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Lindy Gets Personal... ...with the Brisbane Business News

This month the Brisbane Business News published a special young entrepreneur's edition that featured Lindy Chen's tears to triumph story of romantic disappointment that led to business success...



When I first arrived in Australia it was mainly following my Australian boyfriend who I met in China, to follow the love of my life, but when we came to Brisbane it didn't work out. I was heartbroken, all my family was in China, I was in a difficult situation, jobless, I had no friends, no real place to stay.

I really wanted a business and I had the support of the NEIS (New Enterprise Incentive Scheme) program from the Federal Government.

I started out with such a tiny amount of capital that it's funny to think about it now. At the start ChinaDirect's total corporate assets were a \$49 USB stick. The company headquarters shifted between an Internet Cafe that charged \$2 an hour to public libraries where you could get on the Web for free 15 minute time slots.

I researched the Chinese market for six weeks and realised there was a large demand for imports because manufactures were growing so fast, but small-to-medium businesses don't know where to start. They want to get on the China train but they have a fear because China is like a mine field.

At the time I was just really driven. You might think it's funny, but at the time I wanted to break up with my boyfriend because he had an affair and all I wanted to do was make more money than him.

I think it all shows you have to keep a positive outlook on life. ChinaDirect now has 400 customers on its books. We have some well known firms like Merlo Coffee, MiniMovers and Apollo Motorhomes, but we also have smaller businesses, mums and dads and a lot of women with the vision to make something. That's the biggest thrill for me. I think you can get a huge sense of fulfilment by taking a business idea and turning into a real life product. I want to provide business skills, but I also want to offer passion, hope and encouragement. When you really use your creativity, your work life can be an exciting adventure.