

## IDAHO-SHAPED AXE MAKES THE CUT

**ABOUT IRON PINE LLC.** Iron Pine, located in Boise, Idaho, celebrates Idaho life with unique, modern Idaho-inspired designs and is inspired by the Idaho outdoors, history, culture, and art. What started with a doodle on paper has grown into Iron Pine Brand, now offering a different approach to Idaho apparel and accessories. Maria Lopez, the owner of Iron Pine, is a scientist by trade but an artist and an adventurer at heart. They are a small local company whose designs are a family collaboration and sold on their website.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Maria Lopez, CEO of Idaho's Iron Pine LLC, has an eye for detail and design. She noticed that the state of Idaho was shaped like an axe, thin at the top and broad at the bottom. The shape stuck with Maria because an axe in the shape of Idaho looked like a branding bull's eye. Maria needed help with design, prototyping, market research, brand identity, packaging, and more.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Maria connected with Boise State's New Product Development Lab (NPD) at TechHelp, a member of the MEP National Network™, to see if she could bring her Idaho-shaped axe idea to life. Led by the NPD Lab Manager, the NPD team and extended Boise State studio\Blu team sprang into action across several fronts, including product design, prototyping, market research, packaging, graphic design, and supply chain issues. After months of work, the Iron Pine Idaho Axe is now a functional product that functions as well as it looks. Maria sells the axe on the Iron Pine website and through additional distribution channels. Maria unveiled the Axe publicly at the Manly Man's Father's Day Celebration at Boise's Western Collective in 2022. Maria pitched the Axe as the perfect gift for Idaho Fathers who would appreciate a functional work of art.

"I have enjoyed working with TechHelp's New Product Development Lab. They have been part of my rather long journey getting the Iron Pine Axe from concept to product realization. As a self-funded small business with limited funding, I have relied on the NPL on many fronts. I am a BSU graduate myself, and working with Boise State students was a highlight for me. The students are very resourceful and capable, and for me, this was the perfect partnership to get my product to market. I will continue to work with TechHelp on future projects."

-Maria Lopez, Manager/Owner

## RESULTS



5 created or retained jobs



\$55,000 in cost savings



\$35,000 in new or retained sales



\$30,000 in new investment

## CONTACT US



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