

MassCEO Success Stories

ESOP Business Profile

Blue Q



Blue Q, founded in 1988 by brothers Mitch and Seth Nash, is a unique gift manufacturer based in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. With a team of about 60 people, the company embraces a creative, experimental approach to product development. Blue Q is best known for its quirky and unconventional products, spanning categories such as socks, gum, lavatory mists, oven mitts & dish towels, bags made of recycled materials, and even catnip. The company operates without a strict hierarchy, fostering a collaborative environment where creativity flows freely, and innovation is encouraged.

The culture of Blue Q promotes creativity, with everyone empowered to pitch new ideas and contribute to the company's evolution. Employees enjoy an environment of collaboration, where everyone's voice and ability are equally valued. The company operates with a strong focus on continuous improvement, inspired by the Toyota model of Lean Manufacturing (Kaizen), encouraging staff to take the initiative to improve processes and operations.

Blue Q has run under an Employee Stock Ownership Program (ESOP) model for approximately eight years, a business model the Nash brothers felt best suited the future of the company and eventual retirement of the founders, as it allowed employee autonomy and and continuation of its successful corporate culture. This spirit of creative freedom has helped the company build a robust workforce with high retention and satisfaction rates throughout the years.

At Blue Q, the intersection of creativity, collaboration, and social responsibility is what sets them apart from



other businesses. The company's approach to business fosters a work environment that values quirkiness and open communication while making a real-world impact through its charitable efforts. From their unconventional product ideas to their strong social commitment, Blue Q proves that creativity and purpose can coexist and thrive in a business.

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www.blueq.com



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