

How a Dream Business Became an Instant Hit After Three Years of Work

Gwendolyn Rogers loved baking, loved people, and baking for people. She loved delivering joy. She had a habit of taking outstanding baked goods to all sorts of people and occasions. She also loved to share her sweets online---or at least photos of them, along with some of the faces she made happy. She baked ooey gooey goodies so over-the-top pretty and exceptionally tasty that word was spreading. People started asking her to bake for them, offering to pay her to do it, and one of her son's teachers commented that Gwendolyn needed her own shop.

Eventually Rogers started planning her dream bakery café. It was going to be outstandingly beautiful and take a lot of work to put together. No hurry-up-and-open half-baked business plan for this woman! But while the extensive planning, remodeling, and interior decorating was under way, she never paused baking or involving her goods in area events like WZPL 99.5's cake-eating wedding contest. And, she did not wait to start using her new business name and logo. Many months before opening day, Rogers shared photos on Facebook of baked goods tied up in beautiful ribbons printed with The Cake Bake Shop name and logo.

According to Janet Main, The Cake Bake Shop's manager, who worked with Rogers in much of the pre-opening preparations, they anticipated needing eight employees. Today, only four months after opening, they have twenty five employees! That's how busy they are. That's how much the community loves the products and the atmosphere of the shop. They even have customers drive in from surrounding areas.

The Cake Bake Shop fills special orders and supplies desserts to a steak house, but much of their revenue comes from customers who love to stop in for a treat, a lunch, a business meeting, or an after-school snack. And for those wanting something to go with their sweets, The Cake Bake Shop offers sandwiches, soups, and fine drinks---from milk to champagne, depending on your age and your mood; and in the evenings they offer charcuterie (a selection including sausage, salami, other meats, and cheeses). One customer, Joni Bruks, reviewed the shop on Facebook saying, "The Cake Bake Shop is the ABSOLUTE best. As for the baked goods, no other place can compare. The shop itself is so quaint and inviting. When you go there, you never want to leave." Of course there are other places in the area where you can get delicious baked goods, but it's the beautiful experience they are selling as much as the delicious food.

It was Rogers' personality, her wonderful baking, community engagement, and her use of social media which garnered her radio, television, and magazine coverage both before and after her doors opened---without her ever having to pay for advertising. Additionally, her habit of thanking people on social media for sharing their experience in her shop continues to spread the joy and is sure to encourage more interaction and more visitors.
