

Title:

Tech Teen Makes "Cents" With Tractors

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Summary:

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Keywords:

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Article Body:

The first time one of Jenna Greckel's clients told her to put her father on the phone, she convinced him to change his mind and sold him a \$6,000 tractor.

Jenna, 18, has learned a lot about bridging age and information gaps since she was the first 4-Her in her Nebraska county to complete the 4-H Business Sense program. At age 12, she took what she'd learned about communication skills, advertising, bookkeeping and creating business plans and started a pet-sitting business.

Within a year Jenna had started a larger enterprise that combined her rural heritage with modern-day technology. Selling antique tractors and equipment over the Internet is more profitable than caring for pets, but it also produces more challenges.

"I had to put together and present my business plan to the bank manager in order to get a master note to fund my business," the 4-H member said. "As a freshman in high school, it was scary having a payment due on a loan worth thousands of dollars!"

To make sure her venture succeeded, Jenna focused on the business essentials of buying and selling a product, planning for overhead cost, and determining profit margins. As her sales and reputation grew, she also began performing appraisals and selling items on consignment.

Jenna often works with lifelong farmers who aren't familiar with modern business technologies. "They teach me about the tractors, and I help them get a higher sale price by using the Internet," she said.

Negotiating with people of different ages and personalities from all over the country was a daunting experience at first, but 4-H helped Jenna overcome her shyness. "Now I'm able to conduct business transactions with confidence," she said.

Jenna also developed decision-making and financial management skills that she teaches to other youth as president of the 4-H Jr. Leaders group and counselor at an entrepreneurship camp.

She enjoys helping younger and older generations learn how to use technology for business, and she knows that she's often helping people capture a part of their childhood. "People frequently buy antique tractors as a way of maintaining a connection with their past," she said, "and I love helping them relive fond memories of their youth."