

E-COMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING COHORT - AHUALOA FAMILY FARMS

ABOUT AHUALOA FAMILY FARMS, LLC. Ahualoa Family Farms LLC is a family-run farm on the Big Island of Hawaii. Chad Cleveland purchased the farm in 2017, and since then, he and his family have worked to expand farming operations while also resurrecting Hawaii's oldest macadamia nut factory. As fourth-generation farmers, the passion, understanding, and appreciation of agriculture has led this team to transform Ahualoa Family Farms into a premiere macadamia nut farm and processing facility. They are currently planning to start a macadamia tree nursery and planting a new macadamia orchard to keep up with demand. Ahualoa Family Farms is known for their gourmet small-batch macadamia nuts flavored with premium local ingredients. All of their products are grown, processed and packaged on the Big Island. The team is committed to offering products that are 100% Hawaii made.

THE CHALLENGE. Ahualoa Family Farms management worked tirelessly renovating Hawaii's historic macadamia nut processing facility that had been closed for decades. By early 2019 the historic building had been brought up to code and back to life as new manufacturing equipment was installed. However, the COVID-19 pandemic put a pause on tourism and presented a new, and unexpected, challenge for Ahualoa Family Farms. Where once tourism-based wholesale clients made up a majority of their business, these clients were no longer placing orders because tourism had come to an abrupt halt. Management had already started to explore the digital marketplace for their products; however, the pandemic pushed them to pivot and dive right into e-commerce. They knew that with the right website, SEO/SEM, and guidance, they could reach new customer segments during these challenging times. Ahualoa Family Farms turned to Innovate Hawaii, part of the MEP National Network™, for help.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. In 2022, Ahualoa Family Farms management participated in Innovate Hawaii's "E-Commerce and Digital Marketing" Cohort #4. The aim of this series is to help local Hawaii companies expand their customer base through e-commerce sales and digital marketing initiatives. With one-on-one consultants to provide expert advice and answer questions, management was able to get a better understanding of best practice methods in the ever-changing digital marketing landscape and began to implement these initiatives into the new e-commerce side of their business.

"I would highly recommend the 'E-Commerce and Digital Marketing' Cohort to any company looking to learn more about the evolving digital landscape and e-commerce. It helped our team build upon their knowledge and provided us with actionable items that we could immediately put into practice. Having access to expert consultants to answer our questions was immensely helpful."

-Matt Holmes, Director of Marketing

RESULTS



\$60,000 in new sales from optimizing their digital footprint and marketing initiatives



New email marketing system. Thus far in **2023**, online orders has increased by **75%** compared to 2022.



2 staff trained

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