

L A Taco

Background

Walter Aguirre a student at IUP with an entrepreneurial bent was seeking a way to provide additional income for his family. He approached the IUP SBDC with several ideas he had for starting a business.

The Assistance

Specifically, the SBDC helped Walter research his ideas and decide on the path he would take. Originally, from Los Angeles Walter felt there was a gap in the market when it came to Hispanic foods. He knew that the Latino population was migrating into virtually every town in America and with it introducing more and more Americans to the foods of Latin America. He also knew that sales of salsa now exceeded those of ketchup. He felt this was an excellent time to launch a business providing food services based upon Latin cuisines. He raised money through family and friends to establish a food trailer and began offering his menu of tacos & related food offerings at various locations which included Kittanning, Indiana, Ford City, & New Kensington.

Specifically, the SBDC:

- helped Walter choose a brand name for the fledgling business, L A Tacos, a name that suggests authenticity yet could support not only Mexican style tacos, but allow for the introduction of a fusion of international flavors
- Acted as an ally and sounding board throughout the process

Results

The client has developed a brand identity, a loyal following through friendly service, quality food and a strong social media presence.

He has gone from operating four hours a week at two locations to now operating 40 hours/week and added a food truck to go along with his initial trailer. He now operates at multiple locations across Western Pennsylvania.

He now employs two people in addition to himself and anticipates further expansion and additional hires.

The expansion has been driven largely by loyal customers who have recommended additional locations and worked to get him authorizations to set up.

Walter, a Marine and veteran of Afghanistan, now has an additional means of support for his family and a new born whom he is supporting

Walter sources the produce & meats he uses from local businesses.

Western Pennsylvania residents of the towns he serves now have another food option and judging from its popularity are very well pleased.



“The encouragement and guidance provided by the SBDC was critical to my ability to undertake this venture.”
Walter Aguirre

Client: Walter Aguirre
Business: L A Taco
Address: 274 Iron Bridge Road
Kittanning, PA 16201-9428

Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/L.ATaco412>

Industry: Food truck

Year Founded: 2012

SBDC Assistance: Commercialization assistance/Business plan

Additional Partners: Cunningham Meats, Dentici Wholesale Produce

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