

## ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

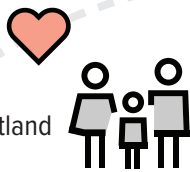
# Business Spotlight

Terra Cotta Gorge Co. is a women's boutique located in The Dalles. Opened in 2018, the boutique caters to the modern bohemian woman who has a sense of city-style. Terra Cotta Gorge Co. offers apparel, accessories, shoes, and gifts for women of all sizes.

**In this Spotlight, we learn how Kenya Kramer, owner and a native of The Dalles, was able to utilize various social media marketing strategies to not only weather mandatory closures and restrictions during the pandemic, but still grow her business and move to a larger storefront in downtown The Dalles in 2021.**

### Gorge natives...

After getting a B.A. in Apparel Design, I worked in the fashion industry in Portland for a year. My husband and I both had family in The Dalles and we wanted to be closer to our families, so we moved back here. Now we are about to welcome our first baby and we are both happy to be close to our families.



### Pandemic...

The pandemic mandates meant I had to close the shop's doors. I didn't know how long that would last so I had to be creative about how to keep the business going. Initially, I stopped ordering new inventory because sales slowed down. Because I had already been using social media, particularly Facebook and Instagram, I began to increase my visibility on those sites. I was able to expand the store's online sales options. I kept an eye out for grant and loan funding options available to me. I was able to get a PPP loan and local grants from the City of The Dalles, MCEDD, the PUD and Lowe's.



**"I want my customers to know there is no age in fashion. If you like it, wear it."**

### Recommendation to people wanting to start a business...

Research, research, research! I researched everything. Make sure you know the industry you want to work in. Know your market, know your competition and area. Come up with your brand and understand your branding image.

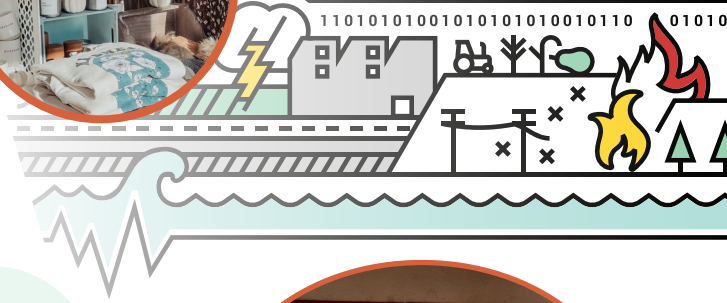
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terra cotta  
gorge co.  
BOUTIQUE



### Starting up...

There were no apparel design jobs in The Dalles, so I brainstormed options. Opening my own store was the best option that I could see, so I began to search for a way to do that on my own.



I did a lot of market research and spoke with the [Columbia Gorge Small Business Development Center](#) to get help with business planning. After being denied a loan from mainstream funding sources, I received start-up funding through the [Oregon Investment Board's \(OIB\) business loan program managed by MCEDD](#).

### Connecting through social media...

It's amazing how loyal the local customers are. The various social media platforms became a way to stay connected to my local customers and reach new customers outside of The Dalles. I post Instagram stories that show me unpacking new inventory and other behind the scenes videos. Featured items sell out!



### What's next?

I moved to a new location in October 2021. It's on a main street, so more visible and more accessible to my customers. It is also much larger so I can display more inventory. I have added a baby section to the store. I would like to add a men's section at some point but that is still in the future.

[shopterracotta.com](https://shopterracotta.com)

Facebook: [terraccottagorgeco](#)

IG: [terraccottagorgeco](#)

Pinterest: [terraccottagorgeco](#)

Learn more about how Keyna started her business in this [OIB video](#).