Stay tenacious. Stick-to-it-iveness is important as an entrepreneur. Even in the hard times, you can’t let anything stand in your way. You can’t be afraid to be yourself.”

Prizes for the Bermuda winning teams were graciously donated by local companies and entrepreneurs who support the local entrepreneurial ecosystem including: A.F. Smith, iClick, Dragonfly Ink Business Services, Into Bermuda, W&W Solutions, JD Lewis Group, and other service providers.

iClick General Manager, John Narraway, donated the top prizes of Apple TVs to the winning team. John, a serial entrepreneur himself, encouraged participants to stick to it and likened entrepreneurship to the greatest joy and the greatest pain. He stated "although some may fail, the experience of being successful makes it all worthwhile." John challenged all of the participating teams to proceed with their idea, promising Apple iWatches to the team that can demonstrate a build-up of 10,000 customers or income of \$10,000 by July 31st (Cup Match) – challenge accepted.

Additional sponsors include Deloitte and the Babson Alumni Club of Bermuda who supported the event by providing scholarships for participants. Brett Henshilwood, Director of Enterprise Risk Services at Deloitte Bermuda, commented: "At Deloitte, we are committed to our community and we are pleased to be a part of this event. We support innovation in the technology space and see this event as a great starting point for entrepreneurs to gain knowledge, ask questions, build their networks and talk to people who can share insights regarding developments in technology."

A representative of the Babson Alumni Club of Bermuda stated: "We are excited to be able to support an initiative where participants come together under the spirit of entrepreneurship. We are proud to be a part of this inaugural year and hope Bermuda becomes a top location for the Startup Weekend organization in the future, attracting participants locally and from the East Coast."

To see photos from the action packed weekend, check out www.inspireebusiness.bm and visit the [Startup Weekend Bermuda Facebook](#) page.

ABOUT STARTUP WEEKEND: Startup Weekends are 54-hour events where developers, designers, marketers, product managers, and startup enthusiasts come together to share ideas, form teams, build products, and launch startups! Whether entrepreneurs found companies, find a cofounder, meet someone new, or learn a skill far outside their usual 9-to-5, everyone is guaranteed to leave the event better prepared to navigate the chaotic but fun world of startups. If you want to put yourself in the shoes of an entrepreneur, register now for the best weekend of your life!

There have been hundreds of Startup Weekends worldwide and about 36% of the teams will go on to continue. Some successful & awesome Startups that were created at Startup Weekend events include: Zaarly : www.zaarly.com, Launch Rock : www.launchrock.co/ Event Up : www.eventup.com

ABOUT Inspire eBusiness: Inspire eBusiness was rebranded from eMonday in November 2013 with the objective of supporting and encouraging the development of local e-commerce with a focus on educating existing and potential entrepreneurs as well as the public about the process of starting an online business and setting up e-commerce

on their websites. The initiative is sponsored by the Department of E-Commerce within the Ministry of Economic Development and is coordinated by the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation with support from other partners. **www.inspireebusiness.bm**

-End-