



HOW TO DESIGN A TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE ORGANIZATION

A START-UP CASE STUDY

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Abstract: In today's business environment, where success for a start-up company is measured by early revenue and profit, it can be quite challenging to design a triple bottom line organization (people/planet/profit) from the very beginning. We present a case study of a U.S.-based start-up firm and discuss its early challenges, developmental processes, and current success as a triple bottom line firm. The company's founder and CEO, with no initial product, distribution, or revenue strategy, sought to develop a company that could provide the marketplace with a valuable product while also staying true to a corporate vision of positively affecting less fortunate people. Our analysis of the case suggests that the founder's vision, passion, transparent communication, and leveraging of partners' resources were key elements in building the firm. We draw implications of our case study for the designers of future triple bottom line organizations.

Keywords: Triple bottom line, social entrepreneurship, social responsibility, start-up organization, organization design, sustainable business, people/planet/profit

Most start-up organizations are unsuccessful – as many as three out of four fail in their first three years of existence. “If failure is defined as failing to see the projected return on investment – say, a specific revenue growth rate or date to break even on cash flow – then more than 95 percent of start-ups fail ” (Gage, 2012). Every entrepreneur knows, or soon realizes, how difficult it is to develop an idea into a profitable, sustainable business. This is particularly true for entrepreneurs who wish to create a “triple bottom line” business, one that serves its customers, makes money, and helps to protect the environment. The triple bottom line concept – people, planet, profit – is relatively new (Elkington, 1997; Norman & MacDonald, 2004), and it reflects a growing societal desire to create and operate businesses that contribute positively to the global economy. Although no official statistics are kept, it appears that the number of successful triple bottom line U.S. firms is quite small.

In this article, we present an analysis of the start-up firm, SOLO Eyewear (<http://www.soloeyewear.com>). Founded in 2011, SOLO Eyewear is continuing to grow and is meeting its triple bottom line objectives. We have known this company and its founder, Jenny Amaraneni, from the start, and we have monitored the company's development over the past three years. We have conducted numerous interviews with Amaraneni, and that information provides the basis for this case study. The following sections describe, first, how the start-up stayed true to Amaraneni's vision in spite of numerous challenges, and the organizational and managerial processes that were used to build and grow SOLO Eyewear. Next, we identify the crucial elements that a start-up must have in order to create and sustain a triple bottom line company. We conclude by offering a set of practical guidelines that can be used by future designers of triple bottom line organizations.

THE VISION: HELPING A MILLION PEOPLE SEE AGAIN

SOLO Eyewear produces a line of hand-crafted sunglasses made with recycled bamboo materials, with a portion of the funds from each pair sold donated to providing eye care for

people who are in need of prescription eyeglasses and sight-saving eye surgeries. The idea for SOLO Eyewear originated in a college classroom. While taking a graduate-level International Entrepreneurship course at San Diego State University, Amaraneni was assigned to read Paul Polak's *Out of Poverty* (2009). This book, which focuses on how social entrepreneurship can be used to benefit those in need, inspired her to develop a company that would not only generate profit but would positively impact people. Amaraneni, who has poor vision herself, discovered there was a great need for eye care around the world and decided to research the issue further. While conducting her research, she encountered two startling statistics that strongly resonated with her: (1) approximately one billion people do not have access to eye care and (2) nearly 80 percent of the world's blindness is preventable. Furthermore, she found that worldwide 285 million people are visually impaired; 39 million are blind and 246 million have poor vision (World Health Organization, 2013). To Amaraneni, the fact that this many people in the world have vision problems which, if left uncorrected, will cause them to lose a good deal of their sight or go blind, was a call to action.

Amaraneni's realization about the state of eye care in the world consumed her. How could so many people in the world not receive proper eye care? So began her research into eye care in Third World countries. The core question that drove her was why: Why was this occurring? Why did the world seemingly not care? Why were simple cataract surgeries that cost only a modest amount of money not available for the vast majority of the world's people? An opportunity to help more than a billion people was an important realization that led Amaraneni to set a goal: *help at least one million people see again*. The next step was to build a company to accomplish that goal.

Amaraneni researched potential products, manufacturers, and even non-profit organizations. She found that corporations who embrace the triple bottom line concept have a higher level of financial performance compared with corporations that do not (Berger & Cunningham, 2007; Castka et al., 2004; Esty & Winston, 2009; Giovanni, 2012). With the current American consumer environment leaning toward sustainability (green products, environmentally responsible companies, etc.), she saw limitless possibilities for a triple bottom line company. Surprisingly, she discovered that few triple bottom line companies exist in the United States.

All of Amaraneni's acquired knowledge has kept SOLO Eyewear singularly focused. Through the use of an initial Kickstarter campaign, SOLO Eyewear gained valuable international exposure allowing individuals around the globe to learn about and support the company's brand and mission. To date, SOLO Eyewear has had online sales in 29 countries, and the company has helped improve the eyesight of more than 9,000 people in 19 countries through providing either new eyeglasses or cataract surgery. This has resulted in an economic impact of over \$3.3 million. Additionally, thousands of people have purchased the company's products and have become evangelists for the company. SOLO Eyewear has received considerable media attention (e.g., *The CW*, *Glamour*, *MSNBC*, *Men's Health*) and was even featured on the *Forbes* magazine website. Publicity and admiration have attracted potential partners, customers, and staffers who are aligning themselves with the company's mission.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Like any start-up, SOLO Eyewear faced numerous business challenges. However, throughout the early stages of its development, Amaraneni was determined to keep the company focused on people and planet as well as profit.

Pressure to Perform

When Amaraneni developed the purpose of SOLO Eyewear as one that would help restore eyesight to people in need, implementation seemed like a fairly straightforward process: identify a product, design it with sustainability in mind, market it to a large enough target audience to produce a profit, and help people in need by aggressively pursuing the company's mission of helping a million people see again. However, this was not as simple as it seemed. Amaraneni discovered that the process of starting a company without any previous entrepreneurial experience was incredibly humbling. Once she began communicating the

vision of the company and started down the path of doing research, designing products, building a website, and acquiring needed resources, she realized that her commitment to others would require the creation of a serious company that could compete in the global economy. The pressure to develop the company, against the backdrop of her vision, is what compelled Amaraneni to work through the issues and obstacles SOLO Eyewear faced early on.

Identifying Target Customers

Prior to conducting any significant market research, Amaraneni believed that college students would be the best target customer because of her similar age and status to the consumer group. She also felt that the specific age group would be the target market most likely to embrace the company's vision. Therefore, initial strategizing about retail distribution, public relations, and marketing focused on the college campus marketplace in her hometown, with the hope to expand to campuses across the U.S. However, once Amaraneni and her team began to search for opportunities, it became apparent the college target market was too narrow. Statistics showed that customers who had discretionary income, solid jobs, were environmentally friendly, and supported social causes were slightly older and more urban. Once the target market was adjusted, Amaraneni was able to create more retail distribution opportunities with stores that served this demographic and offered products that were unique, sustainable, and cause-driven.

Product Design and Manufacturing Issues

An integral part of building a triple bottom line company is offering target customers a valuable product or service that functions as the revenue base of the company, while meeting both the people and planet aspects of the company's mission. Amaraneni chose to offer the marketplace a unique product that included bamboo wood. While in large supply, and known for its ability to grow quickly, bamboo can be a difficult material to work with when the product design calls for bonding of components and ease of manufacture. As Amaraneni had no previous experience constructing a product that incorporates plastic and bamboo, she identified a contract manufacturing company to develop the product. Unfortunately, the very first fulfilled order had serious quality issues.

In its efforts to use a sustainable element in the design of its products, SOLO Eyewear faced a dilemma early on. The use of bamboo required the bonding of two different materials in the manufacturing process. Without in-depth knowledge of how to get the product manufactured, Amaraneni did initial online research and created a short list of several offshore manufacturers who developed products similar to, but not exactly alike, SOLO Eyewear's. None of the manufacturers Amaraneni identified had ever worked with bamboo in the manufacturing process. In hindsight, considering the "value" of the brand and the fact that a company only launches a brand once, Amaraneni should have done more due diligence or sought out expert assistance in the selection of the original manufacturer. However, Amaraneni ordered a few samples from the manufacturer and they seemed well produced. She ordered the first run of 1,000 units to be sold in a few retail locations and online via the company website. After about 500 units were sold, she learned there was a massive quality problem – the sunglasses were coming apart where the bamboo connected to the plastic. Customers began contacting SOLO Eyewear with complaints about the new product.

Doing What Is Right

It is not often that you create a triple bottom line company with the vision and passion that Amaraneni exhibited. Launching environmental initiatives along with a new business involves significant up-front costs and can produce uncertain results, but the payoff in the end can be rewarding for all involved if a corporation follows through (Esty & Winston, 2009). Amaraneni was rocked by the news that the product was falling apart in the customers' hands. More than embarrassing, this issue was challenging the very existence of SOLO Eyewear and its ability to help people in need. If not corrected immediately and to the customers' satisfaction, the manufacturing fiasco could ruin the brand, and subsequently the company,

and ultimately the mission. Amaraneni decided to immediately cease sales of the product, pulling it from the two retail locations and the website.

Amaraneni examined the remaining inventory and discovered that more than half of the items were defective. In an effort to continue the transparent communication she exercised in the past with early followers, partners, staffers, and retailers, Amaraneni e-mailed all existing customers and informed them about the manufacturing problem. Although this was an extremely risky decision, she viewed it as “the right thing to do.” She also posted a note on the company website guaranteeing all customers that they would receive replacement products or their money back. Over the next six weeks, Amaraneni and the SOLO Eyewear staff e-mailed and updated customers via social media almost daily on how they were addressing the issue. In addition, the firm used some of the revenue generated from sales to fund eye surgeries in India, following through on the mission of restoring eyesight to those in need. SOLO Eyewear communicated those successes to both prospects and customers, and doing so cemented the customers’ decision, despite the product’s problems, to continue to support the company.

Satisfying Customers

The core objective of any company is to ultimately satisfy its customers (Sridhar, 2012). Customer satisfaction is critical to building a reputable brand, let alone a start-up company. Amaraneni had tremendous empathy for helping others and began to openly communicate with customers who had purchased defective products. Informing customers of the nature of the problem and the steps the company was taking to resolve them allowed for open dialogue between the company and its customers. By offering customers immediate replacement of the defective products or their money back, Amaraneni was reinforcing the principles of not only a triple bottom line company but any potentially great company. When SOLO Eyewear ran out of replacement products, they communicated with both existing customers and customers who had pre-purchased the product online (but hadn’t received the product yet). What happened next amazed SOLO’s founder. Customers were presented with the option to either wait six weeks for a replacement product or receive an immediate refund. Out of 1,000 orders, only five customers asked for their money back. The remaining 995 decided they would wait for the replacement product. This was strong evidence that SOLO Eyewear customers believed in the mission of the company and had bought into Amaraneni’s dream of helping less fortunate people.

Protecting the Brand

Given her experience with the product-quality problem, Amaraneni realized SOLO Eyewear should continue open communication with the community. Honest and open communication would not only allow SOLO Eyewear to share product resolution plans but also focus attention on the brand. SOLO Eyewear was receiving good media exposure, both locally and in India where the first surgeries were being performed by a non-profit partner. Once the news of the first surgeries hit the U.S., it generated attention both online and in local news outlets via news shows and subsequent interviews with local print media. By engaging its stakeholders, SOLO Eyewear assured them that producing a high-quality, environmentally friendly product and helping others could be achieved simultaneously, a concrete outcome that served to improve the firm’s image. The focus shifted to how this small start-up was helping others and not so much on the product problems. SOLO Eyewear leveraged all this attention to communicate that it would release a new fall line and began to take pre-orders again on the website and continued to sign more retailers to its distribution plan. However, Amaraneni had not identified a reliable manufacturer to produce the new fall line.

Organizing Partners and Suppliers

Amaraneni realized she did not have sufficient expertise to select a manufacturing partner. This realization led her to begin aggressive networking with individuals more informed about manufacturer selection. The input and recommendations from experts persuaded her that product design would have to undergo a major increase in funding. Ultimately, the

changes in product materials and manufacturing resulted in a tripling of the retail price of the product. This was an astounding increase — and clearly one that would not appeal to the original target market. Therefore, SOLO Eyewear decided to redefine its target customer. It began to target retailers who specialized in selling products that supported social causes and sustainability. The company found that the product actually fit very nicely into this retail marketplace at prices ranging from \$75 to \$125. This new price point allowed Amaraneni to select a premium manufacturer who demonstrated the ability to produce a high-quality product. A major benefit of the pricing change would be that the company, if successful in the marketplace transition, would generate more revenue and profit which would mean helping even more people in need. With the new manufacturer on board, the last step was to obtain funding to place the production order for the fall line of the newly designed product.

Creative Financing

In reviewing the feasible financing options, Amaraneni consulted with several advisors about potential funding strategies. However, she did not want to relinquish any additional equity at that time. One of the company advisors suggested a meeting with another founder who had just successfully raised money on the crowd-funding website Kickstarter. Kickstarter offers start-ups an excellent way to raise money without giving up equity. Based on the meeting between the two founders, and with some additional research, Amaraneni made the decision to pursue a fundraising effort on Kickstarter. By putting together a compelling story and video, and creating a strong online and social media marketing campaign, Amaraneni raised \$33,000 – enough to fund the manufacturing order for the new fall product line.

Creating Evangelists for the Company

The founder of Toms Shoes, Blake Mycoskie, stated that his company is proving that incorporating giving into a company's business model can be good for business. He said, "My customers are my biggest evangelists" (Binkley, 2010). From the very beginning of SOLO Eyewear, Amaraneni believed that the actual end product of the company was not eyeglasses but the number of people they could help receive eye care. Amaraneni repeated this vision to everyone she interacted with, whether an advisor, a potential staffer, an intern, a customer, a retail distributor, or the news media. The story was always the same and carried a strong emotional component. "We are creating a company that will ultimately restore eyesight to over one million people." This vision, along with telling people exactly what was occurring in the company (transparent communication) created a very loyal following. More than 300 people attended SOLO Eyewear's fall launch preview, and the company has attracted more than 15 interns who volunteer to work 10-12 hours each week. The interns volunteer their time because of their dedication to SOLO Eyewear's mission, and they frequently communicate their approval of the company and how they are helping restore the eyesight of those in need. Amaraneni rewards their support with a weekly meeting where each intern's work is celebrated in a group setting. Rusticus (2006: 48) noted that this kind of loyalty, among both staffers and customers, is based on the credibility of the company: "The power of word of mouth advocacy derives partly from its credibility. While only 14 percent of people believe what they see, read, or hear in advertisements, 90 percent believe endorsements from their friends and acquaintances." Creating evangelists is critical to a start-up firm, especially one with a triple bottom line brand.

Bootstrapping...Always

As discussed by Gage (2012), bootstrapping a business is challenging, particularly when those involved in building the company may not be drawing a salary, and financial resources are being depleted while not being replenished. Since the beginning of SOLO Eyewear, Amaraneni has bootstrapped effectively, being very creative in keeping company expenses to a minimum and figuring out how to do more with less. Even though the product is sold online and in more than 50 retail locations (soon to expand to over 300), SOLO Eyewear still houses its corporate office in the founder's condominium. Meetings with interns are either held on the university campus or a co-located workspace. There is no significant capital

for marketing, so the use of cloud-based tools, social media, Skype, social meetings, and marketing events, are the norm. The concept of leverage in almost every capacity is critical to the success of SOLO Eyewear. For a recent news media video, a loft location for the video shoot was located and used free of charge. Even today, nearly three years after the start of the company, Amaraneni is as economical as ever, and every expense is examined for reduction or elimination.

ANALYSIS

Several researchers have studied triple bottom line firms and their impact on both the local and global economy (Elkington, 1997; Kleindorfer, Singhal, & Wassenhove, 2005; Norman & MacDonald, 2004; Orlitzky, 2005; Pava & Krausz, 1996; Waddock & Graves, 1997; Willard, 2002). Orlitzky, Schmidt, and Rynes (2003: 406) concluded that "...social performance is positively correlated with business financial performance." In addition, researchers have attempted to define those founding factors that are essential for a triple bottom line firm to succeed.

Vision

Creating a triple bottom line company, one that produces a profit, helps people, and has a positive impact on the planet, requires vision and patience. Vision articulates the overall goal, and patience is needed for the long journey of building the company. Berger and Cunningham (2007) note that a clear and inspiring vision is integral to developing a firm from inception. They go further to state that it is essential to have the corporate social responsibility values and perspective fully defined before having a business plan. In today's competitive marketplace, competitors and "me too" companies potentially will deliver similar goods and services. In some cases, building a triple bottom line company will mean higher prices for the company's products. However, the differentiator that allows for a higher price is the notion of a powerful brand that is seen as helping people and the planet. Start-up companies need the courage to be different and "sincere", with respect to a triple bottom line mission, as that alone could lead to a successful entry into the marketplace. At the core of a triple bottom line company is the founder's vision and aspiration.

Leadership and Capabilities

Amaraneni recognized early on that SOLO Eyewear needed to recruit several people to the company's "cause" in order to design an initial product, create a brand/identity, locate a manufacturer and other suppliers, build a website, and contract with retailers to test the business model. However, the founder realized growth could not occur without finding talented individuals willing to commit to the company's cause. As was found in a survey of over 800 MBAs from 11 leading schools across North America and Europe, a large number of the respondents were willing to trade personal gain to work for an organization known to support social causes. The study found that "...over 90% of the MBA respondents were willing to give up some income in order to work for an organization which cares about employees," and "...over 94% were willing to sacrifice some income to work for an organization that cares about stakeholders such as the community and commits to sustainability" (Montgomery & Ramus, 2003: 9). In the case of SOLO Eyewear, Amaraneni was able to effectively recruit several people to her company who had a diverse set of skills. She communicated the company's mission in such a powerful way that people worked part-time, sometimes without pay, to help get SOLO Eyewear off the ground.

Amaraneni was able to leverage her ability to communicate and network into partnering with key non-profit organizations in a short period of time. In addition, people recruited to the start-up company felt that she had a high degree of integrity and honesty, as she made a point of having open and transparent communication. Rick Lenny, the CEO of Hershey Co., stated, "What makes a good CEO today is what will always make a good CEO and what has in the past: strong values, great personal integrity, and a willingness to make tough calls. But it certainly requires an openness and transparency with the multiple constituents" (Savitz &

Weber, 2006: 3).

The leadership qualities of the founder instilled an even higher sense of loyalty and commitment from the staff. Staffers also sensed a strong work ethic as Amaraneni worked long hours each day to research potential manufacturers, review distribution alternatives, and learn more about building a sustainable product. Wirtenberg (2012) points out that triple bottom line leaders seem to seamlessly integrate people, planet, and profit, and they view it as the proper way of doing business. These leaders “convert challenges into opportunities through which they can make a difference, innovate, and discover adaptive capacities in themselves and their people” (Wirtenberg, 2012: 8). Amaraneni also continually reminded all of the staff, sometimes daily, of the company’s vision: *help at least one million people see again*. Quinn and Baltes (2013) state that the three most critical individual leadership competencies necessary to adopting triple bottom line approaches are long-term view, communication, and influence. In this respect, Amaraneni was able to hit on all three leadership qualities through articulating the vision, evangelizing the company’s mission, recruiting and building a strong staff, and leveraging key partners.

DNA of the Founder

The makeup or “DNA” of the founder is critical to the future success of a triple bottom line company. Firms are created by entrepreneurs who have a vision of how concerted effort can create a new product or service in the marketplace (Schein, 1983). The founder becomes the anchor point for everything the future company does, including creating a culture that supports the core elements of a triple bottom line company. In an organization’s infancy, culture develops and matures based on the imagination and vision of the founder (Hillestad, Xie, & Haugland, 2010). The founder’s core beliefs, as they relate to the mission, must be unwavering in the face of obstacles and challenges. The notion of “helping others” is not just a desire or wish; it is intrinsic to the make-up of the founder.

Amaraneni grew up in a household where both parents held professional occupations in the healthcare field. Her parents believed that everyone should receive a good wage for services rendered. In starting SOLO Eyewear, Amaraneni remembered that message but believed that if the company helped others first, good wages would follow. Such strongly held beliefs are very important as a start-up company attempts to imprint its values on both its customers and staff.

A Cause that Matters

By examining other successful triple bottom line companies, such as Toms Shoes, NIKA Water, and Ben and Jerry’s, it becomes clear that consumers want to identify and emotionally connect with the company’s overall mission. That mission needs to be clearly communicated in every way possible so the consumer “believes” in the cause by purchasing the company’s goods or services. Customers seek information prior to purchase based on the company’s portrayal of itself in a non-financial manner. “There is a growing trend among consumers to know not only the quality of the product but also the quality of the company they buy it from” (Sridhar, 2012: 82). Consumers justify a purchase or even a higher price for a product or service by connecting it to a social cause (Giovanni, 2012). They make statements such as “I buy these shoes because the company donates a pair to someone in need” or “I buy this bottled water so someone in a Third World country gets access to clean drinking water.” So having a mission that matters to your target market segment can differentiate a company.

A Viable Marketplace

An important first step when developing a triple bottom line company with an intended product or service is to identify and verify the size of the target segment in the marketplace. Amaraneni initially identified her target market as 18-30 years old, socially conscious, environmentally oriented, and urban or college dwellers. After doing more research, however, she was able to identify a product that potentially could be sold to over 100 million people in the United States. This tight focus inside of a larger market is what allows a company to acquire word-of-mouth support and grow into the larger market over time.

Building a Sustainable Business Model

While sustainability (in terms of environmental impact) is critical in the design of any triple bottom line organization, it is equally important to understand the need to develop a sustainable business model. While this may seem like an obvious requirement, many founders forget the importance of initially determining a sustainable business model. Elements of a potential business model can include the following: (a) value proposition: your unique benefit to your customers; (b) customer relationship desired: how you would like your customers to feel and interact with you; (c) target segment: the customers you would like to reach; (d) distribution channels: how you plan to get your company's product to market; (e) cost structure: understanding all product costs; (f) revenue options: identifying where you might drive sales; (g) key resources; (h) key activities; and (i) key partners (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). The business model should also be financially sound so as to produce a profit. Potentially, these funds would go right back into the company to drive additional inventory and revenue. Amaraneni was able to develop a financially sustainable business model that has allowed SOLO Eyewear to achieve its triple bottom line goals.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Based on our analysis of SOLO Eyewear, we draw several implications for designing a triple bottom line company. While there are similarities between a company designed to follow the triple bottom line model and traditional corporations, there are also some distinct differences in their main concerns and practices.

People

A company seeking to follow the triple bottom line method of doing business must consider the impact its actions have on all stakeholders. Stakeholders include everybody involved with the company, from customers, to the community where the company operates, to the CEO. A company should be designed with the idea of benefiting all parties involved. It should have a compelling vision that is centered around the idea of helping others and giving back to the community. A triple bottom line company must be developed in a way that the organization is accessible by the community. The communication between the company leaders, the staff, and the public should be open and honest, and the organization should actively interact with the people it is seeking to assist in order to remain humble and maintain its focus. Traditional companies engage in charitable giving; triple bottom line companies design helping others into their business models.

Planet

A company operating under the triple bottom line model should be designed in a manner that minimizes its ecological footprint. The company should strive for sustainability. While recognizing that "going green" may in fact be more profitable in the long run, designing an environmentally friendly company is not simply about positive financial returns. Triple bottom line companies look at the entire life cycle of their actions and try to determine the true cost of what they're doing in regards to the environment. A triple bottom line company should look to have sustainable practices, such as using recyclable materials, minimizing energy usage, safely disposing of any toxic waste it produces, and using renewable energy sources.

Profit

All companies, whether triple bottom line or not, seek to have positive financial returns. When considering a triple bottom line company, however, the idea is that profit will assist with empowering and sustaining the community as a whole, and not simply the staff and leaders of the company. With SOLO Eyewear, the idea is that every purchase assists a person in need of eye care who would otherwise not have access to such services. The profit not only flows to the founder and staff; a significant portion is used to help those in need. A triple bottom line company should develop a high-quality product or service that will reach a large

market and should be targeted toward a segment that is connected to the vision and mission of the organization. Such a design can generate profits that support both the company and the community.

CONCLUSION

Jenny Amaraneni and SOLO Eyewear have come a long way over the past three years. What was once an aspiration is now a fully functioning company, selling products successfully in a competitive marketplace and delivering on its mission of helping others. Amaraneni articulated a compelling vision and motivated a large number of people to join the mission and purchase the firm's products. The focus of SOLO Eyewear is still clear: continue to deliver a high-quality product to the marketplace in order to fuel additional care for at least one million people. Amaraneni has struggled through many important decisions that at any time could have derailed her company, but she never considered sacrificing any aspect of people, planet, or profit. She knew profit was critical but realized the importance of helping people while maintaining a small environmental footprint.

Having survived the early growth stages of the company, Amaraneni is now focused on expanding SOLO Eyewear through both regional and global distribution. The company has been approached by a major retailer that is looking to add SOLO Eyewear to its product line potentially in more than 200 locations. As the company continues to grow and generate more revenue and profit, Amaraneni will look to build out the management team and connect with more resources. Regardless of SOLO Eyewear's growth, Amaraneni and the company will not lose its focus on helping to restore vision to others in need. Thus, SOLO Eyewear is an exemplar among those firms pursuing the triple bottom line method of doing business.

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