

Walnut Hill Winery



“The SBDC played a critical role in getting our product to market & then in helping us grow“

- Samantha Crissman

Client: Samantha Crissman
Business: Walnut Hill Winery
Address: Blairsville, PA
e-mail:

Website:
<http://www.walnuthillwinery.com>

Industry: Wine Production and Sales

Year Founded: 2008

SBDC Assistance: Commercialization assistance/Business plan/Financial Management/Marketing

Additional Partners: IUP Small Business Institute

Indiana University of PA SBDC
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Background

When Samantha Crissman decided she wanted to open a winery she turned to the business assistance services available through Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She had excellent marketing skills, but knew she could use some additional assistance and an outside perspective.

The Assistance

Samantha attended a ten session class on Starting and Establishing a Business. This class helped her navigate start-up hurdles and produce a strategic plan for her business. After she had begun she maintained her relationship with the IUP personnel who had helped her and additional follow on projects were undertaken.

Specifically, the SBDC:

- Undertook survey work to understand which of her advertising methods were most effective. This work enabled her to put in place a more cost effective advertising budget and schedule,
- Analyzed the accounting system she had in place and made recommendations for improvement
- Analyzed production capacity relative to sales & established a plan going forward for expansion

Results

The client has not only developed a wine production and sales business, but has actually developed a venue for entertainment in Southern Indiana County. The events she holds at the winery often offer live entertainment. Consequently, she has developed a broad market awareness and brand identity.

- Client increased event attendance and sales while spending thousands of dollars less on marketing.
- Client staff more productive and client better able to understand financials of business