



“There are always businesses looking to move to or open in Bend, so if you’re not continually on your game and always trying to improve, you won’t be around for long.”

- Tom Beans, Dudley’s Bookshop Café

CENTRAL OREGON SBDC SUCCESS STORY

Tom Beans, Dudley’s Bookshop Café

<https://dudleysbookshopcafe.com/bookshop/>

Tom Beans believes that a town is not a town without a bookstore. Five years ago, the book lover took over a popular Bend downtown establishment, Dudley’s Bookshop Café. Tom had run a bookstore in California in the 1990s, and was able to bring his former industry experience to his new venture, but it was clear that the Central Oregon business operations needed to become more cost-effective.

Tom turned to the Small Business Development Center at Central Oregon Community College for advice and information. He is currently participating in the Small Business Management program, and credits SBM for helping him successfully conduct business in Bend’s increasingly competitive environment.

“Can’t recommend it enough,” Tom says about the SBM program. *“While the group encompasses a wide range of business types, we all deal with a lot of the same problems, and it’s valuable to hear different ways of approaching a problem outside of our own, industry-specific lens.”*

In addition, the solid support offered by the SBM program has been invaluable during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the coffee shop portion of Dudley’s remained closed, Tom focused on driving his business to online book sales. He also received crucial advice from the SBM instructor regarding federal relief programs, realizing early on that a Paycheck Protection Program loan was not the best option, as the company wasn’t going to be able to provide enough work for employees. Dudley’s applied for and obtained an Economic Injury Disaster Loan instead, which is allowing the bookstore to use funds for inventory purchase and not primarily for payroll.

Tom says that being in the SBM program helped him see that *“I needed the flexibility with an (EIDL). I could spend it on inventory.”* In conclusion, he says; *“I don’t know any small business owners who wouldn’t make back the cost of the class many times over.”*