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As we celebrate National DNA Day, we take some time out to catch up with our Head of Operations, Sam Brown

25th April 2022



National DNA Day commemorates the completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003 and the discovery of DNA's double helix in 1953. What impact do you think these events have had on your life personally and for the industry within which you work?

How lucky are we! It's been a complete mystery for 14 billion years and only in just the last 70 years have we known about it and now even starting to understand it! I believe it's one of the biggest discoveries by humankind and we're incredibly lucky to be living in this time. DNA helps answer so many questions, not just for disease diagnosis but some hugely broad questions such as the evolution of life and whether life on other planets is possible. DNA made me who I am in so many ways, not just biologically but inspired me to become the molecular scientist I've always wanted to be!

What would you say are some of the challenges our industry currently faces?

New technologies being scary and TOO complicated. Thousands of R&D teams across the globe are working tirelessly, inventing and discovering amazing new things, which can cause people to be left behind and out-of-date and intimidated. We attempt to tackle this by trailblazing in new research avenues whilst also transferring our learnings to others by making molecular science SIMPLE. Science doesn't need to be difficult.

You manage a team of people to make sure that all our kits are manufactured to the expected quality and delivered to customers on time. What's your favourite part about your role?

When we founded YouSeq, Operations was just me. I'd order, goods in, manufacture, QC, dispense...and a whole lot more! Now we're a far cry from what we once were, with SOPs for every stage of the product life cycle, an experienced team taking care of each detail along the way and sophisticated process software helping to guide this. The best bit of it all is working with my team, they are truly awesome with bundles of talent and in whom I have complete trust to do the right thing.



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And what would you say is the most tricky part of your job?

COVID times have been unprecedented but we're not out of the woods. When demand has been at the highest on record, the supply of everything has not matched. Organisation of inventory has been incredibly challenging, and I totally realise this has been a global struggle. Thankfully the supply has caught up and the steadier supply has meant no more sleepless nights.

Give us a fun fact about yourself?

I am actually one of a three. I'm a triplet...my poor Mum! All three of us work in science, one's a radiologist and the other is a paramedic.

And if you hadn't been an accomplished scientist heading up YouSeq's Operations, what do you think you would have chosen to do?

I can't imagine a world where I wasn't a scientist. If I wasn't in the molecular space, I would be more of an environmental scientist. This does link nicely to my other YouSeq role as the environmental officer, as I believe the best asset of the human race is the planet we all live on. The biodiversity and earth potential for giving is boundless and we should not mistreat this. I can imagine a world where we can live sustainably and harmoniously with nature.

Thanks Sam! And happy National DNA Day everyone ☺



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