

Creating A Smash Hit with Jill Baethge - Part 2

David Crabill: Welcome to the Forrager podcast, where I talk with cottage food entrepreneurs, about their strategies for running a food business from home. I'm David Crabill, and today you'll hear part two of my interview with Jill Baethge of Kaboom Chokolaka. If you haven't listened to part one yet, definitely go back to the previous episode and give that a listen first, that'll help you better understand Jill's unique products and how she grew her cottage food business. Over the first few years

in this episode, you're going to hear how she took her business concept and turned it into a product line that is now sold in Michael's stores across the country. It's a pretty amazing story. All right, let's jump right into part two of my interview with Jill. Okay. So let's jump into this side of your story because this is amazing. can you describe a little bit about what happened and the, the timeline of events.

[00:00:52] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. So um, and I'm still blown away by this. So sometimes I like, I can't believe myself. So sometimes when I describe it, it really is from like this place of like disbelief. so after the Dallas morning news article came out the VP of food crafting at Michaels, she saw the article and she reached out to me.

around may of 2020 is when that occurred. And so the first phone call I was in such disbelief, we talked about just some ideas that I could do with Kaboom Chokolaka. Would it, would it be something that was solely food and chocolate related or would it be something more?

And the amazing thing about the Dallas morning news article was that the person that interviewed me, she focused a lot on my molds, which was really different than any other interview I had given before. And I kind of, at first I kinda thought it found it a little odd. Like I was like, man, she's really focused on the molds where I sourced them from how many I have, you know, just various questions.

And no other person had really asked me a lot about them So in the course of the conversation with Michaels, they were just very generous as far as like, we want to work with you. How would you like to work with us?

Like they actually gave me the option and. I was tied up in my husband's office doing the phone call cause I didn't want any distractions. And I came out of that conversation, that phone call and I just went, holy beep! I was like, this is, this could be huge for us.

And my daughter didn't know what I was talking about. She, you know, like I said, she's my cheerleader. She just started jumping up and down. She could sense, like I was just so excited and I actually had to call them, call the people that I was talking to at Michael's I had to call them two days back and just like two days later and I was like, did I really hear you?

Right. Like did you really say like, I basically could pick what I want to do with you guys. And they were like, yes. So I knew in my heart of hearts that I wanted to create molds because of the struggle that I had trying to find molds, always rigging, you know, I could never, I could never find ones large enough that I wanted to.

I was always kind of rigging these cake molds to work with me. And I just couldn't find any molds

on the market that were specifically for chocolate piñatas, especially large ones. There were some smaller ones that sort of worked, but even then they were a little bit difficult to work with. And so.

They decided that this project they were going to do it in house, but then they decided it would be better for one of their suppliers that they worked with on specialty projects for me to actually go with them. So Michael S uh, introduced me to American crafts, one of their suppliers.

And so then I started working with American crafts and they are just wonderful team of people. they really listened to like all my pain points that I've had with the molds. And they really created something that really resolved a lot of the issues that I was having.

It's just, it's just been so phenomenal to work with American Crafts. I mean, just awesome.

[00:04:21] **David Crabill:** So I want to talk a little bit more about the process of actually developing these products, but can we just jump ahead real quick and share what was the end result of this?

[00:04:32] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. So in July of 2021, I had about 15 different products that went into the Michael's store as seven large chocolate piñata, molds, three small chocolate piñata, mini chocolate piñata molds. And then of course, a mallet to smash them some tools to kind of clean up your product or, or brushes that you can use with the chocolate.

So other, some other chocolate tools. And so, yes, so that has been in Michael's stores since July of 2021. And that has been the result of the effort thus far. And it's opening other doors that I can't talk about at this moment, but yeah, it's just been such a wild and neat journey.

[00:05:21] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I mean, when I saw these products, they're totally legit. I mean, they're really professionally done. And I mean, I actually, when I saw them I thought, oh, these must be just like for shipping or something. But then I looked and it was like, no, these are actually in a store near me in Sacramento. Like I could go out and, you know, see your, your little section right now.

So they're nationally distributed and they look super impressive. You can clearly tell you worked with a pretty significant team to get this all put together.

[00:05:55] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. I mean, they, like I said, they like any of the pain points that I had. They just, they really listened to and they were so, I mean, wonderful. And they, yeah, just some of the things like the heart itself, the, the mold for the heart, the way it's designed it's like the heart stands up so nicely.

The front of it is like this beautiful heart. And I've just had so much fun with some of the molds and creating different things from like the egg shape. Obviously it's an egg shape. So everybody automatically thinks of Easter, but like I created these like characters for Halloween and then like a Turkey for Thanksgiving.

And then like, I didn't get around to it, but I wanted to create like an egg shaped snowman or Christmas tree, you know, like the egg itself has become so versatile for me that it's like, I love it. But I mean, the ball, the big sphere and the cube, those two are so versatile, like you could do anything with those.

So it's just been obviously, you know, it's, it's helped with my process of creating them like, it really does feel like anybody can create them. So a lot of the, the skill level that I had gained through the experience, you don't have to

have those skill levels, like the molds really help you create a chocolate piñata without having any skill, like any, any, you can DIY it.

[00:07:23] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I mean, I, I saw like a little short video of how it's done and I would feel very confident in doing it. is a Testament to the amount of time that it took to actually develop these products.

So what was that process like? I mean, I can't imagine it wasn't a complex process.

[00:07:43] **Jill Baethge:** you know, initially it was deciding on the shapes. We obviously wanted some very general shapes so that people could use them for whatever, whatever occasion. So it wasn't just birthdays and, and things like that. And then they've manufactured a few molds. I got to test them in house, along with other people of various skill levels just to see.

And we, you know, from there provided feedback, but when I say they, just all the pain points that I gave them. They really. Put those in place and had, you know, a lot of foresight into these molds and how to make things better. I mean, they've just, I just really feel like they hit the nail on the head, like when I was like, okay, this is one of the issues I have, and this is, this is the reason why I have it.

and they just really took all of that feedback and just made such a wonderful product.

and a lot of the things that, the first samples that were sent to me, they had already experienced that. Like initially we had to joke cause the ball mold just would not snap together.

There was just a little calibration off on, in manufacturing. And I was like, okay, well, I nearly broke a sweat snapping this first one together. I mean, it was so difficult. At one point, even my husband was helping me. And so they had already obviously had already experienced that. So they knew, you know what, by the time I provided that feedback, they were like, oh yeah, that's yeah, we've already contacted manufacturing about, like, it can't be this difficult.

[00:09:16] **David Crabill:** Where were these getting manufactured?

[00:09:21] **Jill Baethge:** They have manufacturing sites over in China. And I, I will admit, I did ask a lot of questions about that initially, you know, obviously

had concerns about if uh, the facility, you know, gets audited, that it's up to par and things like that. And they, they use a similar manufacturer.

Some of their manufacturers are the same manufacturers for like a target or you know, so they, they obviously were using uh, legitimate manufacturing and that I wouldn't have to worry about you know, maybe some of the headline news type stuff that you don't want to hear about a manufacturer overseas.

[00:10:02] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I mean, I figured they must be doing China or something. Cause the price point of these items is like a lot lower than I would've expected. Actually.

[00:10:13] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. I agree. I think there was there's one product that is made in Japan, but I think the majority of them are from China, but yeah, like my very first like really large mold that seemed to work really well for a chocolate piñata. not the Kaboom Chokolaka ones, but the ones that I found, I found this life-size football at a local cake store and I paid, I think it was over \$35 for it.

It was probably closer to 40 for one mold. And actually my mom bought it for me. She came, she had come to visit and she saw what I was doing. And she was like, well, I want to get you a mold. And I said, honestly, there's this one at the store that I have. It feels like an investment to me.

so she actually ended up buying it for me. And then I still, you know, had to sort of rig it to make it work. And, you know, the Kaboom Chokolaka football mold is not remotely close to that, that

[00:11:14] **David Crabill:** Well, I don't know what it is across the country, but it was \$15 in my area.

[00:11:19] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. so that, and that's the way I Michael's was also in Canada, so I'm not sure of the Canadian prices, but yes, across the country. It is \$15, so

[00:11:29] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I mean, all the large molds are \$15. That's seems like a pretty reasonable price. The mallet's like only \$5 to did they come up with all the prices.

[00:11:39] **Jill Baethge:** they did, they bounced them off of me you know, just to see if I was okay with it, but it, you know, it was one of those things like this is obviously this whole process is very new to me, so I can only, I could only

really tell them what I could compare, the prices that I paid for some of the other molds and things like that.

So, obviously they have a marketing team and they know their manufacturing costs and they've worked with Michaels obviously a bunch of times. So they, kind of taken all those analytics into consideration, came up with the price.

[00:12:12] **David Crabill:** I was actually really surprised that, you know, they came out or you came out with like 15 products upfront, you know, you created them all at once because. this definitely a risky business proposition, right? Like there's no proof of concept. Did they test the waters at all? I mean, how did they know or believe that these would sell? Because I assume there wasn't anything like it in their stores before.

[00:12:40] **Jill Baethge:** you know, it's, it really is the foresight of, you know, the VP of crafting at Michael's like, they were definitely looking for something new and different, you know, cakes and cookies and cake pops at the time were all kind of way over done.

I think that's what, how, why this had resonated with them. And then during that time is when kind of like the hot cocoa bomb craze launched. So it was just, again, just, I don't know if it was part just lucky timing on everything or if, they, you know, really saw something here.

like I said, I mean, it gives me so much joy. I hope that people that have taken the molds and are creating new ones, it gives them so much joy, It's just a need in different things, so yeah. It's um,

[00:13:31] **David Crabill:** Yeah, you know, I mean, honestly, like my son's birthday. You know, your, you did your first one for your son's third birthday. His third birthday is coming up in the summer and I was thinking, oh, maybe, maybe this would be a fun thing to do for his third birthday. Cause he, he definitely loves destroying things. We, we know that.

[00:13:51] **Jill Baethge:** Yes.

[00:13:51] **David Crabill:** So um, yeah, but anyway, I mean it clearly, it's a very fun concept and it sounds like the VP just like really believed in the idea. You didn't have to sell them on the idea at all.

[00:14:02] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. it's in, you know, early on in the, in the podcast here, when I was talking about the name, I really feel like also the name helped

me cause it's a Kaboom Chocolaka. You know, it's a catchy name. And people tend to remember it. They don't always know how to spell it and You know, but I think that helped a lot too, that it, brings a new spin on everything that was going on at the time.

You know, people were doing a lot of more projects at home and get it, you know, we went through the baking, your own bread craze and, a lot of people, you know, were still at home and still wanting to do new things. so just food crafting in general has become such a neat area for a lot of people that are, you know, now at home and trying different things. it's just has been like just the perfect timing, sometimes I just feel like I'm just extremely lucky Cause like at one time, like I want a car. So like I've always had like this lucky part of me. but then there are uh, I obviously work hard too, and my husband has been a very good support system.

He was just like, no, you've worked really hard for this. you know, so he, he reminds me, you know, that, yeah, we've put in a lot of hard work for this. And, it seems like if I just continue to go back to my mission about just trying to bring a little bit of joy and a very hard, hard world, I mean, life is hard and we all have different tools and resources and to work with.

And so if I could just bring just a little bit of joy to some people here and there that's, you know, that just really sets the tone for the other things that I've done or that I'm hoping to do in the future.

[00:15:51] **David Crabill:** Yeah. You know, I was thinking about there had been some key turning points. I mean, some people would call them lucky, but like, I mean, you said it was very uncharacteristic for you to leave your job. I was thinking, you know, if you hadn't left your job, you wouldn't have this business today.

Right. And then also you just happened to stumble upon this YouTube video of someone making a candy piñata which if you had never seen that YouTube video, or if you hadn't been on YouTube that day or whatever. Right, it's just interesting how these like little turning points have led you to where you're meant to be, I guess.

[00:16:24] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. I mean, I do feel like it's, it's been, divinely inspired. I mean, honestly, it's just, it's putting a lot of faith into you know, that this will work. I mean, my mom, said one time. She said, cause you know, there's obviously as any business owner, I mean, throughout any given day, you have these highs and you have these lows.

And I mean, you're just up and down all day. And at one low point I called her and she said, you know what, If you are doing things for the right reasons you know, God will provide, you know, cause I was, if we were obviously we were struggling and she was like, I feel that, you know, initially you stepped away from your job to take care of your kids.

You know, those were, are good reasons, you know, those are very good reasons. So it was just kinda like, I mean, throughout all this journey is always try not to get too wrapped up in things and just go back to, okay, am I doing this for the right reasons?

You know, and different things along the journey have made a difference.

You know, for me, it probably took me six months to decide on the name, but now I'm really glad that I came up with a catchy name. I'm glad I took that time. It was at the time. It was a huge investment for me to join the chamber of commerce. That was a turning point for me.

That's where I met, the writer that writes for the Dallas morning news. And that article obviously was a launching pad. So it was like certain key steps along the way, you know, now I can look back and say, wow, that step was huge. You know, at the time it didn't seem that huge, decided on a name.

I was like, yay. I finally have a name, you know, but it was catchy enough to be a launching pad and, you know, I really didn't know, well, joining the chamber of commerce. Yeah that could help, but I'm glad I oriented, the business to be more of a business and not, and tried to, I think it was important to me to separate myself from other home bakers, you know, that I wasn't just trying to do this as a side hustle that I really was trying to make this something more. And I didn't, I didn't always know that. but really approaching it, you know, to try to get other business people interested in my business.

And obviously a lot of my customers are mommies, but a lot of people that I've met through through the process of it are, you know, they're also business owners and it really works well. It's a very good community, you know?

[00:18:47] **David Crabill:** I'm just curious. Did you go to the effort and expense to trademark your name?

[00:18:52] **Jill Baethge:** yes,

[00:18:53] **David Crabill:** cause I was just thinking, like, it's just interesting to me, that Michaels came to you and they didn't just like, see what you're doing and say, oh, we'll build a Michael's brand around it and create our own molds. Cause it sounds like they did quite a lot of the work.

Right? Like why do you think they were willing to let you use your own branding on these products?

[00:19:16] **Jill Baethge:** I actually only had a few discussions with Michaels and then was, working with American Crafts' team. So I never got into too much. That part of it, my sense on it is that you know, I Was one of the few people in the U S that were at the time that were creating anything like these.

So you know, I suppose at the time maybe came across as more of an expert than a lot of other people, because there was no one else creating. And like I said, I really feel like the name was catchy. Like they, they could see that they could build a brand around the name. And that was when I started working with American crafts, they rebranded the logo and stuff like that.

And one of the things that I had told them is that I wanted to have the look of it, be a little bit different than some of the other dessert shops or dessert labels and brands that are out there. So a lot of brands use and I have, I have no problem with this. I'm not saying this is, this is good or bad.

I actually really like a lot of these colors. And what have, and initially used a lot of the colors myself, but they use, you know, like the light pinks. Maybe a light teal or, sea foam green or something like that. And I feel a lot of brands kind of use those colors, a lot of dessert brands. So I kind of wanted to be just slightly different in the coloring of my label.

And so we kind of decided more on a, like a Fiesta type theme. So there's a lot more like brighter colors in it. but that was, that was, you know, me working with American crafts, you know, at that time I had a very basic logo so American crafts has definitely beefed up the brand.

[00:20:55] **David Crabill:** Was there any investment, like any monetary investment on your part, or did they like assume all the risk in this process?

[00:21:02] **Jill Baethge:** Yes, it's a licensing agreement. So they assumed all the risk. So the, you know, like I said, the only thing I had to really do is make sure I got the name trademarked, which I had intended to do anyway and right after my very first Michael's call I. Reached out to a lawyer to try to get that process

started and then had to re do it since we had a different you know, look to the logo.

So we had to redo that part of it too. um, so I've actually been through two trademarks on it.

[00:21:35] **David Crabill:** What did it actually take in terms of either time or effort or money to actually get that trademarked?

[00:21:43] **Jill Baethge:** Up front it's not a lot of time. Since I hired a lawyer. I just had to give him, you know, a few basic information. Some people do the trademarks by themselves. And it was probably something I probably could have done by myself, but because I had already had a conversation with Michaels, I knew I didn't want anything to go wrong.

Like I knew if I was going to do this, I wanted to be it to be done right the first time. And so I, decided to go through a lawyer I think initially it was around \$1,100. So the patent and trademark office it generally takes about six to nine months. you know, initially.

the paperwork to file, but then after that, it's a lot of just sit back and wait and see if they have any questions and making sure everything gets filed correctly. So that is what initially it took to do all that?

[00:22:41] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I know it takes quite a long time to get things trademarked. So. Did you have to give any up, any control or part of your business to, you know, let Michaels or American crafts take on this side of your business? Like, did you have to give up I dunno, percentage of the company or like some kind of control.

[00:23:01] **Jill Baethge:** no, not at all. initially I wasn't sure if I was going to keep the customer side of it, like creating piñatas. I didn't know if I would still have. Time to create piñatas and also, promote and market these products. But for the most part, I have been able to, obviously sometimes my social media does wane a little bit because I'm might be wrapped up and, things with the molds more so and not so much with customers, but Yeah, I mean, they, like I said, it's just been a wonderful opportunity and American Crafts has been just phenomenal that, you know, some of those questions I asked up front, like some of the things about the branding redesign, you know, it was like, now, are you going to be owning this logo or this brand and stuff like that?

And no, it wasn't, they pretty much said that. Yeah. After they rebranded I'm pretty much welcome to do with whatever with the brand, you know, obviously I wouldn't go off the rails with it or anything, but yeah, it's it really was just really taking my feedback and, you know, working together to design these molds and testing them out and now creating a bunch of piñatas with them so I get the fun, I get the fun part.

[00:24:15] **David Crabill:** Yeah, it sounds great. I mean, you're definitely, you know, just providing the ideas and advisorship. But uh, I assume that, you know, they own the product, right? So like if they were ever to decide to pull the product from their store shelves, you wouldn't be able to take those products and market them on your own.

[00:24:35] **Jill Baethge:** Not as far as I know I'll have to go back and look, but yeah, they, I mean, they do own the design of them and things like that. So, my contract with them is for a couple of years, so I wouldn't be able to do anything in the immediate timeframe with that.

So I guess after, you know, after the contract ends, then we'll see what that leads to. But yeah, for the most part they've, you know, like you said, they've, they've taken on the risk of it and things like that. So I um,

[00:25:10] **David Crabill:** Oh, yeah, it seems very like a very fair trade-off for sure. Um, and so do you just, do you actually get like a commission on sales or do you get just like a steady compensation for your involvement with the project regardless of sales?

[00:25:28] **Jill Baethge:** It is a licensing agreement. So I I'll get royalty payments from it.

[00:25:34] **David Crabill:** and what do you have to do in return you know, I mean, obviously you're advising on molds or whatever but is there anything else that you have to do on a consistent basis and exchange as part of this.

[00:25:48] **Jill Baethge:** yeah, not anything I have to do. I mean, obviously I want to promote them and market them and show other people, give them different designs and maybe inspiration from that. You know, those are all things that I want to do. Cause it, you know, again, boils back to like, people enjoy making these and hopefully my molds make it easier for them to make it.

Then, you know, that's, that's, what's worth it to me. So yes, I do realize I need to post more on social media and really show people you know, how to use

them and things like that. But yeah, it's, there's not really anything I have to do. Actually, I usually feel like I'm the one that's reaching out to them and like, what else can I do?

You know, like, how else can I market this? Do you have it? You know, like what else can I say? You know, things like that. so yeah, it's, kind of funny how yeah, I feel like I, I try to take on more than probably I have time for

[00:26:49] **David Crabill:** I did see that you've done some classes for them.

[00:26:52] **Jill Baethge:** Yes. So that was a great opportunity and that's, that's actually led to a couple of other people reach out to me and asked me to do some classes for them. which I haven't done at this point, but yeah, that was, those were a lot of fun.

They were, you know, because of COVID they were all over zoom, so none of them were in person. the last class I was showing people how to create a family size, hot cocoa bombs. So using the ball mold, the Kaboom Chocolaka, like ball mold that has like an eight inch diameter, I was showing people how to do that.

And that. I think the, at the last check had like close to 800 people registered for it. Obviously not everybody shows up the day of because they can register for it and then view the video at a later time. I think my first class my very first class with them also had a few hundred people registered.

And I think at one point there were like 200 people viewing it during the class. And then a lot of people viewed it afterwards since they go on YouTube, Michael's classes go on YouTube. so there's, there's clearly still a ton of interest in how to create these and various ways to use them.

[00:28:02] **David Crabill:** I also saw that you had um, like a \$500 giveaway contest. Is that like your giveaway or is that something that was spearheaded by Michaels?

[00:28:12] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. That was through American crafts. they did uh, the contest there. Yeah. So that was, that was fun. Little bit something, a little bit different. and so far, like a lot of my contests have just been like local, you know, like I have a piñata to give away or something like that. But that was obviously a bigger one to do.

[00:28:31] **David Crabill:** So you obviously went through this big process of designing the products and, had the VP at Michael's and eventually American

crafts just like fully invested in this concept, but what was it like when it actually hit the store shelves? Like, what was it like when you walked into the store? The first.

[00:28:50] **Jill Baethge:** So that was what was kind of funny. So Michael's is headquartered in Texas and the Michael stores that are in Texas were one of the last ones to get their display setup. And I, every store is different. So initially, like they went online on July 23rd, and some stores had on July 23rd had their displays up already.

And so for like a couple of weeks, we kept going to Michaels and like, okay, they don't have the display at the end, but the very first time I saw it, it was just, it was just so surreal. I mean, it was just unbelievable, I swear, every time I walk into Michael's and I go uh, like if I, whether I'm there to check on my displays or like to buy products, I always go by it.

And I'm just like, just can't believe that. I have products and Michael's like, it's just, I just feel like I'm still dreaming.

I mean, like I fight, imposter syndrome and thinking like, I don't deserve this but yeah, it's just still unbelievable for me, but yeah, it was just so cool to like so many friends and other people like other followers on either Instagram or Facebook, like you know, they're from all over the U S and they would, go to Michaels and purposely like, take a picture of themselves, like take a selfie in front of my display.

And that was just so like, just so special. it was just so cool. Just the amount of support that people came out. I mean, it really is such a good community. Um, Just, with everybody wanting to learn and do chocolate piñatas, I mean, the amount of.

Questions and comments that I receive a day. And I love that when people tag me in their creations, like using the mold. And I love it when people reach out and have questions. And I really do try to make myself available through all the channels. so when people call or email or DM or however, they contact me, it's usually me responding.

Like you're not getting anybody else. It is, me with the lessons I've learned. If you have a question and my tips and advice. So it doesn't mean I know everything. I just know, you know, whatever. I do know. I, I love sharing that with people.

[00:31:10] **David Crabill:** I was going to say, I mean, you've got a brand nationally distributed in stores. How do you even have the time to run your cake business? Cause I know you're still making these smash cakes.

[00:31:23] **Jill Baethge:** It's a challenge. I mean, I'm not gonna lie like right now, cause I decided to redo my office and like, I'm so glad this is a podcast and not a zoom call. because behind me is like a, a ton of different molds that I want to categorize. And so I had them organized, I had this big, huge cabinet that I organize them in and I had them organized by holiday or like, you know, all the animals went in one section, all the occupations went in another section.

And I've got to the point that I have so many that I now have to catalog them so I can make them a little bit more easier to search at least search for. um, things get a little crazy, you know, I, sometimes I can't always respond right away.

I do try It's a lot of juggling on time. So like, if I'm waiting in any sort of line, I'm usually online trying to answer questions. so it's, yeah, it's definitely a struggle of, of time, you know, and that's, that's part of the reason why at times I I've stepped away from marketing. my own piñatas you know, just to promote like the molds.

And there's a couple of Facebook groups that are, solely for breakables and chocolate piñatas. And I spend a significant time on those groups answering questions. Cause I do want to be a resource for the community. So yeah, so then if that's taking more time than you know, I do a lot less local advertising and that's, you know, maybe right now these days, that's probably why the majority of my customers are repeat customers but yeah, I haven't gotten significant amount of new customers in the area. Cause I had to kind of step back locally. But my customers that I do have are so great and they are always referring me. So I always had seemed to have plenty to do.

[00:33:19] **David Crabill:** They don't need to hire you anymore. They can just go out to Michael's and make their own right.

[00:33:23] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. So, but you know, like I said, I catered to all you know, my customers aren't yeah. They're not, they're not the DIY type. my mom was worried about that and I told her not to be worried because the people that are my customers, they're not the DIY type. So I don't feel like I've, lost customers because of the Michael's thing.

If anything else you know, like I said, people have just been tremendously supportive and it's just been great.

[00:33:52] **David Crabill:** What would you say is your favorite thing about having this business?

[00:33:59] **Jill Baethge:** I love seeing the videos when people smash it, I love their expressions. I love the excitement. I love the hoots and hollers. just the joy that people get from smashing it is so cool. like for example a mom got a cupcake for her daughter and they were, it was a single mom and they were going through a little bit of a hard time in her daughter was, you know, kind of pretty quiet kind of, you know, they were whatever they were going through, they were, you know, they were just dealing with things I guess.

And so my mom, the mom got a cupcake piñata for her daughter and It was just the daughter in the video, but it was just the mom and daughter at home smashing it. But when the daughter smashed it, she doesn't, you know, like there's not a lot of verbal yelling that's going on, but her face, the expressions on her face are so it's just so neat to see because she hits the thing and it doesn't quite open just yet.

So, you know, she's like, you know, kind of what's going on. And then like her throughout the process, her eyes are getting wider and wider, you know? And then when all the candy spills out, you could just tell, like, it didn't have to be like this big production of things I don't know, it's just her facial expressions were just so many to watch through the process.

And that's what I, I love about getting, I always tell my customers, if you have a video to share with me, just send it, you know? because I love seeing, you know, the comments that are being made and just the excitement and keep in the candy. Like if it's kids, man, is there like a candy grab afterwards?

I mean, it is worse than playing. Like, I don't know if you ever played that card game spoons, and sometimes you would end up with scratches on your hands. I mean, it is like, that can be like that ferocious. And it's like, you know, it's like all those things, like just seeing that and just, I don't know.

Yeah. like I said, I think it just all boils down to like the joy, the excitement, just the experience of it.

[00:36:06] **David Crabill:** Well, I mean, it is amazing to see. I mean, it hasn't been that long since you started this business. It was just in 2018 that you started it and in a pretty short period of time. Something, that's not only brought a lot of joy to your local area, but now with this whole Michael's product line is bringing that to, you know, the entire country.

like, I know you, weren't the first person to come up with this concept, but I think we could pretty legitimately say that you've helped put this idea on the map. So it's probably a little surreal for, you know, you to hear that, but I think that's definitely very true.

So it's, it's really cool to see what you've done and I'm definitely looking forward to seeing where you're going in the future. Do you have any plans for the future or like you just going to keep on going with the products and trying to make cakes when you have enough time.

[00:37:02] **Jill Baethge:** yeah, so I've had a couple of. Opportunities here recently that have come my way that are just in the works. So I really can't talk to them. And, I don't know if they'll, you know, come to fruition. Um, So that's been kind of neat. before the Michael's thing, I totally had plans to move from cottage business to a commercial business and, took a different course through that.

So that's always still kind of in the back of my mind to expand the business that way I would love, absolutely love to create new molds uh, grow the line. Because initially when we, did our, like our first pass at this, we actually had several more that we would have loved to do, you know, but you know, working with Michaels, they wanted a certain amount and things like that.

So we wanted it obviously give them options that they would be comfortable with and just work for, you know, work from there. So, yeah, there's, I mean, there's a lot of things that, you know, right now I do feel like I will be continuing on. I mean, initially when I started this, I definitely thought like by now I would be back in the corporate world.

And so this, journey has definitely taken. quite a few twists and turns nearly all for the good, I mean, it's, you know, I still have pains of every, you know, just like every business owner. So it's not all, you know wine and roses and, and balloons over here. Like, you know, there's still a lot of things that I have to, you know, deal with as a business owner that all the other business owners have to deal with as Well, too.

but yeah, it's you know, there's a lot that I feel like there's definitely, you know, a lot of legs left, in this business, but, you know, I feel like it just has a lot of potential and would love to continue on with it. And I just feel like there's, there's still like a lot of things that can be done with.

[00:38:58] **David Crabill:** Well, it's quite incredible to see where it's come in a very short time. And I look forward to seeing where it'll go in the next few years. Um, so Jill, if people want to learn more about you, um, you know, where can people find you online or how can they reach out?

[00:39:15] **Jill Baethge:** Yeah. So I have Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Pinterest, And probably even Twitter, but although I think my Instagram feeds my Twitter, but they're all of those are under Kaboom Chocolaka and some of them are more developed than others. Obviously Instagram and Facebook are pretty developed.

I just only recently gone on TikTok and had like my, I guess, first viral videos. So that's been kind of cool and I'm still developing Pinterest. But like I said, all of those accounts are all, under Kaboom Chocolaka.

And then for my customer business, I have my website, which is www.kaboomchocolaka.com

There's a form there that you can reach me that way too. yeah, I think that covers all the ways you can reach me.

[00:40:03] **David Crabill:** thank you so much for coming on Jill and sharing with us today.

[00:40:07] **Jill Baethge:** Yes. Thank you so much.

[00:40:09] **David Crabill:** That wraps up part two of my interview with Jill. And I think you'll agree that her business has taken her places that she never dreamed of. It will be fun to see where it takes her next.

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Thanks for listening. And I'll see you in the next episode.