



Prixel Press Leverages CEG & TVCOG for Prototyping & Commercialization Assistance



Overview

PRIXEL is a local Hudson toy startup that makes customizable printmaking kits. The kits use silicone pieces that people can arrange into unique illustrations and patterns. With the help of the Center for Economic Growth's (CEG) Business Growth Solution (BGS) and Tech Valley Center of Gravity (TVCOG), a manufacturing incubator and maker space in Troy, Brandon Gamm's idea is moving beyond the prototyping stage to a mass manufactured product.



PRIXEL Founder Brandon Gamm works on a PRIXEL Press kit at the Tech Valley Center of Gravity (left) and shows a design made with the invention (right).

The Situation

While working as a graphic designer in 2011, Gamm made the first PRIXEL prototype by using laser-cut rubber pieces glued to LEGO. Each year, he would iterate on the press, usually to print annual holiday cards or business cards. In 2015, he moved to Hudson from Brooklyn and continued refining the prototype with the hope of launching a business.

Gamm incorporated PRIXEL in late 2018, and shortly afterward he visited the TVCOG to use its laser cutter and vacuum former. With the 130 W Thunder Laser, Gamm cuts the plastic trays on which PRIXEL pieces are arranged. With the Belovac C Class vacuum former, he molded the plastic trays that hold all pieces of the PRIXEL kit. He also uses CEG's Stratasys 3D Printer to prototype new trays and certain components of the press. Gamm uses a desktop CNC machine at his home office to make molds for casting the color-coded silicone PRIXEL pieces. Each kit includes 544 unique pieces featuring either letters, numbers or unique shapes such as squares and triangles.

The Solution

Amid the pandemic, in 2020, PRIXEL joined TVCOG's Manufacturer Incubator Program. That provided him with guidance from professionals with manufacturing expertise, including CEG. Gamm specifically joined the TVCOG incubator program to develop his product and explore ways to scale up and improve the production of its components. TVCOG created an advisory committee that met monthly, and an engineer-in-residence was assigned to provide technical engineering assistance.





CEG's Business Growth Solutions

Growing Manufacturing & Technology Companies

Troy Fischer, a Westerlo inventor with 28 years of toy and game industry management experience, was PRIXEL's engineer-in-residence. Gamm said Fischer's advice helped him avoid common pitfalls in the toy industry and how to go from manufacturing one kit at a time to a dozen. Gamm said his monthly meetings with Fischer helped hold him accountable and meet his goal of creating a salable product. TVCOG also helped Gamm with networking. The center regularly has guest speakers. One guest speaker, referred by CEG, is now helping Gamm find a contract manufacturer, and another is helping with third-party logistics.

PRIXEL sold its first kit in August 2021 and sales have continued even without any marketing. Gamm is currently in a fundraising stage and looking for a manufacturing partner to scale.



The Results

- Increased Sales: \$12,000
- New Jobs Created: 3
- Cost Savings: \$3,000

New Investments:

- Investment in New Products: \$5,000



I always wanted to turn this toy invention into a business, and the Tech Valley Center of Gravity and Center for Economic Growth helped me do that because they have the tools you need for prototyping and can help with scaling up production.

The Tech Valley Center of Gravity's Manufacturer Incubator Program kept me on a path to commercialization, saved me from mistakes toy entrepreneurs frequently encounter, and helped me make connections that further helped me develop the business.

Brandon Gamm
Founder, PRIXEL



About CEG, Business Growth Solutions

CEG's Business Growth Solutions (BGS) serves small to medium sized manufacturing and technology companies (SMEs) helping them drive top and bottom-line growth. CEG BGS is a Regional Technology Development Center (RTDC) and houses the regional Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) center, which is part of the New York State MEP program, which is funded by National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and Empire State Development Division of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NYSTAR).



About TVCOG

The Tech Valley Center of Gravity is a 501(c)3 makerspace, manufacturing incubator, STEAM-education center and creative community located in the heart of downtown Troy, New York. Our Manufacturing Incubator, supported by the Empire State Development Division of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NYSTAR), provides expert coaching and advisory services for product-related startups. We offer resources specifically tuned for hardware development through our Makerspace and Prototyping Center, with our advanced manufacturing equipment and flexible workspace.

To learn how CEG BGS could help your company, contact CEG BGS Senior Vice President, Michael Lobsinger at michaell@ceg.org or call 518-431-1481.

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