

TUTTA BELLA EXPANDS ITS BUSINESS AMID CHALLENGES, THANKS TO A JOB SKILLS PROGRAM GRANT

ABOUT TUTTA BELLA. As it did for many small businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic proved challenging for Tutta Bella, a popular artisan pizza company with multiple restaurant locations dotting the Seattle area. The company began its journey as a pizzeria, but was expanding by adding a USDA-inspected commercial and manufacturing division. The pandemic was the catalyst that prompted it to dive into that direction of growth and Tutta Bella worked with Impact Washington, part of the MEP National Network™, to help make it happen.

THE CHALLENGE. During the pandemic, Tutta Bella closed its Bellevue restaurant and manufacturing location and purchased a 15,000-square-foot facility in Seattle to grow its in-house fresh food manufacturing facility. In Bellevue, Tutta Bella was turning out about 2,700 items per day in a cramped space and hoped the move to Seattle would help produce 5,000 items per day. The fresh products, such as Tutta Bella sauce, take-and-bake pizzas, and more are sold at stores including Costco, Fred Meyer, QFC. The expansion to manufacture products in Seattle also required the company to go from 43 employees in Bellevue to about 150 in Seattle.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. When Tutta Bella moved into the new production facility in the summer of 2023, everything was new: processes, equipment, employees, products, and an enterprise resource planning business system. Training was partially funded by the Washington State Board of Education Job Skills Program through Seattle Colleges with Impact Washington conducting the training.

“Impact Washington has been an absolute pleasure to work with. Our staff did not have the skills and knowledge to select and implement an ERP without the training provided,” said Tutta Bella’s Ian Kasman, director of business systems. The extensive ERP and business systems training was part of a thorough two-year program.

On-the-job training courses were designed for employees and courses occurred five days a week. Extensive testing and training were needed to ensure staff was ready to operate all aspects of the new facility. Once everything was up and running, employees were then trained on how to measure performance and how to adjust as needed to maximize success.

"Choosing and deploying an ERP system for our fast-growing business was a challenging endeavor. The invaluable assistance from Impact Washington and the JSP Training Grant played a crucial role in our success."

-Kimberly Nocco, Director of Business Intelligence

RESULTS



110 new or retained jobs



\$3,000,000 in new or retained sales



\$8,100,000 in new investment



\$5,000,000 in cost savings

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