Integrated Biofuel Companies Survive

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It is the integration of intent, goals, actions and partnerships that differentiates sustainable biofuels companies from the rest. Integrated companies have deep roots. The leaders of these companies create solid alliances with companies that support their missions through sourcing, distribution, technology and long lasting relationships.

Integration

- Simplify your strategic intent.
- Create strategic alliances.

One great example of a biofuels company with minimal funding on the road to commercialization is Citrus Energy, LLC. David Stewart, CEO, states that the strategic intent/mission of Citrus Energy, LLC. is quite simple: Citrus Energy's mission is to develop fuel ethanol that minimizes environmental impact and cost by using citrus waste and other biomass.

Simplify Your Strategic Intent

Strategic intent is more than your company's mission statement, although a company must have a clear mission. Strategic intent is the story of how a company links quality, customers, employees, costs, net revenue and profit margin. Only a factual, believable and compelling chronicle works.

David Stewart is a true entrepreneur. His expertise in the early days of lean manufacturing and computers is the origin for his enthusiasm in the biofuels industry. He states that he believes in biofuels and wanted to be part of excitement. In 2007, David and his team did attract the attention of a wonderful funding source, Florida Power and Light. Florida Power and Light, in an alliance with Citrus Energy, agreed to build a 4-million gallon plant that usse citrus peels to make ethanol. However, the funds were cut due to the economy.

Yet, David Stewart and his team march on — disappointed, of course. When asked about the time invested, writing a 300 page application and proposal currently on hold, David talked about the learning process and how the process fine-tuned the details for integrating and commercializing Citrus Energy. The leaders continue daily their research and relationship building. They attend conferences and stay current in the latest technologies, both in the field of biofuels and other disruptive industries.

Citrus processing waste, a pectin, cellulose and soluble sugar rich mixture of peel, segment membranes and seeds is thus available at no cost and in large volumes with potentially no transportation costs. This waste citrus biomass stream will be used as a cellulosic ethanol feedstock. According to Citrus Energy, citrus waste feedstock can produce ethanol at significantly lower cost than corn feedstock and is the most economically attractive and technically feasible of the potential cellulosic feedstocks.

Citrus Energy is exploring opportunities for significant state and federal funding assistance to grow the energy crops on the tens of thousands of acres of phosphate mined lands that require remediation to be returned to food production agriculture. This could allow Citrus Energy to continue in its “no cost/low cost” biomass feedstock model.

Create Strategic Alliances

Relationships are important to Citrus Energy LLC. David Stewart is using his time wisely. With a $2.5 million grant to study “Fuel Ethanol Production from Citrus Waste Biomass” [1] from the Florida government, David continues to streamline his processes and create research inroads He has three patents pending: Ethanol Production From Citrus Processing Waste; Method And Apparatus For Vacuum Cooling Of High Solids Slurries; and Method And System Of Treating Citrus Waste To Remove Peel Oil Components.

The company is also working with Oklahoma State University and the University of Florida.

Ronald A. Silver, who sits on Citrus Energy’s Advisory Board, is in the Florida House of Representatives, with extensive knowledge of public policy issues and the legislative process, allowing him to be an advocate and servant for his diverse community.

Citrus Energy leaders are building alliances with processors which potentially include Southern Gardens Citrus, Division of US Sugar, Pepsi, Tropicana, Coca Cola and Minute Maid. The goal is to obtain year round supplies of citrus waste from US and Brazilian producers.

And … when the funding plugs pop, well-integrated and well strategically planned companies such as Citrus Energy LLC. emerge as the Sustainable PROFITS Bioenergy companies with deep roots, strong leadership and solid strategic alliances.

Integration, is one of the seven Bioenergy PROFITS Principles. These Bioenergy PROFITS Principles highlight proven principles to running your business more effectively and are featured in Dr. Lober's forthcoming book, DELIVERANCE: From the Valley of Death to Sustainable PROFITS in Bioenergy. (Ascension: 2010).

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