

## PRIXEL PRESS LEVERAGES TVCOG & CEG FOR PROTOTYPING & COMMERCIALIZATION

**ABOUT PRIXEL PRESS LLC.** PRIXEL is a local Hudson, New York, toy startup that makes customizable printmaking kits. The kits use silicone pieces that people can arrange into unique illustrations and patterns. While working as a graphic designer in 2011, Gamm made the first PRIXEL prototype by using laser-cut rubber pieces glued to LEGO. Each year, he would iterate on the press, usually to print annual holiday cards or business cards.

In 2015, he moved to Hudson and continued refining the prototype with the hope of launching a business. Gamm incorporated PRIXEL in late 2018 and shortly afterward he visited the TVCOG to use its laser cutter and vacuum former. With the 130 W Thunder Laser, Gamm cuts the plastic trays on which PRIXEL pieces are arranged. With the Belovac C Class vacuum former he molded the plastic trays that hold all pieces of the PRIXEL kit. He also uses CEG's Stratasys 3D Printer to prototype new trays and certain components of the press. Gamm uses a desktop CNC machine at his home office to make molds for casting the color-coded silicone PRIXEL pieces. Each kit includes 544 unique pieces featuring either letters, numbers or unique shapes such as squares and triangles.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Brandon Gamm wanted to move beyond the prototyping stage to a mass-manufactured product. For help Gamm turned to the Center for Economic Growth (CEG), part of the New York MEP and the MEP National Network™, and Tech Valley Center of Gravity (TVCOG), a maker space in Troy.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** PRIXEL joined TVCOG's Manufacturer Incubator Program in 2020. The program provided guidance from professionals with manufacturing expertise, including CEG. Gamm specifically joined the TVCOG incubator program to develop his product and explore ways to scale up and improve the production of its components. TVCOG created an advisory committee that met monthly, and an engineer-in-residence was assigned to provide up to five hours of technical engineering assistance.

Troy Fischer, a Westerlo inventor with 28 years of toy and game industry management experience, was PRIXEL's engineer-in-residence. Gamm said Fischer's advice helped him avoid common pitfalls in the toy industry and how to go from manufacturing one kit at a time to a dozen. Gamm said his monthly meetings with Fischer helped hold him accountable and meet his goal of creating a salable product. TVCOG also helped Gamm with networking. The center regularly has guest speakers. One guest speaker is now helping Gamm find a contract manufacturer, and another is helping with third-party logistics.

"I always wanted to turn this toy invention into a business, and the Tech Valley Center of Gravity and Center for Economic Growth helped me do that because they have the tools you need for prototyping and can help with scaling up production. The Tech Valley Center of Gravity's Manufacturer Incubator Program kept me on a path to commercialization, saved me from mistakes toy entrepreneurs frequently encounter, and helped me make connections that further helped me develop the business."

-Brandon Gamm, Founder

## RESULTS



3 jobs created



\$12,000 in increased sales



\$5,000 in new investment in new products



\$3,000 in cost savings

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