



INNOVATION & ADAPTABILITY

In the face of the pandemic, small businesses have been forced to adapt to business challenges that could not have been anticipated. Many have been working in survival mode. But, while in survival mode, some businesses were able to identify new ways to utilize resources already available to them. By reacting quickly, and communicating honestly with employees, customers, and vendors, small businesses have found a way to thrive during these challenging times!

INNOVATION

One example is [Marmiro Stones](#), a custom specialty stone fabricator and design company in Carlstadt, NJ. The pandemic has certainly created some unique challenges for the company, but they have survived many obstacles and economic downturns in the past 20 years. This was an opportunity to be more innovative and develop stronger teamwork. Team Member Heidi Arpacilar said, "I intrinsically felt that we would make it through the pandemic and that we'd come out even more successful. Moe is an amazing leader. I had absolutely no doubt that he would find the positive in this situation and that we would grow from it."

From the start of the pandemic, Co-Founder Moe Arpacilar knew two things for sure; they needed their supply chain to stay intact and for their team to stay together. "The product runs the machine, it is an absolute. All of our raw materials come from our operation in Turkey, so it was pivotal that both of our teams (Turkey and U.S.) stayed together and that the supply chain remained intact. We didn't lose one day of production." On the importance of keeping his team together, Moe said, "In business there are so many ups and downs, but you always come up again. You have to trust your team and keep them positive."

Marmiro's "mobile showroom" is one example of the innovative culture of the company...literally bringing the showroom to a customer's home! Since retail stores were shut down, the mobile showroom offered a safe way for customers to view their products and interact with their sales team. With the use of wireless technology, the customer can be in the mobile unit looking around, while the sales team sends images to a screen for the customer to look at. The showroom is disinfected after each use, ensuring that their customers and staff are safe. This was one of the keys to their success throughout the pandemic.

Through innovation and adaptability, Marmiro Stones is staying on target with their strategic goals and moving forward with their growth plan.

ADAPTABILITY

Another example is [The Graphix Spot](#), a large format digital printing company in Budd Lake, NJ. Like most small businesses, the initial reaction to the Covid shutdown was panic. Since much of their work is done in commercial office spaces, most projects were cancelled or postponed. Owner Matt McTaggart said, "I knew we had to adapt...and do it quickly!" Based on CDC guidelines of safety protocol, Matt quickly pivoted his business to print social distancing graphics and signage.

First, the company teamed up with their material suppliers and created catalogs of examples. Next, they quickly reached out to their clients and trusted referral partners to let them know what they were doing. Through social media blasts, phone calls and emails, the word quickly spread about their new service line. The response was overwhelming! Matt said, "One account gave us an order so large we had to purchase a new state of the art, large format printer just to keep up with the printing volume."

The Graphix Spot continues to print safety signage but is now returning to commercial projects as well. By being nimble, adaptable and innovative, sales are up, and new business continues to come in.

If you'd like to know more about these companies, or have your own innovative story to share, please connect with us. We'd love to hear from you!

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CO-FOUNDER, MARMIRO STONES

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