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Lipple have a new marriage and a new business plan for turning their joint venture from an idea to an app.

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Less than six months after attending Pittsburgh Startup Weekend, Traci and Joe Lipple have a new marriage and a new business plan for turning their joint venture from an idea to an app.

The couple behind Pittsburgh Startup Weekend's winning idea, the Thoughtful Husband gift giving service, has come a long way in a short amount of time and they're not the only ones. At least two other companies that received some recognition already have made moves that have drawn investors and excited organizers who weren't necessarily banking on businesses being formed immediately.

Pittsburgh Startup Weekend is part of an international nonprofit initiative that is headquartered in Seattle. The event brings entrepreneurs, engineers, designers and marketing specialists together to build teams to create a business plan over a 54-hour period. Last year, Pittsburgh Startup Weekend hosted events in March and October. Attendees pay for tickets to attend the event.

"For our last Startup Weekend, the message was to contact companies and start community building efforts and see what could develop in a 54-hour period. We wanted to see if there were enough people doing start-up activity in the community, enough supporters, enough leaders and feeders," said co-organizer Kit Mueller. "Since then it's been amazing."

For Mr. and Mrs. Lipple, the whirlwind pace that has brought them from an idea to a business plan has fallen neatly in line with other changes in their lives. The couple,

who were in a four-year, long-distance relationship before marrying in October,

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energy or patience to find the right thoughtful gift for every occasion. It was right then that we realized we could help men be thoughtful without thinking.”

Since their idea took the first place prize in October, the duo teamed up with East Liberty-based marketing company Thinktiv to take part in a condensed version of its Playbook business plan program. The company uses Thinktiv office space and relies on mentor Paul Burke, who is guiding them through the Playbook process. Mrs. Lipple credits the 45-day program with bringing Thoughtful Husband “further along than we could have done in six months.” Companies that take part in the Playbook program agree to share a portion of equity with Thinktiv.

Today, Mrs. Lipple serves as company CEO and her husband, who has extensive experience working with Silicon Valley software companies, is an adviser. The company, which will officially launch under the name Lily & Strum, is looking to bring founding executives on to its board and raise capital.

Oh, and they also found time to get married on Oct. 12.

“It was awesome, we had the time of our lives,” said Mrs. Lipple.

Thoughtful Husband isn't the only Pittsburgh Startup Weekend alum receiving aid from Thinktiv. Mr. Burke, who is managing partner and co-founder of Thinktiv, said Yougotreferred, a small business referral service created by Pittsburgh Startup Weekend attendee Jonathan Diven, is about 34 percent through the Playbook program. Mr. Diven is using the program to learn the best steps to take if he decides to proceed with the business.

One of the most visible success stories to date comes from the company that was recognized for its hustle and hard work during October's Startup Weekend.

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The game, which mimics the style of the Pokemon and Digimon series, has users pit digital monsters against one another in battle. The twist, said Mr. Perini, is that the monsters created for each player will have features that relate to the player's location. They ultimately hope to launch the product as an iPhone app.

"If you're in Pittsburgh and it's cold, rainy or snowy, you would get an ice-type monster or if you were in Phoenix maybe you'd get a monster that shoots fire or one that is an actual phoenix," he said.

Mr. Perini said the team is about 20 percent done with work toward the project and will use Kickstarter funds toward adding sound, music, special effects and other features to the game. He said he never expected to be on this journey this soon after Startup Weekend.

"I went into Startup Weekend for two things: to meet a bunch of great people and to have fun and build something I thought was cool. In the first three hours I met 10 people I could say drastically changed my life and are passionate about this product," he said. "I never expected that would be what happened, but I couldn't wish for a better outcome."

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