



Suzanne Fulford

Lutz, Florida



Dixie Belle Paint Company

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Suzanne Fulford:

Suzanne Fulford, founder of Dixie Belle Paint Company, a GrowFL 2017 Florida Companies to Watch honoree, launched her company with no investors, loans or partners in 2014 and generated just under \$2 million in revenue for 2016. Fulford attributes the company's tremendous growth to several key factors converging at once.

"I saw a trend and filled a gap in a niche market," she said. "Because I knew a lot about my market, I could target exactly where I needed to be on price and colors and selection. I knew what was lacking. A myriad of things fell into place."

It all started because Fulford was not happy with the high prices of the quality paint that she wanted to use to paint furniture for resale. "I experimented with my own formulations and came up with something

comparable if not better," she explained. "I could also use my own colors. I realized pretty quickly there was a large hole in the market for better pricing. I set out to fill that gap."

Now Dixie Belle Paint Company manufactures and sells chalk mineral paint used mostly for home décor. Users don't need to sand or prime when they paint furniture, fabrics, concrete, metal, glass, or many other materials. "We have better prices and selection than our competitors," Fulford said. "Our colors are more Americana, bold and bright. We have a lot of complementing products that go with our paint from glazes, to clear coat and wax to metallic additives that give paint a weathered look."

Fulford's advice to aspiring entrepreneurs is to be open to ideas and proceed conservatively. "Know your market," she said. "Proceed as cost effectively as you can. Everything I got, I bought off Craigslist and did as cheaply as possible because I didn't want the pressure of having to turn a large profit because I owed money. Know your product and don't overextend yourself."

Fulford is grateful for the recognition as a GrowFL Florida Company To Watch and credits her team for the award.

"We are so honored and excited," she said. "We feel very blessed and fortunate to have reached this level of recognition, and would not be here if it wasn't for the outstanding team here at DBP."

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