

It's Not all about the Bottom Line for Bakery Owner

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Jeanne Fiocca, founder of Cookie Text, with her three sons

“It’s about making people feel seen.”

Jeanne Fiocca had just told her college freshman son about sending a CookieText to a friend who was going through a hard time, and how Fiocca had gotten a lovely text from the friend in return. His response above was a mic drop.

Fiocca leans on moments like these to reaffirm that running her small cookie cake business is exactly the right job for her.

Fiocca launched [Cookie Text LLC](#) in 2011, and has been delivering personalized cookie cakes throughout Hampton Roads since that time. Her initial vision was a “cookie gram service”. That concept has slowly transformed to the company selling 7 flavors and 5 sizes of cookie cakes, with each item personalized and hand-delivered. In the last couple of years Cookie Text has

found a nice niche with business gift giving, providing cookies with corporate logos on them to businesses big and small.



Fiocca concedes that the current economy hasn't been an asset to her small business, "cost of goods has doubled this past year. I was getting butter in July for \$1.86 a pound, in December it was close to \$4," but interactions like the recent one with her son helps her to see the big picture:

"Sure, I'd love to be hitting record sales, and of course people launch businesses to make money, but Cookie Text is much more than that." Mother of three sons age 19, 20, and 22, Fiocca softens when she talks about what the boys have learned from watching her operate Cookie Text.

One of her favorite stories is when one of them came home back in middle school and told her that his friend's dog had died.

"I told him I'm sorry to hear that, and it's sad."

His response was, “Can we send her a CookieText?”

At the time, “I was floored. I mean, what middle school boy has that sense of compassion?” She thinks her sons have been influenced but the nature of her business.

In an era of texting, tweeting, and snapping, putting something tangible behind your words helps others feel seen, heard, and valued. “Truly connecting with others is a gift, and knowing that I created something that helps others do that makes me very happy, that it may have taught my sons some lessons in being kind to others is more than I could have hoped for.”

She contends that the benefits of owning her small business have far outweighed its low points. Despite ‘having to learn to use excel spreadsheets’ and the equipment that inconveniently breaks down, she raves about the wins:

“I grew up with a lisp and hated having to talk in front of a class. Now a true highlight for me is being invited to speak in public about my journey as an entrepreneur.”

Regent University, Christopher Newport University, Tabb High School, the Strome Entrepreneurial Center, and Hampton Economic Development are among the entities that have invited her to speak. Of those she cites the Women’s Leadership Summit at CNU as a highlight:

“Each time I speak there a student reaches out afterwards and tells me that what I said truly resonated with them, that’s a win, that fits with how I want to live my life.”

With a sly smile she adds that not once after speaking has someone mentioned her lisp.

The company also has allowed Fiocca to give back to the community through sponsorships, donations, and tasting event fundraisers. “I get to give in ways I couldn’t if didn’t own my own business. I am a runner, so a good deal of our giving is centered around race sponsorships. It’s cool to blend two parts of my life.”

Fiocca knows her company’s impact is small and that it will likely never make her a millionaire, but she seems undeterred:

“Life is about the small things. Sending a CookieText to someone to show them that they matter is one of those small things. I get to have a job where I help people be nice to each other every single day. What can be better than that?”



You can find Cookie Text online at cookietext.com. Everything they make is sold online and hand-delivered straight to homes and businesses by their own delivery drivers. They deliver Monday through Friday and orders can be placed up until 9pm the night before.

Fiocca takes great pride in saying that everything is made from scratch, and there's "not an ounce of Crisco in the kitchen, only real butter for us!"

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