

MARKETING EFFORTS INCREASE SALES AND RETAIN JOBS

ABOUT DOGGIE WALK BAGS INC. Doggie Walk Bags, Inc. is a woman-owned, family-operated business established in 1988. The company manufactures bags specifically designed to help dog owners clean up the waste that pets leave behind in public areas. Although used during an unpleasant task, Doggie Walk Bags are baby-powder scented to neutralize odors for pet owners, opaque in color to hide the contents, and fitted with easy-tie handles to help make pet waste easily disposable. The company is located in Balboa Island, California, with around 11 employees.

THE CHALLENGE. Doggie Walk Bags wanted to diversify its customer base. The company lacked a formalized marketing strategy, and most of its sales relied on top customers. When one of those customers dropped off, it negatively impacted sales and put six jobs at risk. Doggie Walk Bags needed to embrace a new marketing plan to appeal to consumers and grow its client base. Increased foreign competition provided additional incentive for the company to solidify its standing with current customers and retain sales.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Doggie Walk Bags had an established relationship with California Manufacturing Technology Consulting (CMTc), part of the MEP National Network™. After an evaluation of the company's challenges, CMTc consultants worked with Doggie Walk Bags to develop a formalized, multi-faceted strategic marketing program. Key team leaders participated in weekly marketing and sales planning sessions to determine threats and specific opportunities for growth. To enhance brand awareness and connect with new customers, Doggie Walk Bags launched a new website featuring a modern online ordering system. CMTc also recommended Search Engine Optimization best practices to help generate new leads and sales when prospects searched for pet products via search engines. The company learned how to integrate social media marketing into the mix and embraced social networks.

Doggie Walk Bags also worked with CMTc to increase its tradeshow activity. CMTc identified target tradeshows with potential prospects, and helped the company develop new collateral materials, including an introduction letter with information on the company's top products, and an e-mail follow-up program for new contacts. Doggie Walk Bags created a special quarterly newsletter with promotions designed to encourage repeat sales and entice at-risk customers to keep their business with the company. Sales increased, and the company hired a new staff member to manage the follow-up process for leads, along with a customer service representative to resolve any client issues.

"With CMTc's assistance with marketing, strategy development, and coaching, our organization was able to increase and retain sales by \$2.25 million. Our organization has the strategy and structure in place to target new customers and retain key clients."

-Chris Crosson, Co-Owner

RESULTS



Increased sales: **\$750K**



Retained sales: **\$1.5M**



Increased jobs: **2**



Retained jobs: **6**

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