

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

Business Spotlight



Lucy's Informal Flowers is a full-service florist offering flowers arranged or by the stem, plants, cards, and gifts. At Lucy's they gather flowers, plants, containers, glass and gifts from the finest sources, artisans, and designers and work with clients to create a finished product that meets the customer's needs. Owner Lucy Gorman wants people to feel comfortable and confident asking for flowers.

In this Spotlight, we learn about how Lucy got started and how she dealt with the pandemic.



Gorge Living

I've lived in Hood River for 35 years. The Gorge is an interesting place to work. You get clientele from all over the world. I was already a florist in the Gorge and had been doing a lot of weddings. The venue I had been doing a lot of work with was going to close, and I was ready for something new. The existing florist in town was looking to sell her business. The time was right and we opened the week before Mother's Day in 2005 – quite the start! It's really fun to be in this community and be here long enough to see the community come together and work together on exciting new projects as the town changes.



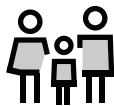
Pandemic

Ninety percent of our impact was from the wedding industry shutting down. There were also supply chain shortages that impacted what we could get. I was able to keep operating and tried to keep true to my vision and scale. I had to cut back on staff hours and only order what I needed. I spent more time on my books and understanding my Profit and Loss statements. I added curbside pickup for customers and stepped up marketing on Instagram and Facebook. I also got a loan through the Paycheck Protection Program and was able to bring back my one part-time employee.



Starting up

I didn't use any formal financial resources when I started. Instead, I remortgaged my house and my husband did the bookwork. So much focus is just on running the business, but the [Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#) has helped me think about planning more. In 2019, I met with an SBDC advisor and was encouraged to apply for a loan through the [Oregon Investment Board](#). The loan gave us a chance to pay some bills and fund some necessary maintenance.



If I had some free time...

I have always wanted to really learn how to ride a horse! I went to a dude ranch once and rode on a trail, and I thought it was really fun.



Recommendation to people wanting to start a business...

Get financial advice before you start! It was really meaningful to have the conversation I had with the SBDC because they told me "you're doing ok, keep going" and helped me get my resources together.



"I want people to feel comfortable and confident asking for flowers. If someone doesn't know what they want, I like to help guide them. I want my customers to feel empowered."

Learn more about this business:

informalflowers.com

Instagram: [lucysininformalflowers](#)

Facebook: [Lucys-Informal-Flowers](#)



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