



# Louisiana Small Business Development Center at Greater New Orleans Region

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Serving Assumption, Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and Terrebonne parishes

## Tina's Cajun Creations

Kenner, LA



### Economic Impact

- 1 job retained
- annual sales up 80% pre-Katrina
- established in 1987

Tina's Cajun Creations began in 1987 as a small cookbook shop called "Books for Cooks" at th Riverwalk in New Orleans. It has mushroomed into a company which sells multiple product lines of spices and gourmet food mixes, both nationally and internationally. Founder, Tina Emenes credits much of her success to the Louisiana Small Business Development Center.

### LSBDC Greater New Orleans Services Given to Client

- redesign business plan
- revamp marketing strategy
- redesign packaging
- redesign her website
- create marketing materials
- customer marketing database & research

"I first heard about the LSBDC standing in line at the Small Business Administration Disaster Center on Airline Drive. I knew my business was in trouble after Hurricane Katrina," said Tina.

Tina's Cajun Creations, based in Kenner, had sold most of her products to small retailers and tourists attractions in the French Quarter. Eighty percent of her sales depended on New Orleans tourism, and suddenly that market was gone after Katrina. Tina had lost most of her sales and most of her employees. She turned to the LBSDC for help. In order to survive, Tina knew she had to diversify and find a new customer base outside of New Orleans.

The LSBDC helped Tina revamp her marketing strategy and business model, and obtain the financing necessary to redesign the packaging for her product lines, and to create marketing materials to reach national and international markets. Consultants helped Tina overhaul her website and position her company for e-commerce.

Since LSBDC Greater New Orleans Region is collaboration among three universities and an economic development agency: SUNO, UNO, Loyola and the South Louisiana Economic Council, LSBDC consultants were able to connect Tina to resources offered by the universities. She received marketing interns to help create a customer database and marketing expertise and research from faculty members.

Today, Tina's Cajun Creations is stronger than ever before. Sales have jumped 80 percent since before Katrina. Tina sells her products on HSN (Home Shopping Network), in Dillard's Department Stores, in Whole Foods, and in Ross Department Stores. She has received a contract to sell her products in the United Kingdom.

"I couldn't have done this on my own. The LSBDC has been a lifesaver. As a small business, I didn't have the capital to expand or hire the expertise needed to take my business to the next level. I am so grateful to the LSBDC for everything they've done for me," said Emenes.



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