



C. Nelson Manufacturing Co. Helps You Beat the Summer Heat with GrowNOW



Owner Kelley Smith stands in front his company's mural to commemorate locations where their products are sold.

Not many people would guess that a small business in Oak Harbor, Ohio plays an essential part in their summer fun. Whether it's a group of friends catching a ball game, a family on vacation or a week-night trip to the local ice cream parlor, the C. Nelson Manufacturing Company has helped folks beat the heat since 1898.

Owned by Kellen "Kelley" Smith, Nelson Manufacturing is a leading manufacturer and distributor of custom-design ice cream cabinets, kiosks and pushcarts. The company was purchased in 1976 by Kelley's father, a former steel-mill engineer from Youngstown. One of Kelley's brothers encouraged their father to buy the com-

pany and make the move to Oak Harbor to become an entrepreneur.

When his father retired in 1996, Kelley assumed control of the business until the early 2000s, when he sold the company. Deeply committed to the community, and upon hearing the new owner's plans to move Nelson Manufacturing out of Oak Harbor, Kelley bought the company back in 2007, keeping the business' doors open and retaining local jobs.

What allows Nelson Manufacturing to stand out in its industry is the company's capability to customize all of its products. Unlike its mass-producing competitors, Nelson Manufacturing's cabinets and carts are entirely "made to order," with all facets of design and production coordinated in-house. The company is proud to service about 500 clients a year world-wide, including amusement parks, sports complexes and local eateries. With 75% of the company's business taking place between March and June, C. Nelson Manufacturing products are delivered just in time to help thousands of people stay cool all summer long.

C. Nelson Manufacturing is a shining example of how GrowNOW creates an

environment for small business growth. The company first participated in the Ohio Treasury's small business linked-deposit program in the 1980s under former Ohio Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow. The company used its original rate reduction to finance a 15,000 sq. ft. expansion of the facility and purchase of equipment. Today, Kelley used his most recent GrowNOW rate reduction broadly to finance a number of the company's manufacturing operations, from design and engineering to assembly and distribution. This included the purchase of an additional machine that permits Nelson Manufacturing to produce even more essential cabinet parts in-house. Kelley acknowledged that in these trying economic times, he would have been very hesitant to purchase any new equipment without the help of GrowNOW.

The Ohio Treasury's GrowNOW program has helped the C. Nelson Manufacturing Company thrive in Oak Harbor for nearly three decades. Find out how GrowNOW can help your business by visiting www.GrowNOW.ohio.gov or by calling 1-800-228-1102 (option #3).

CLOSE-UP

BUSINESS: C. Nelson Manufacturing Co.

YEAR STARTED:

1898

SERVICE:

Custom design of commercial refrigeration products in small quantities, particularly for outdoor use.—www.cnelson.com

BANK:

Croghan Colonial Bank