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# Startup Spotlight™

## ProInfluence Startup Spotlight™ on Maxine's Heavenly Cookies

Startup Spotlight™ features innovative, consumer-based startup companies and their passionate founders.



**Robert Petrarca, Co-Founder & CEO**



### Who is Maxine's Heavenly and how did the company get started?

It all started with Maxine. She was a 1950s mom who loved cooking for her family. She made all sorts of great recipes but was really known for her cookies.

Her son, Tim Miller made those same cookies with his kids. But as the family got older and new information about better eating became available, they decided to see if they could replicate the flavor profile with better-for-you ingredients.

So, Tim and family friend Robert Petrarca started with Maxine's beloved recipe, and substituted ingredients one by one, taking out all the processed flours and sugars, gluten, animal products and, with them, all the empty calories.

The result was delicious and unlike anything on the grocery shelves, so Tim and Robert decided to start Maxine's Heavenly so that they could share their delicious creation with the world.



### What makes Maxine's Heavenly different than so many other better-for-you snack companies?



Our difference is really in the sugar.

First, we use natural sugars - coconut sugar and dates. We actually were one of the first brands, if not the first, to use coconut sugar. It is important to us to use very minimally processed ingredients, and both of these sugars are about as close to picking them right off the plant as you can get.

Second, those sugars are low glycemic. That's a fancy word that means they don't spike your blood sugar.

So you can have a sweet treat without the sugar crash, making it an ideal snack.

Third, our cookies are lower sugar than most other brands. A majority of consumers are looking for ways to reduce their sugar intake, but that doesn't mean that their sweet tooth suddenly goes away. Maxine's Heavenly cookies are the perfect solution - they're sweet, but not a sugar bomb.



## Who are some of the key Maxine's Heavenly team members & backgrounds?

Our team is small but mighty, as they say. We contract with some really great industry experts and have advisors on our side, but the day-to-day is a core team of 4:

Robert Petrarca, CEO & Co-Founder, was new to CPG when he started, but not new to starting companies. He co-founded an events company in Sonoma and helped it grow from nothing to a \$3 million company in just a few years.

Rachel Carmichael, Partner & Director of Marketing, comes from a nonprofit background. She has a master's degree in nonprofit management, which has been helpful in steering the ship. Her marketing experience has been focused on messaging and marketing implementation for start-up companies.

Evelyn Turner, National Director of Sales, was previously Director of Sales, West at BrandStorm, representing their Natierra Superfoods line. Before that, she served as the Natural Channel Sales Director, National for the Hain Refrigerated Group, which included the brands Greek Gods, Almond Dream, and Coconut Dream Yogurts.

Julie Craig, Sales Manager, came from Spoonk, a wellness product brand, and has been our secret weapon when it comes to adding new doors.



## Who is your primary target market and how do you best reach them?



We're looking to reach what we call Chief Health Officers. You can recognize these people in the market, because they are the ones that grab a product off the shelf and flip it around to look at the ingredients. They want to eat well, but they aren't so strict that they won't indulge in dessert. They're just smart about it.

As far as demographics, they tend to be female millennials. We use all the traditional digital channels to reach them, but at the end of the day, it's all about getting them to try the cookies. In addition to being better-for-you, they are gluten free and vegan, and a lot of people have preconceived notions about what they are going to taste like. With good reason! A lot of better-for-you products just aren't as tasty as the junk food versions.

We're really proud that we've been able to replicate mom's homemade, decadent flavor with our cookies. But I can tell you that till I'm blue in the face. You have to try it and decide for yourself if we're telling the truth.

## Where can consumers buy Maxine's Heavenly today?

We're available everywhere online at maxinesheavenly.com, Amazon, mylkguys.com, and thrivemarket.com. We're in about 1400+ grocery stores, mostly on the West Coast. You can find us in Whole Foods (Northern and Southern California), select Walmart stores, Natural Grocers, Nuggets, Lassen's, Mother's, Bristol Farms, Erewhon, Gelson's, and a ton of independent stores. You can find the store nearest you on our website.

## Do you have a B-to-B, corporate sales program?

We're actually working on that right now! We want office managers and small stores to be able to order wholesale from our website. You can expect that to come soon but for anyone interested, please contact Rachel@maxinesheavenly.com.





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## How do sales look over the last 12 months? How are they trending?

Sales are great! We're currently in rocket ship mode, experiencing triple digit growth year over year and adding retailers every single week.

## Does Maxine's Heavenly currently own any intellectual property?

Our recipe—and it's a priceless asset. :)

## Are you currently raising capital?

Yes, We're in a convertible note round right now. Funding will mostly be used to launch innovative products I can't talk about just yet and for marketing initiatives to get the word out about our brand.

## What's one thing people should remember about Maxine's Heavenly?

That we're a team of good people trying our hardest to bring you the best cookie experience we can. One of our core values is "relentlessly high standards" and I'm here to tell you that we think a lot about our consumers, and we care a lot about our cookies. It can be a tough balance staying true to your values while also making critical business decisions. But having that homemade, wholesome experience is important to us, and every decision we make is based on that north star.



## To learn more about Maxine's Heavenly, where should people go?

We encourage everyone to visit us at <https://maxinesheavenly.com/> and on the following social platforms:

-  Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MaxinesHeavenly/>
-  Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/maxinesheavenly/>
-  Twitter <https://twitter.com/MaxinesHeavenly>
-  Pinterest <https://www.pinterest.com/MaxinesHeavenly/>

#CookiesEveryDay



## Listen to Robert further discuss...



- Clip #1: [Maxine's Heavenly - Who We Are & Why We're Different \(2-mins\)](#)
- Clip #2: [Maxine's Heavenly - An Entrepreneur's Lesson \(2-mins\)](#)
- Clip #3: [Maxine's Heavenly - Clean Ingredients \(2-mins\)](#)
- Clip #4: [Maxine's Heavenly - Funny Startup Story \(2-mins\)](#)

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