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Start-up scene in Singapore is female friendly: Infini Videos co-founder

In the first of a special series looking at Singapore's burgeoning start-up scene, Tracy Wong of Infini Videos encourages women with a good idea to take the plunge and start a business.

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Infini Videos co-founder Tracy Wong.

SINGAPORE: When Tracy Wong decided to set up interactive video platform Infini Videos early last year, she faced a fundamental challenge - she was pregnant with her second child.

"It was definitely more challenging than if I weren't pregnant. (I felt like) I was expecting 'two babies'. One is the start-up, the other one was my real baby. It was mentally and physically exhausting. Actually, in my heavily pregnant state, eight or nine months, I went out to do video



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shoots and ran around directing talents. Also, I participated in meetings and met investors," she said.

"Thinking back, I didn't regret that."

To get her start-up up and running, 39-year-old Ms Wong had to attend conferences, networking events and pitching sessions, and she estimates that women generally make up only around 20 to 30 per cent of people attending such events. But despite being the only woman present on many occasions, she never felt she was being discriminated against.

"At (networking) events, you just have to seek out people to talk to based on common topics, men or women. It's never a lonely party. As long as you contribute to the business discussion, you don't feel left out, you don't see any issues," she said.

The road to setting up Infini started a few years ago.

Having spent more than a decade as a white-collar in the television industry, Ms Wong decided to call it a day and start her own business - an experience which she had always been "curious about".

She started a marketing agency in 2012, before setting up a tech startup early last year.

Said Ms Wong: "I set up my first company as a co-founder. It dealt with branding and marketing, I created several video campaigns for clients. They were asking, 'What's next in terms of online videos?'"

"So as a person who used to be from the television industry, I was curious about how technology has changed online videos (and users) habits," she added. "I looked at several solutions and found interactive videos to be very promising."

The idea was not new, Ms Wong admits. But more people were gradually looking at creating interactive videos – even without knowing programming skills.

"We didn't think much of the challenges, if anything, there's more optimism than fear, because of the growing ecosystem and support, programmes like Mediapreneur help boost our confidence. Knowing that this is validated by a larger broadcast company in Singapore, that helped us feel confident in moving ahead with our business ideas."

Mediapreneur, which is Mediacorp's incubator programme, provides start-ups with seed funding, a working space, mentoring and networking opportunities to speed up their growth and development.



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Having being through the ranks, Ms Wong urged aspiring women entrepreneurs to look for avenues of support.

These include entities such as the Female Founders, a Non-Governmental Organisation which looks to support female entrepreneurs and aspiring business leaders.

Incubator programmes are also useful for new entrepreneurs, she said. "Your whole learning curve is accelerated. There are people with the know-how to teach you and guide you along the way, instead of learning from your mistakes, that would take a longer time to pick yourself up."

In the year ahead, Ms Wong hopes to seek out more investments to grow her business, possibly overseas. Her team is also expanding, and she is looking to recruit in-house developers and salespersons.

"My advice to other entrepreneurs, especially female, at whichever stage you're at, if you're thinking of jumping in and starting your own business, just do it now. You'll just have to deal with whatever challenges that come your way. Women are resilient like that."

Infini Videos is being supported by MediaCorp's incubator programme, the Mediapreneur (<http://www16.mediacorp.sg/themediapreneur/>).

Through the programme, companies receive seed funding, individualized mentoring, a conducive working environment, marketing support and networking opportunities to help them grow into successful companies.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/business/singapore/start-up-scene-in/2539212.html>