

COLORADO-BASED NATURAL SKINCARE COMPANY SPINSTER SISTERS TURNS TO LOCAL MEP CENTER TO INCREASE THROUGHPUT AND MEET HAND SANITIZER DEMAND

ABOUT SPINSTER SISTERS. In the early 90s, Kelly Perkins had growing concerns about the toxic chemicals being used in everyday products and decided to do something about it. Kelly started making soaps out of plant-based ingredients many of us have in our kitchens. Requests from friends and family grew into demand from farmers markets and health food stores. Spinster Sisters production has grown into an 8,860-square-foot Spinster Sisters Microsoapery in the hills of Golden, Colorado, with a flagship store. It has also grown from a team of one to a team of 16 people, and her products are carried by over 2,100 retailers across the country, including Whole Foods Market, H-E-B, Kroger, Duluth Trading Co, and many more.

THE CHALLENGE. Spinster Sisters was considering discontinuing some product lines and had earmarked their hand sanitizer as one possible candidate. As Kelly watched the news, however, she realized that it would be better to double down instead. She then reached out to her packaging supplier and placed an order for 200,000 bottles and pumps, which was a significant increase from her traditional order of 5-10,000 units. Since Spinster Sisters has an excellent ongoing relationship with Whole Foods, Kelly called them first to see how many of the 200,000 bottles they would be interested in purchasing and was shocked when they requested the entire amount and then some. With pressure mounting to produce more faster, Kelly reached out to Janine Ledingham at Manufacturer's Edge, part of the MEP National Network™, whom she had previously met at a Naturally Boulder event, to see if there was a better way.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Manufacturer's Edge spent time at Spinster Sisters studying their current workflow and experimenting with different methods for reducing waste and expediting the process. At one point during the early days of the pandemic, Manufacturer's Edge Service Delivery Specialist Juan Emilio Aranda even rolled up his sleeves and spent time helping to bottle hand sanitizer with the rest of the Spinster Sisters team in order to meet demand. Based on his experiences, and after studying the systems currently in place, Juan Emilio was able to make a series of recommendations for improvements. Phase one consisted of simple modifications, including the purchase of a manually controlled piston fill system, and resulted in an increased throughput that allowed them to make six bottles of hand sanitizer in the time it had previously taken to produce one. Phase two focused on the addition of a new production manager with whom the Manufacturer's Edge team worked to create long-term strategies for process improvement and layout changes. Spinster Sisters continues to rapidly expand and is currently focusing on their marketing and outreach efforts while also moving into the Canadian markets in the coming weeks.

"Manufacturer's Edge really came through for us when we needed you most at the start of this pandemic. I appreciate your assistance so very much. Thank you!"

-Kelly Perkins, President/CEO

RESULTS



\$118,000 in increased or retained sales



\$24,000 in cost savings



\$22,000 in new investment



2 created or retained jobs

CONTACT US



Manufacturer's Edge C/O
Geotech
2650 E. 40th Avenue
Denver, CO 80205



(303)592-4087



www.manufacturersedge.com

