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Cloning is more common these days than many of us realize. Companies like BioArts make big business cloning cows that have the specific features both ranchers and food consumers want. Horses with exceptional characteristics are cloned. Sheep have been cloned to recreate animals that grow more wool. The process goes something like this: Extract an egg from a donor animal (donor A)Remove the nucleus - which contains the genetic material (DNA) - from the eggInsert another animal's DNA into that egg (donor B)Implant that insever into a surrogate animal for development The resulting animal should have the DNA of donor animal B, and none of the DNA of either donor Animal A or surrogate. Ad In its simplest form, these four steps make up the cloning process. It can take a lot of attempts to produce a healthy livestock clone (about 90, on average), but it happens regularly enough that companies like BioArts are doing well [source: Science News]. The problem is that the specific characteristics of a dog's reproductive system make each one of these steps extraordinarily difficult. Firstly, there is the very simple problem of lack of knowledge. There has never been any reason for scientists to seek a deep understanding of dog reproduction. So the first problem Missy's researchers had to overcome was a general lack of research on the subject. The other problems were far more difficult to deal with. First, ovulation most animals on a regular schedule. Human females, for example, ovulation (releasing an egg from the ovaries) approximately every 28 days. Dogs, on the other hand, ovulate almost randomly. It can be every six months, it can be every 18 months. There's no way to know. So scientists have some time to harvest an egg from a dog. To make matters even more complicated, dogs do not release a mature egg as most mammals do. The ovaries release an immature egg that then develops in the fallopian tubes. When it's ripe, that egg is viable for a full two or three hours [source: BioArts]. Pulling out the egg from the fallopian tube at the right time is quite a challenge. So let's say when a dog begins ovulation, scientists are lucky enough to get to the egg while it is still viable. The next step, to remove the kernel, is also a problem. Most animals' eggs are translucent, so it's easy to see exactly what's inside and safely pull out the core. Dog eggs are opaque, practically black. This makes it much riskier to go in for the core. It requires special equipment to look inside the egg, and it provides much more unsuccessful extractions. It also makes it harder to insert the new DNA. Finally, putting prepared eggs in a surrogate is a pending game, too. A dog can only be implanted with a litter when it is in the randomly occurring ovulation period. It is called estrus - the time period when a dog can become pregnant. Finding a surrogate is as hard as finding an egg donor. So how did the South Korean scientists who created Snuppy overcome these challenges? They credit their success at least in part to working hours. They worked 20-hour days, seven days a week. When a dog in the lab went into estrus, there was someone there to take advantage of it. It took them only three years to produce a viable clone. Has BioArts had similar success? Are there any little Missy clones running around? Find out on the next page. May is the month to prepare your house and garden for your dog's summer days. Start at the top - in the attic - in the attic - on your way out, with a stop in the kitchen, before you turn to the courtyard and nighttime areas.1. PREPARE TO BEAT THE HEAT While there has been a cold and rainy spring for most of the country, you can be sure that warm weather is just around the corner. That means the familiar hum of air conditioners and unwanted accompanying increase in electricity bills. In preparation for the months ahead, think about what you can do to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature without breaking the bank. Loft insulation. Just as they do in the heating season, insulation and ventilation in the attic help HVAC system perform effectively during the summer, when the air conditioner is in use, not the furnace. Also, if you do not already have one, think about installing an attic fan to usher in overheated air, reducing the significant burden on the cooling device. The whole house fans. If you mainly run the air conditioner overnight, a full-house fan can probably save you a significant portion of the change. How does it work? By pulling in the cool night air through open windows on the lower floor and cycling it through the house. A professional can help you decide if it's the right solution for you, but generally speaking, full-house fans work best in regions with low humidity, where the temperature drops at least five degrees after sunset. Related: 10 Really Cool Cooling Fans Ceiling Fans. Since they are cooled by circulating air, ceiling fans should be installed in the rooms where you spend the most time (e.g. the kitchen, family room or bedroom). They cost pennies to operate; even using them occasionally instead of AC will make a positive difference in your energy bill. Window air conditioning. Before pulling the window air conditioning unit out of storage, ask yourself how old it is. Efficiency has improved so much that buying a new energy smart device can actually be cheaper than relying on your old clunker for yet another summer. Regardless of age, be sure to maintain ac by cleaning or replacing the filter. And for safety reasons, make sure that the installation is secure and will not budge! Awnings and sun blinds. Awnings are great for reducing heat gain, as they protect windows from direct sunshine. Many fixed or options can be found in materials ranging from canvas to aluminum. Also consider solar blinds and solar screens, which are either found in interior or exterior styles. Both work to absorb heat and block sun rays without preventing the view of the outdoors.2. UPDATE KITCHEN Kitchen makeover doesn't have to be a total gut job. If you're looking for a way to infuse color and pattern, why not re-tile backsplash? It's a simple project to tackle over a long weekend, even if you're not an experienced handyman. Want to go a step further? Re-face your cabinets. A new wood veneer or a bright coat of paint on cabinet doors and drawer fronts can really be transformed, effectively making the old kitchen look brand new. Best of all, the price is correct.3. IMPROVE YOUR GARDEN AND GARDEN This month is the perfect time to make improvements to your landscape marking. Try a distinctive edging that will define the garden walkway or planting beds. Another idea: Use containers to bring flowers and greenery to your porch or backyard deck or patio. Want to have some fun? Experiment with making your own pots out of everyday household materials; see 10 Inspired DIY Planters.4. RID YOURSELF OF SUMMER PESTS While there are many ways to deal with bees, wasps, mice and critters, the best approach to pest control is the natural. Did you know that mice find the smell of peppermint unbearable, or that does not tolerate Tabasco sauce? For bed bugs, the answer is a treatment of diatomaceous soil! Find details and more tips in The Complete Natural Guide to Apartment Pest Control and Prevention.5. READY DECK, PATIO & GRILL Since this is the month many of us will start spending more time in the backyard, sweep your outdoor living space clean and make necessary repairs on deck or patio surfaces. If the gas grill has been inactive for several months, check the burner beams for obstacles and secure all hose connections well. (And don't forget to fill the propane tank!) Meanwhile, charcoal grill owners are wise to clean off ash and fatty residues - a good habit of keeping up during the season. Read much more in How To: Care for Your Grill - and bon appetit! December 21, 2002 5 min read Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own. Q1: We are still in the research and development phase of our business concept and have just settled on a product. We don't have enough information to put together five years of estimates. We're loaded with test data we can include, but how do we get around a five-year projection? Q2: I'm writing a business plan for an online community aimed at the small business segment of the construction industry. There is no way to measure our activities against the customer's needs and potential market share. What are we going to do? A: Because I get so many questions about projections, answer two letters typical of those I receive. Making good projections is conceptually easy, but takes thought and legwork to get right. Sales estimates are an act of faith. They are supported by your assumptions about sales, channels and markets, but in the end, it comes down to simple faith. Expenses are easier - you'll be able to get your numbers with some research. Base your sales numbers on how to acquire customers. Let's assume you plan to sell the product for \$500 and spend \$100,000 on advertising. You think your ads reach an audience of 130,000, of which 50,000 need your product. You think 3 percent of these will respond. That means 3 percent X 50,000=1,500 customers and sales of \$750,000. Use numbers that reflect your company's assumptions: you want to sell the product through ads; customers will pay \$500 for your product; and a 3 percent response rate is reasonable. Magazines can give you circulation and demographic numbers. You can run your own minitest to get response rates or check out market research firms. If your product requires direct sales, you can start with a budget for salespeople and make assumptions about how many sales per year each salesperson can bring in during a specific time frame. But what about market size and share? By all means use market numbers to limit your estimates. If you project capture 5 percent of the market in the first quarter (a rare achievement in fact), that can signal incorrect assumptions. Base your numbers on understanding what drives your purchase. Use market numbers to check affordability, but don't use them to generate the numbers directly. And remember your timing! Sales occur weeks or months after marketing expenses. Therefore, if you project expenses for ads in January, make sure that the associated revenue figures don't appear in your projections until February (or later). Nothing mentally brings you to the brink of the abyss as sales forecasts. All your assumptions about sales, customer needs and how to reach customers come together to produce a brilliant income figure that will at best be wildly inaccurate. And not only that, but building your projections means mentally committing to these assumptions. All the visionary inspiration suddenly becomes black and white assumptions for everyone to question. And it's scary. Very scary. But it's worth it. After building your model, you will have clear answers when investors ask probe questions. And you will benefit from a manager having laid bare your business model, you can track your progress. Have you estimated a response rate of 3 percent? When the actual price arrives, you have an early warning if you need to adjust your plan. Having made sales estimates, expenses are almost easy. Sales made you estimate pretty much everything. With expenses, select the line items and quantities you think you need to make Fly. If you imagine a 5,000-square-foot store with six sellers, you've found two large line items: rent and wages. The trick is to identify the line elements to make your business real. If no one in your team has experience identifying relevant expenses, you can often find help from consultants who have built similar operations. When you know the line items, a few days on the web and phone calls with vendors can give you amounts for each expense line. For payroll data, use your expected headcount (you remembered to do a headcount projection, didn't you?) and head to Salary.com for actual salary figures. For equipment purchases, a Dell seller would like to help. Office supplies? Staples is there when you need them. Rent? Call Coldwell Banker. And if you are a high-tech company, remember to budget M&A, Ms and Coke for programmers (they'll love you for it). Just make sure your expenses link to each other and your earnings. If you buy 10 servers, you'll need to get your ISP fees to reflect this, and make sure 10 servers are right for your expected customer base. The more your numbers support each other, the better your chances of presenting a rock-solid business case to potential investors. Making your estimates is often one of the hardest parts of writing your plan, but the discipline and understanding you want to develop will lay the foundation for a thriving, healthy business. Stever Robbins is a consultant specializing in mastering overwhelm, power and influence. The author of It takes much more than attitude ... to lead a Stellar Organization, he has been a team member or co-founder of nine startups, an advisor and angel investor, and co-developer of Harvard's MBA program. You can find his other articles and information at SteverRobbins.com. This article originally appeared on Entrepreneur.com in 2000.