

# From Math Teacher to Cake Pop Mogul: Amy Mucha's Multi-Million Dollar Journey

**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 I'm talking with Amy Mucha, who has an unbelievable cottage food story. But before I begin, I want to thank the sponsor of this episode.

Cottage CMS. [Cottage CMS](#) is a newer platform for cottage food entrepreneurs that I was honestly very skeptical of at first, but I have checked it out. It is very impressive and I think it'll be especially helpful if you find yourself juggling with a lot of different tech tools and find yourself kind of frustrated with technology.

Cottage CMS can definitely help. I'll talk more about them later in this episode, so stay tuned for that and a special offer for Forrager podcast listeners. Alright, this is a very special episode because the very first episode I am doing on video, I have run the podcast for over six years now. We're over 160 episodes in.

And finally I am moving the podcast to YouTube. Uh, well not quite moving it because it will still definitely be on the audio players, but if you're listening to this on an audio only podcast player, know that there is also a video version on YouTube. I'll include a link to that in the show notes. And you'll not only get to see me and Amy, but also get to see some of what Amy has created, which is very impressive.

So let's talk more about our guest today, Amy.

She lives in Kent, Ohio and runs three businesses now. [Daisy Pops](#), which is her cake pop business. [Daisy Makes](#), which is a cake pop supply company.

And [What's Popping Con](#), which is a cake pop conference. Amy was a high school math teacher who started making cake pops for fun. Pretty soon friends were requesting to buy them and like most of the guests on my show, she decided to start a cottage food business and that became an extremely successful cottage food business before she opened up the pop shop, which is what she calls her commercial cake pop company.

She was selling over 100,000 cake pops per year.

An amazing amount of success from a cottage food business. But now with her cake pop shop, she and her team sell 2,500 cake pops per week. It's absolutely incredible. And if that is all that Amy had done with her cottage food business. It would be one of the most successful cottage food stories I've had on the show, but there is more.

Amy also runs Daisy Makes, she sells cake pop supplies and actually invented a cake pop system that makes it easier for cake pop artists to manufacture and sell great cake pops and sell them and make more money with their business. And this cake pop supply company has been taking the industry by storm. It is growing exponentially.

And if you thought that her cake pop business sounded pretty successful, which it is. Daisy Makes is now 10 times more successful even though she served it less than two years ago. She is now shipping tens of thousands of orders around the globe and it's just unbelievable what she's done with this cake pop thing.

As I said, she also now runs an annual conference for the industry, and is truly one of the top leaders in the cake pop world. So we got a lot to get into in this episode and try to figure out how Amy did it. So with that, let's jump right in.

Welcome to the show, Amy. Nice to have you here.

[00:04:01] **Amy Mucha:** Thanks I'm so glad that I can pop on here today.

[00:04:04] **David Crabill:** Okay. So, talk to us real quick about how this all got started for you.

[00:04:10] **Amy Mucha:** Sure it was a chance encounter I feel. My mother-in-law got me a cake pop book simply because it had a koala cake pop in it and said. "Hey Amy, you like baking. Maybe you should try doing cake pops." And I said, "Okay!" So as I was being a full-time high school math teacher, I just started making cake pops on the side. When my own kids came around they became you know the birthday treats Um they would also come into my classroom and be bribery for my students. So yeah I mean that's the very beginning of it just started as a fun little hobby which then turned into a hobby that made a little bit of money and here we are now and I'm sure we'll get to the rest of it throughout this.

[00:04:48] **David Crabill:** So, uh, you said that you got this cake pop book a while ago. What year was that?

[00:04:54] **Amy Mucha:** 2011 I think which is 15 years hard to believe

[00:04:59] **David Crabill:** Yeah, 15 years ago. And so take me forward from that. You had this cake pop book. Was it love at first sight or like, did you, did you get right into it?

[00:05:09] **Amy Mucha:** Um you know I tried and surprisingly didn't epically fail cause cake pops are are real little pain in the butts you know like they're they're a trial to make Um but I you know I just kept at it kept improving um would start like teaching other people how to do it you know at like at my school or like at my church Um and it was just it was super fun And then I would just make them like I said um for my kids for their teachers So in 2016 I wanna say I made some for my oldest his teachers they were little turkeys for Thanksgiving and I proudly posted them on my own social media And one of my current students at the time his mom saw it on my social media and said Hey Um I actually like buy you know one of the like a few of those cake pops for Thanksgiving and I was like you wanna spend money on these silly little treats

that I make. But I was sure I'd take your money. So that was my very first dollar made from cake pops in 2016.

[00:06:06] **David Crabill:** Okay. 2016. And, um, and you were a math teacher at this time, teaching high school math. You know, one thing I actually wanted to ask you, uh, which is unique to you, is that I saw you say that you always wanted to be a math teacher. Like you knew that What, what, what, how old were you when you first knew that?

[00:06:29] **Amy Mucha:** Ooh I remember looking back at like my kindergarten you know like things I found in my parents basement and it said right there like I wanna be a teacher now I don't think I knew that it was math back then Um but I've always enjoyed math And then in high school I loved math Would usually like get done with math things pretty quickly and then I would be able to like help my classmates and my friends I was like this Is what I'm called to do You know like I love helping people understand math so I knew leaving high school that I wanted to be a math teacher So that's what I went to college for To study math education.

[00:07:00] **David Crabill:** Yeah, because I mean, I feel like most people are not like that, right? Like you clearly were very goal oriented. You knew what you wanted to do, and then you actually did it, and you followed through, and then you came back to the same high school years later to teach. Um, so I, I was kind of thinking that part of what has made you successful is that, you know, you kind of hone in on something and, and, and get to it.

[00:07:29] **Amy Mucha:** I would definitely say so I am a definite like committer to a cause In fact I think that cake pops were kind of like the first hard left in my life You know where I like you said I was teaching at the high school that I went to Like I married my high school sweetheart We lived two doors away from my parents you know where I grew up So it's a lot of things that I like once I I know something I stick with it Um so never did I ever think that I would quit teaching uh to do cake pops But I would say like that tenacity And also I always say if I could get people hyped about math surely I can get them hyped about cake pops and cake pops tools Perhaps an even easier thing to get them excited about

[00:08:08] **David Crabill:** So 2016 is when you started your, you made your first sale, and then where did it go from there? Did word of mouth spread or was this just kind of really on the sidelines?

[00:08:22] **Amy Mucha:** Uh it was definitely word of mouth I remember making maybe like 16 dozen like Christmas cake pops Then that year in 2016 just being like if I sell these like amazing like that would be so great Um and I did sell them I feel like they were probably to people that shared my last name and or had were friends with me Um but you know I was like okay like this is great And then the next year in 2017 um somebody actually asked like Hey can you make a custom football cake pops I was like oh played with Play-Doh before so I'm sure I could probably shape Cake Pop Dough into a football shape So that was my very first uh like custom order where somebody was telling me what they wanted in cake pop form and then just continued along I had a spreadsheet my life is run by spreadsheets you know of my orders And then come 2018 um it was getting pretty busy We had like an order of like 300 cake pops and I

was like okay I was like this is getting to the point where I think I need to like make it an official business You know like let's like and figure out the systems and the processes to uh to to do this And so 2018 in March I actually sat down with a current student of mine She was in my AP statistics class um and she helped me like start the social medias Um we my husband helped me like watch the website got our LLC So yeah March of 2018 it was the official birthday of Daisy Pops

[00:09:41] **David Crabill:** I mean, if you look at your branding, amazing branding job, I'm sure anyone, everyone tells you that, right? So, but you, a math teacher, wouldn't necessarily expect a rational math oriented person to have this creative side. Where does that come from?

[00:09:59] **Amy Mucha:** I do not. That's my husband My my husband is a designer He owns a design company uh which is in the same building that we are now And uh he said at the beginning we were originally called like daisy cakes and my um my logo was like super cute But he was like no no He's like this is not it Amy He's like if you want to grow this business you need a professional logo and a professional brand And I was like oh okay Um so sure enough he and his team you know started doing our branding and I often say that without each and every is the name of his studio Without them we would not even be probably a quarter of what we are because that branding matters so much You know fake it till you make it is very real especially in branding cause when people come to us they're like oh my gosh like you look so professional Like and they haven't even seen a cake pop yet They just look at the branding and see it and they're like okay like this must be legit Um which it is Thankfully We're not faking it too much now Um but yeah the the branding is all thanks to to my husband

[00:10:56] **David Crabill:** And it's not just the branding, but there's a lot of design, right? You know, the cake pops themselves and

[00:11:04] **Amy Mucha:** True

[00:11:04] **David Crabill:** assume your husband's not making the cake pops, right? So.

[00:11:08] **Amy Mucha:** No you got you got that right He he draws the line there but you're you're totally right on the cake top side Um I and people will say that often like oh Amy you're so creative I'm like you know what Actually I'm not like I'm very very logical very like mappy Um and I can look at Different people Like when I first started making cake pops I would go on Instagram type in like hashtag cat cake pop and like see what other people were doing and decide like oh that's too much work Like I can't make any money as I'm doing that Or oh that's too simple that's too messy Like this one's pretty good In fact I'm gonna take the best parts of several of these and put them together So in my mind it's more like an equation of like all right these are the good parts I'm just gonna plop em into this pop them into this equation you know And out comes a a really cute cake pop But also going with that you know there are some beautiful cake pops out there that are beautifully sculpted beautifully hand painted And I could not could not and would not do that because I'm like I don't have the talent I'm a pop artist not an artist Um and also you know I come at it from much more of like a business perspective than like a you know design perspective of just like okay like if I wanna make money and also if I'm

teaching full-time and momming full-time I gotta I gotta get these done and they have to look cute but I can't spend my entire life doing them

[00:12:21] **David Crabill:** So let's talk about that. 'cause you know, on this practical, more rational side, you sort of veer it into a different style of cake pop. Can you talk about that?

[00:12:32] **Amy Mucha:** Yes Yes Um so you know continued on cake popping just a little bit of the the bridge to that Um so I said 2018 we officially started Daisy Pops Um I would still probably have been teaching happily in my math classroom if it weren't for COVID So COVID came kind of disrupted I mean everything Um but in my life it proved three things to me It it well number one it took away the joy of teaching that I had cause the relational side was [00:13:00] gone And I knew it was temporary but it was still really hard Number two it made individually wrapped treats really pop off if you will People didn't want birthday cakes with candles to blow out They wanted individually wrapped cake pops or other treats that they could send that they could do drive by birthday parties et cetera And thirdly I saw what more of Amy in the business did cause up till then I would say it was about 80 of my professional life was teaching 20 was cake popping in deep COVID that flip flopped because I was teaching from home and I had more time to do cake popping And that's really when Daisy Pop started taking off Um so I made the really really tough decision to uh not return to teach Um after the 2021 school year I went back for one more year um decided to go full-time into cake pops And then when I did that I was suddenly rolling you know hundreds of cake balls a day And uh my shoulders hurt so badly I was like oh my gosh like I'm a college athlete Like this should not be a workout for me Um and I asked my coworkers I was like Hey do your shoulders hurt all the time And they were like kind of yeah I was like oh no Like this is this is not okay And close to that time one of my coworkers brought back these cosmic brownie cake pops that she had made and she had made them perfectly flat perfectly rectangular to look like cosmic brownies And I said Brittany she's also a former math teacher We taught together for many years I was like how did you do that And she was like well I just like patted the dough out and like used a cookie cutter And I was like oh Oh my gosh So that was like when the the light bulb like went off in my head of there's another way to do cake pops

[00:14:27] **David Crabill:** Yeah, and this was not the first time. I mean, it's not like you invented this, right? This concept of a flat cake pop has been around.

[00:14:35] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah I would say so And we were we had flat cake pops as well But what we would do is we would portion out our dough we would roll it into a ball and then we would flatten it So like we're making our flat cake pops but we're still like doing the portioning and the rolling and then making it flat Um and so I was like well like can can we do a flat cake pop But instead of doing that I was like can we actually roll it out kinda like cookie dough and then use a cutter to cut it out So we actually started doing experiments like timed experiments I was like okay I'm gonna make a dozen baseball cake pops and I'm gonna do it my old way of portioning rolling flattening it and then I'm gonna do it the new way of just rolling it and cutting it out And the rolling and cutting was about two to three times faster And I was like okay I was like this is this is wild So I think in 2023 maybe 22 in fact um daisy pops just like went cold Turkey Like we were like you know what We're not doing any more spherical cake pops We're only

going to do the the flat cake pops And uh I was waiting for some kinda like pushback from our customers and I got like two comments and they were like oh they look bigger And I was like well yeah cause there's more surface area They were the exact same volume trust Trust me I did the volume conversions and calculations had my TI 84 out doing all of them I was like oh I told my students they would use math in real life and here I am doing it but but yeah So that's how Daisy pops switched from the spherical cake pops to the disc cake pops

[00:15:58] **David Crabill:** Even before this though, before you switched to this more efficient method of making cake pops, you're obviously running a very successful business even before the pandemic, right? So, um. What do you think helped make you so successful? Like it helped this business grow so rapidly? Maybe it didn't grow rapidly.

You tell me. Did it grow rapidly or did you feel like it was organic?

[00:16:20] **Amy Mucha:** I felt like it was organic I felt that Daisy Pops was a good growth trajectory of like okay like we're taking in more orders so now we can take in more orders Um so I started hiring people pretty early on uh because I had to delegate cause I was again teaching full-time morning full-time Um I was like well I can't make all these K pops on my own So I hired some former students Um I hired some friends of mine So they would start coming to my house actually um and doing it So I mean I was I was a decent teacher so I could teach them how to do these methods my way um and then they could you know do it on their own um on their own time I didn't have to be there to oversee them necessarily all the time Um so I think the the forced delegation was actually the key to this business because as everybody who is making treats knows like you like we me you you're you're the you know the bottleneck essentially of your business cause you can take as many orders as you want but can you make all of those orders Um and so I'd say the delegating but then also my inability to say no was uh was also clutch here People would order and I'd say yeah of course we can do that And then I would be like okay like how do we do this You know But again I love problem solving so I was like Hey it's like a big math equation like here Here's the variables you know here's the answer I need So how do I put those all into this equation to make it happen Whether that's bringing on more people whether it's me getting less sleep than I want to you know whether it's like calling in some some friends to help out because I my employees can't do it Um so it was a lot of just you know moving chess pieces around I feel on the on the people side especially

[00:17:57] **David Crabill:** You say it was forced delegation, but you know, you're, you're a high school math teacher. Like you, you said that you didn't have any entrepreneurship experience at this point. I feel like a lot of people, if they're just feeling overwhelmed, would just pull back on what they could do or limit what they could do.

Um, and I know, I know you're a people pleaser, you wanna say yes, but. It is a pretty big step to start delegating. Right. When you've been used to doing everything yourself. So was that something you had any experience with beforehand?

[00:18:29] **Amy Mucha:** That's a great question I mean I always feel like I would like delegate to my students essentially like hey like I have to like make these copies I have to pass out these

papers I have to do these things And I quickly realized students are actually willing helpers especially if I bribed them cake pops you know So I feel like I would always think like oh if this is not something that like requires Amy to do it I can easily ask for help you know doing these things Um so I think it kind of probably started you know back back in the classroom doing that Um but like professionally no I I did not really delegate didn't have to delegate Um so it it was a new thing Um I jokingly sometimes say maybe it's cause I'm lazy inside because then I'm like well like yeah like we can do all these things but other people can do them Like I just you know think of the things and I'm like well I have I have the great help that that can help me make it happen

[00:19:20] **David Crabill:** Would your closest friends agree with the statement that you're lazy?

[00:19:24] **Amy Mucha:** No

[00:19:25] **David Crabill:** No, I don't think so.

[00:19:26] **Amy Mucha:** you're you're correct Yeah but most I maybe like innately like deep down inside you're right most people would not say that

[00:19:35] **David Crabill:** So, uh, did it, I mean, the other thing about delegation is that it is a bit of a risk, right? I mean, you're now having to pay someone. Were you just, was your business growing enough and fast enough to really afford to hire, or did it feel like a risk to start to delegate?

[00:19:53] **Amy Mucha:** No it didn't It felt like a necessity more than a risk at at the time And also I was able to especially during like COVID I was able to pay my coworkers. We became actually we can talk more dive into this later but we essentially became a network of home bakeries during COVID because they weren't coming to my house cause we needed to keep our distance Um so everybody was baking at their own homes And then I was the clearing house Um but during that time I would actually say like okay like this is one cake which makes about 48 cake pops You get paid per cake So I don't care how fast you go I don't care how slow you go this is what you're going to make per cake And then it's up to you you know how much what your hourly wage is on how how quickly you do it Um so that was that was really really nice kind of at the at the not quite the beginning beginning Um but during that period of time to just think okay like this is you know if I set reasonable expectations reasonable wages um and then when I had to like convert when we moved into our pop shop I'm like okay like no more per cake I have to pay them hourly Um that was much more of a risk in my mind I'm like okay Like I now I have to know like what what their what they need to make like what we need to make And it was it was a lot to figure out But at the beginning um it was a necessity And we never had to take out loans either Like so we always were making enough money to pay the people that were cake popping Um our first loan was when we opened our pop shop

[00:21:18] **David Crabill:** Yeah. We'll get into the pop shop a little bit first. You know, you've been talking about how you were a mom full, you know, big a full-time mom. Um, I guess, I

mean, I don't know, were you, were you actually a full-time mom before you started teaching or did you continue teaching through that and how old are your kids?

[00:21:35] **Amy Mucha:** Yes Uh my kids are currently 13 11 and nine We have Peter Charlie and Daisy So you can see that we skipped over our old our boys and went straight to Daisy for the naming rights of the companies Um uh but they were I mean I started making cake pops before any of them were around uh as they kept coming around I cake pops got pushed to the back burner um for for a while Just you know with babies and teaching I continued teaching full-time uh throughout having all of them as well Um so you're right it was not full-time momming it was a momming In the when I wasn't teaching which also felt full-time but when I started Daisy Pops like if or when the idea kind of came around Daisy was less than one So I think they were zero like two and four at the time Um that I really like started making money from Cake Pops

[00:22:27] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I mean, pretty crazy for you to be having a full-time job. Also having three very young kids. And substantially growing the business. Do you remember, like say in 20 17, 20 18, like how many orders you're a numbers person? So I think you would know how many cake pops you were making, how many orders you're making, what your revenue was like, you know, any of those three that you could share.

[00:22:53] **Amy Mucha:** sure So we actually have something called a pop counter I don't think I have one sitting around unfortunately But it's a place value counter like in elementary schools where it's like ones tens a hundreds et cetera And uh so I was like this is I want to keep track of how many K pops we do in a year So starting in 2018 when we officially became a business we started this and we turned it into like a game So when customers come and buy cake pops they have to flip the pop counter and do the math Um which is is super fun We gamify it with free cake pops if you flip to the next a hundred the next a thousand Um but at the beginning it was essentially just I I want to keep track So that first year of officially being a cake pop business um the pop counter hit 13,000 cake pops which and we only really started like I said in like late March So it was uh you know April April on we made 13,000 cake pops that year

[00:23:41] **David Crabill:** It's over a thousand cake pops a month, right? So over 500 cake pops a week, which is.

[00:23:50] **Amy Mucha:** Uh 2,250 Yeah Mm-hmm

[00:23:52] **David Crabill:** For the,

[00:23:53] **Amy Mucha:** So it

[00:23:53] **David Crabill:** oh, sorry. See? Uh, I'm not the math teacher. Right. But

[00:23:57] **Amy Mucha:** your

[00:23:57] **David Crabill:** yeah. Um,

[00:23:59] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah

[00:24:00] **David Crabill:** Why I had 2000 in my head, but anyway, you, you're doing 250 cake pops a week, so that's, that's a lot. For a first year.

[00:24:09] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah It it was and I I give credit where credit is due to my school that I taught at They were like the first community you know that knew of the cake pops They would purchase them they would share it online they would tell their friends Um so thanks to CBCA is the name of the school Um I I really do believe that I was in the the right time at the right place um for for the cake pops business to to really start because it was just that you know community of people that were so so encouraging and so willing to support the business at the beginning

[00:24:42] **David Crabill:** I love the pop counter. I've seen the pop counter. I think it's a, this amazing idea and not just in that it's, it's fun and you've made it fun, but also this is a very tangible form of social proof. Right.

[00:24:55] **Amy Mucha:** Mm-hmm

[00:24:56] **David Crabill:** Was that intentional or did it just kind of happen randomly?

[00:25:01] **Amy Mucha:** I'd say it was it was more so I just wanted to keep track of the numbers but then it quickly became a humble brag Like very quickly when I tell people like when I was able to say like I'm a math teacher Everybody knows exactly what that entails There's no guessing you know or anything Now when I say I make cake pops like I'm gonna a cake pop bakery Everybody's response is always like that's so cute All right Which it is arguably very cute But then they see the pop counter and they're like oh like over a hundred thousand cake pops this year you know And I'm like yeah And they're like oh So it does do exactly what you said It's social proof that hey like these are worth buying A lot of people buying them should do

[00:25:42] **David Crabill:** You mean you just threw it out there? A hundred thousand. I mean, that's an unbelievable number. I've seen that number on your pop counter. What? What's like the most cake pops you've had on that counter?

Maybe you don't do the counter anymore 'cause you sell so many thousands every year.

[00:25:58] **Amy Mucha:** Oh no no no

[00:25:59] **David Crabill:** Oh.

[00:25:59] **Amy Mucha:** keep up with that pop counter

Um we have we've never quite surpassed 150,000 There were two years that we had like 148,000 and 149 So one one day I am going to hit that 150,000 number

[00:26:13] **David Crabill:** I mean, this is just an unfathomable number for a home baker. Right. So, and when did you actually hit these? Like a hundred thousand. When was the first year you did? You did that?

[00:26:26] **Amy Mucha:** I did that as a cottage baker actually So I think that was in 2022 Um we hit 113,000 cake pops Uh making them from from home which is uh just pretty wild You can I I had a lot of freezers in my house In fact I remember talking to somebody I think from the Ohio Department of Agriculture or something and he was like well yeah He's like you know like it's just a home bakery when you get to having like 11 freezers in your house you know maybe it's time to move on I was like counting and I was like I think I have nine eight or nine Um but uh but yeah and that's that was clutch too the ability to freeze cake puffs So that was a huge thing I should have mentioned way back is that you can make them you can wrap them you can freeze them and then they are perfectly good and it allows your schedule to get freed up which was such a blessing

[00:27:13] **David Crabill:** Yeah, that's crazy. Now, when you say you made it over a hundred thousand in 2022. I mean, you had employees, right? Were they making them in their own homes because of the pandemic? And so this is kind of like a group effort to make that happen.

[00:27:28] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah Yep So we essentially like I said became a a network of home bakeries So every week I would make the schedule based on what you know flavors we needed what orders we had and make a spreadsheet again of everybody and say this is what you are going to do this is what you're going to do Um and then they would come by I think usually Fridays they would pick up all of their supplies that they needed the cake mixes the oil the chocolate um whatever they needed to make their you know their assignment Um and then go back them make them throughout the week and then come back put em in my freezers the next Friday have their next assignment and then get what they needed for that assignment and then go back Um so it was not just you know my oven that was uh cranking out all these cake pops but it was a a collection of ovens which which definitely made it poppable There's no way we could have done that I don't think out of just one house

[00:28:19] **David Crabill:** Yeah, probably not. Now, 2022 is notably the year that this is the a hundred thousand mark, right? Is notably the year after you left your teaching job. I know you left that in 2021, and you talked about it being very hard for you to step away from your math high school teaching job. What did that feel like?

[00:28:41] **Amy Mucha:** It felt so scary So scary And I think whenever I hear other entrepreneurs speak I feel like it's usually in the line you know along the lines of like I hated working for other peop maybe not hated I disliked working for other people I really wanted to be on my own you know I I like having you know autonomy and that was not me I loved working for other people I liked being able to take problems you know up the administrative ladder be like you know what This is this is above my pay grade Uh here it is you know administrators Um and I loved like working I just I loved my teaching job so so much Um so it was it was hard to leave because I loved it so much Um it's also hard to leave because I was getting paid a steady salary from that and it was no it's not like they were probably going to fire me you know like it was I I

had it Fairly guaranteed you know probably till I wanted to retire Um so yeah it was it was terrifying I I cried a lot I prayed a lot I had a lot of discussions with people that were a lot smarter than me and a lot more experienced than me Just you know like hey like what do you guys think Like here's here are the facts here are the numbers I spent a lot of time doing numbers Um like what what do you make of it So yeah it was it was tough

[00:29:54] **David Crabill:** It's interesting 'cause now looking back right there, you know, the amount that you've grown in the last few years is crazy. Um, you kind of had this amazing opportunity in front of you. And yet, I don't know, maybe you almost didn't take it right. I mean, looking back, right, do you have any regrets for leaving?

[00:30:15] **Amy Mucha:** No not a single regret which is again such a such a blessing God definitely had me exactly where he wanted me to teach and now he has like me exactly where he wants me making cake pops so yeah I mean there there are things that I I miss like I miss again I miss working for other people That was great I love that Um I miss you know like those connections with my students that I had I miss being in my school community with my other teachers like in the trenches with them all the time Um but I now I employ high schoolers you know like so I still get those relationships on a different level which is great So I still get the best of both worlds I would say But yeah no regrets.

[00:30:53] **David Crabill:** Hey, real quick, earlier I mentioned our sponsor Cottage CMS, and I'll be honest with you. When I first came across this platform, I was pretty skeptical. I have seen dozens of software platforms built for cottage food entrepreneurs, but this one feels different for one.

Drew and his wife Kat are actually successful cottage food business owners and also Drew has a ton of experience building software tools like this.

I personally set up a site on college CMS for my fudge business in under an hour, and I was impressed and clearly I'm not the only one. Even though cottage CMS, it's only been around for a few months, it already powers over 800 websites, so I encourage you to check them out. As I said at the beginning, we do have a special offer for listeners.

You can check that out at [cottagecms.com/forrager](https://cottagecms.com/forrager). Again, that's [cottagecms.com/forrager](https://cottagecms.com/forrager). And when you go to sign up, you can set up a totally free website that is forever free. But if you do want to try the premium features, you can try that totally risk free. Drew offers a 30 day money back guarantee, and also if you face any hiccups.

He provides incredible support as anyone who uses Cottage CMS can attest to. So again, I encourage you to check them out. You can do so by going to [cottagecms.com/forrager](https://cottagecms.com/forrager). Now back to the show.

So the flat cake pop evolution happened after you moved into the cake pop shop. Right? So we haven't really talked about the cake pop shop yet. And you know, I've seen a few interviews of you that you've done in the last year and people kind of gloss over that stage of your business.

You know, like, oh yeah, you opened this pop shop and then, oh, and then you made Daisy Makes, which is this whole other side of the manufacturing business that we haven't talked about yet. Um, but like the, the pop shop is huge. I mean, that is by no means an automatic, like, oh yeah, that's definitely gonna work.

But you made it work. Can you talk, talk to me about like, what was it like to create it, and then what was that first day like in the, in the shop?

[00:33:19] **Amy Mucha:** Uh yeah that is uh that is so true It does actually get very glossed over Um and it does it deserves its own space You're right Um but yeah so the pop shop it uh I said I would never do two things I said I would never quit teaching cause you can't make a living off of cake pops Ha ha And I also said I would never open a brick and mortar because we were doing just fine in my basement Um however my husband was renovating the building that I am currently sitting in now which is where his design office also is And when it was all kinda like set said and not done yet but when he had tenants he was like well he's like we have one opening on the ground floor Do you want it And I was like oh man I was like you know what If I'm quitting teaching to do this full time I should probably have a place where number one all of us can work together Because that's when we really become efficient and consistent when we're all together doing the same thing Uh number two it gives people a place to come instead of my house Like half of Northeast Ohio knew my address because they were coming to pick up cake pops from my driveway freezer Um and and three it allowed us to ship nationally actually And four it allowed us to get into grocery stores So because of all of those reasons I was like okay like it it is time So so I put put on my big girl pants I I walked you know to the bank um and was like okay like I'm gonna need money to do this It's the first time I had ever had that conversation And thankfully they said yes and I took out my first loan and we like lived at this building for quite a while turning it into a cake pop bakery It was not a kitchen or a food grade or anything beforehand And and we made it like that which was a massive effort.

[00:35:02] **David Crabill:** It's so fascinating to see your line of reasoning. I've seen this trend, right, where you're like, these are the three reasons, or the four reasons, 1, 2, 3, and it's just like, it's, it's fascinating to me because you clearly are a very rational person. You, you, you're, I feel like a lot of entrepreneurs are very decisive people, but it sounds to me like what I'm hearing is that you think through things a lot before making a big step.

Would you agree with that?

[00:35:31] **Amy Mucha:** Oh yeah absolutely

[00:35:34] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I feel like most entrepreneurs that have seen the kind of success that you have, they're pretty decisive. Like they just make decisions really quickly. They move forward and oh, if they fail, they fail. Do you feel like you're like that in any way or like, 'cause you've obviously seen an unbelievable amount of success with this.

[00:35:56] **Amy Mucha:** Sure I my husband would say I'm a very quick decision maker perhaps too quick sometimes but I think that has kind of evolved as my myself as a business owner has

evolved too cause now like a lot of those things that I was thinking about at the beginning like okay like this this this has to be in line now It's like well I know how to do it Like I've I've already experienced it I've done it so I can make quicker decisions about things But I do the most part always try to make sure to like ask ask those people you know like get people's opinions like that I know and I trust get people's opinions who it's gonna affect You know like asking my coworkers like well what what do you think about this Um so I can be pretty quick to make decisions but I wanna make sure they're good decisions So I do put in the thought and the effort and the research into those before I make them

[00:36:44] **David Crabill:** Not easy typically to get a bank loan. Um, what did it take to actually get that?

[00:36:53] **Amy Mucha:** You know it took a lady named Jessica who works at Huntington Bank not in Huntington ad not sponsored by them but um she had like known about us so I went and I talked to her She was like okay She's like I'll take this project on And she like single handedly made it happen She she lives right around the corner from us too She would bring documents to my house for me to sign And she has been our you know our banker through every single thing since then Uh she's helped us open you know me for businesses Uh my husband you know a couple too and every step of the way she's there I can text her if I have a question Um so it is really like it's amazing what a difference one person can make in your business and a lot of Daisy Pops. Daisy Makes everything thanks to Jessica from Huntington because she was such an incredible individual and continues to be.

[00:37:45] **David Crabill:** Well, we also have to talk about this side of it. I mean, it worked out clearly, but there was a risk of taking on debt. For sure. So what did that feel like in the moment?

[00:37:56] **Amy Mucha:** Terrible I hated it I uh I like I said everything like if I wanted to buy an edible printer like I had the money like I was like okay I I just need to you know sell like 20 dozen extra cake pops and I have the money to buy a printer Um if I wanted to get a cricket to cut out said edible images I was like okay like I have the money to do that So this was the first thing that I was like I don't have the money to do nor will I like ever you know all at one time So I need a bank loan Um so yeah it felt real bad Um in fact I don't know if I would've had the the confidence to do it if it weren't for my husband who has again owned his own business you know bought the building that we're in and he's like Amy he's like you gotta spend money to make money He's like you do He's like and it's not a rash decision. Clearly cake pops are selling so it it should be worth it I was like Okay let's do it Um so yeah so amazingly I have been able to pay off said loan already which I thought it would take a a lot longer um which was a happy happy day Um but but yeah I'm a very risk averse person and that was truly like the I think the first one of the first like big risks I mean I know I quit my job but I could always go back to teaching but this was something where I was like oh like once I signed that paperwork for the loan I was like there's there's literally no going back Like there is money on the line

[00:39:15] **David Crabill:** Do you think that having money on the line helped drive you forward and helped you like, uh, this has to work?

[00:39:24] **Amy Mucha:** Oh ab absolutely Yeah .Before that well before quitting my job and before taking out that loan I always thought like oh if cake pops are not as popular as they are like You know so sorry to my part-time you know like contracted help At the point in time they were all contractors Um you know like go find another like really part-time fun job Like I'll just go back to to teaching you know I have more spare time Like it's it won't be a big deal Um and then when I quit my job I was like well this is a bigger deal because uh now like again I could go back to teaching but it would take effort Um and then when I took out that bank loan I was like oh okay Like now there is a lot riding on the line And then moving forward I I employ about you know 15 people just on the Daisy Pop side So now it's not just my self on the line it's all of these people who I have to you know care for and provide for Um so yeah it's it's a lot of responsibility for sure.

[00:40:16] **David Crabill:** And how many cake pops do you sell per week in the shop?

[00:40:21] **Amy Mucha:** Um well I'll answer two different questions there We are making about 2,500 cake pops So we have 10 times what we did uh that that first official year in business Um and actually like selling from the pop shop itself I say we get about like 10 to 12 of our business of people actually walking into our little retail area of the pop shop and purchasing cake pops And the other or so um is from different different revenue streams.

[00:40:52] **David Crabill:** Wholesale.

[00:40:53] **Amy Mucha:** Yep Wholesale um event Yeah event rentals So we have a pop fleet of vehicles so people can you know rent the pop mobile and we come and we you know hand out cake pops and uh and also just like you said online orders So a lot of people will order online They can choose to pick up at the pop shop We have some partner shops in the northeast Ohio area too that we will deliver to and people can pick up there on the weekends so they don't have to drive to Kent Um and then also um shipping orders corporate orders is another big one We just uh this year so far we've had a almost 9,000 cake pop order and a over 7,000 cake pop order which has been so fun.

[00:41:30] **David Crabill:** So I mean, 3 2500 cake pops a week is crazy like, that's an unbelievable number of cake pops. But we're talking about the business and the risk of the business. Do you, does he, now that you've gotten to this point, have that fear and that risk gone away? Or do you still feel like, oh, you know, our cake pops's gonna be the next cupcake, you know, are they gonna, are they gonna die off?

You know, is that, is there still a feeling of risk there?

[00:42:04] **Amy Mucha:** You know there there is but it doesn't scare me kind of like it did at the beginning because I'm like you know what like through all of the the business things I I figured out how to pivot you know And I figured out like how again problem solving the name of the game. So I'm like well like all we do right now is cake pops In fact I jokingly say if I ever write a book the title would be just cake pops Because whenever people ask me what I make I'm like cake pops And they always say just cake pops I'm like yes just cake pops Um so could we

venture out you know and do other things one day we could you know but also now we have Daisy makes and we have What's Poppy common So we have bus other businesses that support other cake poppers too So you know do I think that Daisy Pops goes really well with those other two businesses Absolutely You know I want them to all grow together Um but there are there are ways Of you know just doing doing slightly different things We can pivot you know we can teach cake pops classes which is a lot of what I do Our pop education program is a whole another part of it Um so so yeah Lots lots of ways to to you know dip a cake pop skin a cat if you will.

[00:43:13] **David Crabill:** You say you make just cake pops, and I know what you mean. That's the only food item you make, but it's not entirely true, right? 'cause you don't just make cake pops. And in fact, I believe that they have, they're, they're not even like the majority of your business anymore by any stretch of the imagination.

So can you talk about the evolution of your business? That's a pretty, pretty large pivot that you underwent. And when, when did that happen?

[00:43:37] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah, so we I mean the making flat pops I asked my husband you know I had done all the math I was like Hey I need a 3D printed cookie cutter that is exactly one and a half inches in diameter Can you do that He's like Yeah sure I was like okay great And so that's when we all at Daisy Pop started making our flat pops um moved into the pop shop and we started doing a lot of like different shapes. Um we came out with our our trays that hold our dough shape so that they don't smush when you put the stick in Um my one of my favorite memories of my husband Nate is he saw me like cookie cutting and then pushing the dough out cause it's not like cookie dough it's thicker Um so it will actually usually stick in your cutter So I was like using my finger to pop the dough out and he was like why didn't I just make you like a print you a like a solid negative form that you can push the dough out with and we can call it a popper And I was like Nate this is why I married you like right here Um so you know all of those things were starting to come together And in 2023 is really kind of when the flat pops started taking over social media Um so my my two good friends Cake pops by Rachel who I know you have talked to before Um she was one of them that I kind of like finally was like Rachel you should try this Like you're making a lot of cake pops It would save you a lot of time So she jumped on the bandwagon uh because she did uh another great friend and now coworker of mine Nicole from Main Street Sweets Frisco she started doing it. So when these like you know internet pop stars of which I I would say I'm not one I'm the friend of these internet pop stars who just had big following So when they started doing these flat pops people started asking like oh like how are you doing that Like and then they came to us and said are you selling those tools And I said no but should I and the answer was was yes.

[00:45:25] **David Crabill:** Man, it's interesting to think about how much your husband has been involved in the business, right? Because from the beginning you said with branding, um, you know, like obviously he has this design company, and then also when it was time to grow into your own shop, you know, he had this space, this, this, uh, location for you to move into essentially.

And then also with the 3D printed stuff, right? So have you ever thought about like, well, you know, not everyone has a husband that has a design firm and everything like that. Like, where would you be without him if you were just doing this on your own?

[00:46:04] **Amy Mucha:** I'd still be teaching high school math is where I would be with without Nate but no

[00:46:10] **David Crabill:** Do you think that's true though?

I mean, mean, you, you had, you know,

[00:46:13] **Amy Mucha:** Mm-hmm

[00:46:14] **David Crabill:** Okay.

[00:46:14] **Amy Mucha:** I do Yeah Because I wouldn't have somebody beside me who I know and who I trust in to say This makes sense Amy like you you can do it And who also again he carried the insurance He had a good job a steady job So I wasn't we weren't giving up our entire family's income We had three kids we had to provide for Um so just those things alone I would probably still be teaching teaching math Um but yeah Nate is a massive part of the story and while he has not ever made a cake pop necessarily um he is integral in math joke pun intended in the the Daisy makes side of it Um and without him I again there would not be a daisy makes like it it wouldn't exist with without my ability to or me asking Nate like Hey Nate I have this cake pop problem Can you solve it with a 3D printer And his answer always being yeah absolutely And then usually like I'll do it even better than what you think I was like oh yeah this is perfect.

[00:47:08] **David Crabill:** So let's talk a little bit about the 3D printer stuff, because this has become a huge part of your story, right? And ICI clearly it's called coming from your husband. Right. But, um, you know, what was the first time that you started delving into the 3D printed stuff was just for creating a custom cookie cutter, right.

[00:47:32] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah pretty much Yep And the the thing that I didn't love about cookie cutters and actually there were a couple things Um I there were preexisting cake pop tools to make 3D cake pops And I had actually talked to the company making these and said Hey your cake pops are bigger than my cake pops Would you ever consider coming out with like a mini size And of course they said no Like why would you do that You know for one person that makes smaller cake pops which I understood Um but I was like okay And then if I tried to use cookie cutters even like the little mini metal ones they were never all consistent You know like I don't think cookers really care that much about like the consistent area that maybe they care more about Like is it the same the same length the same width the same height et cetera I was like I want my cake pops to weigh the same cause that's what us Cake poppers you know think about is what is the volume of these cake pops the weight of them so as we you know as I had my circle one that I knew was exactly 1.5 inches I knew exactly how much my dough weighed I knew what the area was the volume Um and I asked Nate I was like Hey can you make a like a bunny face And he was like sure I was like can you actually make it the same area as that circle one I was like it doesn't need to be the same height the same width I want it the same area so

therefore it's the same volume so therefore it's the same weight Um and he was like yeah I can do that So that was kind of the start of our whole like system of like if you're using a a medium you know which is you can kinda see behind me there's a that purple size up there So that's a size medium And every shape you get that is a medium is going to be the same exact area which means the same volume same for larges extra larges smalls So there is now a a cake popper um size for every single pop artist and for every single Situation like you don't have to make a massive cake pop If you're going to be giving out cake pops at your kid's school event You can make little ones but they're all gonna be the same size You know no matter if you're doing a circle or a or a heart or a bear face

[00:49:28] **David Crabill:** I know I see them up there. Are you able to grab those really quick so we can see them?

[00:49:33] **Amy Mucha:** Uh so this is this is where it all started right here So this is the medium this is the size that we use at Daisy Pops And there is a cutter so basically like a glorified cookie cutter except it has really nice ergonomic tabs for your fingers right here And then this is very sharp like I mean not like it's gonna hurt you but it cuts your cake pop dough really really nicely Um and then we have our popper So we cut our dough usually sticks in there. We push our popper in and then it right out Um and then we have our tray the tray I think is the the magic sauce here It's where we put all of our dough discs standing up vertically And then instead of picking up each one and putting a stick in and having to put it down we have a whole tray of dough discs that you can just run run through putting sticks in and it doesn't deform your dough And each we have all like 200 some different shapes Each one has its own tray so that it is specific to that shape

[00:50:30] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I mean that's what's kind of fascinating about this Daisy Makes business is that. The sky's the limit, right? Because each of your designs needs to have its own tray, you know? And so, and they all need to work together because I initially, you know, it was like, well, why couldn't you just use a cookie cutter?

You know, you've mentioned cookie cutters. I know that's how you started.

[00:50:52] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah

[00:50:52] **David Crabill:** But, uh, I don't know. It just seemed like, oh, cookie cutters are cheaper. Right?

[00:50:59] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah

[00:51:00] **David Crabill:** I know that this business is working. Now, can you share some of your numbers on the days you make a side, because the growth is unbelievable.

[00:51:09] **Amy Mucha:** Oh boy yeah Daisy makes I feel like came outta came outta nowhere We didn't know what we were getting into Um but yeah we we have had well I should know this about we started officially in April Well lemme back up a tiny bit then I'll get to your question Um so in in 2023 we people were asking us on social media like Hey are you selling those things So

I was like well sure like let's try it So we did like a a pre-order of a disc pop starter kit whereas like a rolling pin that had depth wheel guides that keeps your dough exactly the right depth And it came with four different sizes of cutters We didn't even have the pops the trays yet you know it was just just this cutter So we did that We sold like two or 300 of them I was like oh my goodness And I remember you know getting those ready to ship out and thinking wouldn't it be funny if we ended up shipping more of these and selling more of these tools than we actually did cake pops. And I was like that's that's silly Um but but then it just kept growing kept expanding And then come February of 2024 right around before Valentine's Day we came out with a heart and a lips popper And those were the cutters the poppers and the trays And uh we were selling more of those tools through the Daisy Pops website than we were cake pops And I was like well I think it is time to uh to divide these businesses So in April of 2024 Daisy Makes was officially born Um and since then we've had over I think 60,000 orders um of people We can ship them we can ship them globally Um and not only are we selling our own tools but we've started becoming the one-stop pop shop So we whole we carry a lot of other cake pop supply providers um so that people can just come to us and be like well here are my poppers and oh here are the sprinkles Like here's the the elixir that can flavor it Uh here are the cake pop sticks Here are the bags where they can get everything from us.

[00:53:01] **David Crabill:** I mean, 60,000 orders is just, uh, it's, it is so hard to even fathom. Right? I mean, and, and obviously an order is gonna contain multiple items. So we're talking about hundreds of thousands of things and like, and, and most of these are 3D printed items, right?

[00:53:22] **Amy Mucha:** Mm-hmm You wanna guess how many 3D printers we have

[00:53:26] **David Crabill:** I, well, I, I did see in an interview what, what you had five months ago, so it, it, that was 40 at the time.

[00:53:34] **Amy Mucha:** Old news Old news We are currently at 114

[00:53:40] **David Crabill:** Wow. Wow. So, yeah, I mean, you, you, you talked in that interview about going to the store every weekend to buy more. Is that still something you do?

[00:53:51] **Amy Mucha:** To know thankfully uh we we're we're pretty set but we will I think we're actually starting to order them on on pallets now Um [00:54:00] so we use Bambu printers which are I would like to say the absolute best machines out there And um so we can we're starting to replace our original P ones with P two Ss now And so we were just reaching out to Bamboo about sourcing like a a pallet full full of printers to to come Um but it's really nice with the amount of printers that we have we don't have to run them like three times a day like we were So a year ago Nate and I were about you know our our minds because it was pretty much just us with a couple other helpers and 40 printers and you know we were like we were having to keep up so it was like having a baby you know like you had to get up at 2:00 AM to do that third run and it was just relentless So now with that many printers we can usually do one maybe two runs a day when we are like super super busy Um but I mean they those printers they they print they stay very very busy

[00:54:54] **David Crabill:** How much does a printer cost?

[00:54:57] **Amy Mucha:** uh with the the a MS system automatic material switching systems That's how we can do like this is green and clear so you can do multiple colors um right around a a thousand ish dollars Um which you're like wow that's that's a lot of printers at a thousand dollars Um but I mean they they print their worth fairly quickly you know and and printers are printers are great I I jokingly say I mean obviously I love my my human coworkers and uh would never never trade them I was like printers don't ask for a lot They don't have to take bathroom breaks They don't have to sleep you know they're never hungry They never complain but but yeah it's it's pretty wild Just the the the horsepower that these uh printers provide

[00:55:39] **David Crabill:** You're saying, but they are hungry. Right? Because they need filament.

[00:55:44] **Amy Mucha:** to be fed filament Yes Very very good point

[00:55:47] **David Crabill:** That's a, that's another challenge, right? Because that's a lot of filament to be buying.

[00:55:53] **Amy Mucha:** Yes Uhhuh Okay I pulled up my daisy makes wrapped uh the statistics from 2025 Would you would you like to hear

[00:56:00] **David Crabill:** Sure,

[00:56:00] **Amy Mucha:** behind it

[00:56:01] **David Crabill:** let's hear it.

[00:56:03] **Amy Mucha:** Um so with our poppers there last year there were about a hundred million cake pops made globally using our tools which is really cool I love that statistic

[00:56:14] **David Crabill:** How do you, how do you know that statistic?

[00:56:16] **Amy Mucha:** Great I I did math It is an estimation I have the little squiggly line uh before it but I actually did a survey I asked all the people we have a Facebook group um on for daisy makers so I asked all of them like how many cake pops are you making on average per per week I think I asked um I asked on social media um and I was like and I I understand this is a biased group because they're all they're all daisy makers So I was I was well aware Um but I also like looked around at other like what other poppers were seeming to be to be making And so I just took the number of cus the number of individual like customers that we had So if they ordered 13 times I only counted them once Um but I was like so if that one person is making an average of however many cake pops a week like what does that equate to So I'd say it was a pretty I think uh I probably could have gone higher with that estimate but yeah a hundred a hundred million cake pops made with our tools 38,000 orders just last year Um 37 countries reached with Daisy makes orders Um so that's something with cake pops Like I'm not gonna ship outside of the us but with these we can we can ship everywhere We've shipped to a lot of

really cool countries Um we had 94,000 poppers sold so that means 94,000 of these guys right here So that's not including the trays or any of the supplies but just this right here Uh we did 25 pop artists collaborations which we can get to later but where we work with fellow pop artists and they help us come up with our designs Uh 114 printers which I had already shared uh half a million plus print hours logged across all of our printers Uh this next statistic is pretty crazy Uh 1,250 miles of 3D printer filament So that's enough filament if we like unwound at all to go from New York City to Miami which is wild Um 16 wholesale partners last year uh that we're carrying our products Now we're up to um in the in the twenties reaching almost 30 10 employees uh spread across four states and we got one new UT US utility patent for our Popper system So so yeah that was the 2025 rash numbers which were pretty pretty wild

[00:58:32] **David Crabill:** That is a crazy lineup of statistics and you know, that's all, come on so quickly. You know, you started this kind of, what, two years ago? A little less than two years ago.

[00:58:42] **Amy Mucha:** It's right about our two year anniversary coming up in April

[00:58:45] **David Crabill:** And you know, like at this point, you know, you've got daisy pops, you still have the shop open, you know, and then you got this Daisy makes just exploding. Then this is really, I mean, it's like everyone's dream, right? To have this is a massive success but comes with challenges and this is really the point in which you need to start stepping into a CEO role or maybe finding one.

Um. What has that transition process been like for you?

[00:59:14] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah I mean it really kind of started with Daisy Pops where I suddenly was the one not making cake pops you know and that's what I had done for years in my basement Like I I made so many cake pops And then I think that that transition really kind of started when we moved into the pop shop Um and my goal was that I should never have to be covering the pop shop hours There should always be other people here you know when we're open too take people's orders They should also be making cake pops Um because like as I said we had a pop education program so I love going into the schools you know and teaching kids how to cake pop talking about entrepreneurship all this So I knew that I needed to be more free so I kind of had my first experience on the like moving out of the actual like work work um working I started working on my business not in my business um which I went through the 10,000 small businesses program through Goldman Sachs It was a free like 12 week program and it it changed my life I did that the first semester that I was not teaching Um and it really me exactly that You gotta look be looking kind of down at your business instead of being in the weeds of it If you want to grow you know if if you don't then yeah just keep keep doing what you're doing and be happy and that's great Um and then moving into the Daisy Mix thing And if I wasn't able to do that with Daisy Pops I don't think I would've come up with Daisy makes because I would've been too busy making the cake pops instead of thinking like well how can we improve our systems and our processes and do this And then now how can we sell these things that we're printing Um so yeah so now we have a an amazing team at Daisy makes um where I do have like a leadership team with me where it's not just me you know thinking of like where where are we going Like what's what are the next steps Like how do we reach out to new

wholesale partners Like if we wanna take over the world you know for the good of cake pops like how do we do that Um and now I have great people by my side and we also have great people Doing the work that we can trust to run all the printers to clean all of the poppers to ship them reliably I mean so yeah it's we have incredible people on all of our teams that we we couldn't do it without

[01:01:18] **David Crabill:** You make it sound so like, oh, this is so amazing. But I know that there are challenges that you face

[01:01:27] **Amy Mucha:** yes there are

[01:01:28] **David Crabill:** all the time. Right? So what has been challenging about this growth phase of yours in the last couple years?

[01:01:34] **Amy Mucha:** Sure I mean I always say time management It's a it's a it's a lot to be like okay Like well I remember a few weeks ago it was a really busy week and I had like worked all day you know like done dinner with the kids like put them to bed and I sat down on the couch with my laptop I was like okay round two of work You know starting at like 10:00 PM like that will probably take me till 1:00 AM just to like answer all the emails that I didn't answer in the day cause I was busy doing other things like [01:02:00] working Um so time management is just it's a lot to do that Um people management is I'd say is is number two Um and again we have incredible people um but I do have to keep them all happy I am providing for them I have to take what they have to say you know into account I have to make sure that they're well provided for um like both both financially and like do you have what you need to do your job well Um and if there's a problem you know like I said when I was teaching I could just run it up the ranks be like Hey this is above my pay grade Well unfortunately for me I am the pay grade now So like every everything rests on these shoulders here which is what I will always say is my least favorite role Least favorite part of entrepreneurship is you know like these shoulders carry all of the weight Um now again I'm I'm starting to distribute that weight a little more but still like the final decisions the you know the final problem solving the problems Like they they come to me So I say that is that's the toughest I would say

[01:03:04] **David Crabill:** How do you feel like this business has impacted your family? You know, 'cause you still have kids at home, right? And work life balance, family balance. What's that been like?

[01:03:17] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah Nate and I say it's not work life balance That's a that's a silly thing life integration So uh you know because originally we were like well there's no work life separation because Daisy makes was in our house So like the cake pops moved out the 3D printers moved in and then just recently um are the most of the printers We still have some of them there but most of it is outside of our house So our our kids are are living So it is very very integrated Um so do our kids all know how to run a 3D printer You know they sure do Do they all know how to how to pack Daisy makes boxes They do You know so they they are in it And it's really funny too sometimes when mean working with your spouse is is great most of the time Sometimes it [01:04:00] gets a little harried And so whenever like Nate and I like and arguing

about something our kids will always say well must be a busy week for Daisy Makes I'm like it's so true It's so true because I mean it it does like it that work definitely filters into into life But I mean our kids our kids are living it for for better or worse Um they see they see the lows but they also they see the highs Um and they get to see like oh like my my son went to a birthday party He brought Daisy Pops and the person there were people there who didn't know him and they're like oh like we love those And he's like well that that's my mom's And they're like nuh And she was like Yeah Like yes this is this is my family's business Um so like little things like that where they get to see it and they're like oh like maybe this is cool So yeah we we jokingly tell them they have jobs forever and ever They we have enough businesses they can all own one too So we'll see how it shakes out

[01:04:53] **David Crabill:** So, I mean, a lot of people with kids with a career, you know, they, they might not have chosen to go this route of trying to grow. I mean, not, I mean, even if they had started a shop, the pop shop, right?

you could have chosen, just keep growing the pop shop to some degree. I mean, you, you essentially chose to, you know, divert attention away from the pop shop in order to focus on Daisy makes to some degree, I'd imagine.

So what, what's, what's driving you to do this? What's causing you to try to grow this huge, you know, when you could, you could have, I guess, a more relaxing or, or normal life, I guess, right?

[01:05:37] **Amy Mucha:** Kind of a good good old lifestyle business Right Um that's that's a great question I'd say on the it's probably different answers honestly for all three cake pop related businesses for Daisy Pops it was the goal is to always spread joy with cake pops Uh whether that's to our customers to my coworkers you know like I I do not leave home without cake pops in my bag and when I get to like hand out cake pops to people and they're like is so fun I was like I know right And if I eventually get a say out of that perfect But that's not the reason why you know it's just to add add joy Like you can't be frowning when you have a cake pop in hand Um so that's kind of what was driving the daisy pops side of things and and still is um on the Daisy make side of things It was I think it's the the educator in me and I was like I I found a you know a more efficient and consistent way to do this And I I could gate keep it you know but like there's so many other cake poppers out there that I I could help Like I could help them save time you know And that's the best thing about Daisy makes is people will say we would never make cake pops before because they're a little pain in the butts Like we we just did not enjoy them And also we could never make money off of them because they took too long to do and they weren't consistent Like it was just such a pain They're like now cake pops are our favorite things to do They're back on our menu We can make money and then therefore we can scale our cake pop business because of your tools And I just I think that's amazing Like I love hearing stories like that of how like we can come alongside other cake poppers you know and and help them And then kind of the same with what's popping con our our cake pop conference that we're going into our second year of Um and it's that's like the heavy on the the pop education side where hey like we're all doing kind of the same thing So why don't we gather together like learn from you know the the names in the business you know like shop the vendors and also just like swap

cake pop stories or like you know hey like this is how I do that Like oh that that's such a good idea Can I can I use that And people are gonna say yeah Um so those are like the three different driving forces behind the three different businesses

[01:07:41] **David Crabill:** Still, it would've been very easy for you to go. Um, I'm way too busy to start a conference right now, you know?

[01:07:48] **Amy Mucha:** it sure would've Yes Yeah I felt like dying a few times last year as a we were in like the depths of Daisy makes darkness like good darkness just crazy busy And we didn't have the team or the printers we do now and like building this conference from the ground up I was like Hmm man regrets But there really are no regrets Um but yeah it's yeah I I don't know why I don't say no honestly Um yeah I think I think maybe it's just I can see the end vision oftentimes Maybe not the end but like I can see the starting vision of like what could this conference be you know to other people And then it was that and so we're doing round two and people are still you know they're so excited to come back because of it I'm like okay like all of those late nights you know all of the the tears of overwhelm that happened single one was worth it

[01:08:37] **David Crabill:** Well, I think anyone in the cake pop world would agree that you're kind of have become. One of the main leaders in this space, you know, do you kind of feel like you're helping grow this movement of people?

[01:08:53] **Amy Mucha:** Right I guess so I would like to think so It's actually uh really funny So the my two friends that I had mentioned before Rachel and Nicole they were doing a a live on social media maybe a year ago or so and uh they were like yeah like they had mentioned you know me and whatnot They're like yeah like Amy's like the the influencer of the influencers where like she's not the one like having to like make make her own videos or like do this She's like she just like tells the influencers like Hey like here's this idea maybe you should try it And then they do and they're like oh she was right Like that was a great idea And then that's kind of like how it spreads And I was watching that just chuckling to myself because I was like that's that's a funny way to Very funny way to put it And uh and no I did not invent disc cake pops You know like people were doing the good old like rolling and flattening them like well before I'm sure other people had used cookie cutters to make cake pops too Um but I will take credit for inventing like the system you know of like yeah you can roll out your dough and then you can cut it instead of like having a plunger and putting your dough in there and then plunging it out Um so so yeah But it's been it's been fun to just see how much time and energy and money we can save people

[01:10:06] **David Crabill:** It seems like almost everything you touch, it just works, you know? Oh, oh, she had a great idea and wow, I'm really glad I implemented that. What have been some of your failures or things that, you know, can you think of something where you thought, oh, this is an amazing idea and it just did not work?

[01:10:24] **Amy Mucha:** Huh There there are no failures So I'm not sure what you're talking about I'm just kidding what have been some epic fails They you know and I mean there there

have been to be clear But I will say too again the the teacher and me um whenever like something doesn't go right or how I expect it I don't I try to not think like well that was a fail I think oh it's a learning opportunity But like I mean truly like what can I learn from that What can I take away cause it might not be a trash idea it might be a good idea but I just did it in a trash way without knowing you know what I could know in the future Um so just taking every you know every situation as a a way to problem solve to a better solution Um but some some fails I um cake pop on the daisy pop side cake pops estimation is really hard you'd think I'd be better at it Um but there were a couple Christmases where I was like well like we're gonna start making Christmas pops in the summer cause that's when we have like the manpower woman power like all the high schoolers and college girls are home so they can really make it Um and then come Christmas time I was like well we didn't sell nearly as many so now we have thousands of cake pops left over Um which I mean a problem to have I got to like donate them to hospitals and schools and such but that's also thousands of dollars you know that I am that I lost because of that Um so just trying to figure out like okay like how do we how do we do that better next time Um let's see what other fails are there I'm sure there are some a prepared list of

[01:11:58] **David Crabill:** Like, it sounds like there's not too many, it sounds like you, you've been pretty successful.

[01:12:04] **Amy Mucha:** no There there have been fails have been for sure But like I said I think we probably just like pivoted and then instead of of them as a failure be like oh we we learned from it and then we we went with it

[01:12:17] **David Crabill:** and it's hard to think of them on the spot. I know. You know, it's hard to come up with these specific examples, but, um.

[01:12:22] **Amy Mucha:** Mm-hmm

[01:12:23] **David Crabill:** One thing I wanted to ask you was, you know, how you've grown this business, you know, these businesses I should say, because I mean, you know, I'm sure word of mouth only got you so far. I mean, I may, maybe I'm wrong.

Maybe you know, word of mouth has taken your business to these levels, but probably not. Right? So what have you done to help grow the Daisy Pop side and then what did you learn from Daisy Pops that you then put in Daisy makes to make it what it is today?

[01:12:51] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah that's a great question And I I say that I like everything that I learned in my teaching life I used in Daisy Pops everything that I learned in [01:13:00] Daisy Pops I used in Daisy makes everything that I've learned in Daisy makes I use in what's popping con you know it's like an accumulation of all of those like learned experiences Um but I would say um I mean word of mouth is is huge It still is for us Um but going with word of mouth has also been social media So for Daisy Pops we started a a pop influencer program where like you know some like local people who were just you know big on social media we would send them cake pops They would have their own codes that you know people could use to save 10 or whatnot Um and then we would I would track them you know and just like see how how is this

going And with Daisy Pops I mean we had some some great people um in that program who did a phenomenal job Um but I kinda like learned the ropes of like an influencer program And so then when we started Daisy Makes I was like well we could take that pop influencer program and just plug it into Daisy Makes and that is where that really took off because if you're you know if you're a pop influencer for Daisy Pops and you like eat a cake pop or you know take a picture of your kids eating a cake pop it it's gone You know like you [01:14:00] you can get more but it's gone However Daisy makes like if they have this tool they're using this tool in every single video and they're making a lot of videos because they're also content creators you know as well as treat makers Um so so yeah just like bringing Rachel on board I think Rachel is the very first Popin um bringing Nicole on We have a a great group of about 20 of them and I'd say that our Popin codes are probably used in about oh I mean well over half of our orders So like it's it's widespread and that's how people find out about us Like so many people have actually walked into my Daisy Pop shop to pick up their Daisy Makes order And I say oh like what are you making What are you working on So I met so many people that way and almost all the time they're like oh yeah somebody in Texas I saw them That's Nicole you know I saw her on TikTok and I was like that's a cool tool I'm gonna order it and oh and it's local to me so I can go pick it up Um so so yeah just like that community that networking you know the the influencer network Um and then also just uh collaborations is another huge part like across the board of all of the businesses is we're doing something to find other people doing really cool things and collaborate

[01:15:10] **David Crabill:** Well, it's pretty crazy where you have how far you've come to this point. I, you're looking ahead, right? So what, what do you see in your future for this, for these businesses?

[01:15:25] **Amy Mucha:** Oh boy that's a great great question Uh again I think it's three different answers based on three different businesses Um Daisy Pops I I love the the pop education side of it Like I said um I love going into the schools I you know love just educating students on cake pops on entrepreneurship on problem solving on 3D printing Um so like I love the like spreading the cake pop joy going into the schools So I think pop education like for instance I go into my kids school um and their pre-K class they have Daisy Pops Day and they learned about shapes and then they cut out shape sprinkles and then they put those shape sprinkles on a paper cake pop and then they translate that into a Play-Doh cake pop still talking about the shapes And then I'm there and we actually like make real cake pops So you know it's like an integrated lesson I was like that would be so great pre-K through college You know like what what does that look like Um so I think that's that's what I would love to see for Daisy Pops Um for Daisy makes Whew I mean just you know keep on uh trucking there Um we've we've added so many fun things We my newest thing actually won a pitch competition to add daisy dough into our offerings where we make the cake pop daisy pops makes the cake pop dough we freeze it cake poppers can buy it so that they don't if they're new if they don't have time if they just want a stash of freezer dough they can pull out and use if they want it for content cake pops Um they they have that So um that's been the the newest thing to roll out there literally and figuratively And then uh what's popping con Um it's you know staring at me in the face Round two's coming in a month. But I think that that could be a really cool um like there is no like National Association of Cake pops There perhaps doesn't have to be you know like I I there might not

need to be Um but I think if there should be one that what's popping is probably the the thing to do it you know so just being like Hey like here are here are resources here are people you can ask you know here's perhaps like collective like discount codes for certain things Um so something like that So all three of those are like kind of pipe dreams in the in the future But um but yeah you know like I said just taking taking the world over for Cake Pops one cake pop or two at a time

[01:17:35] **David Crabill:** With Daisy Pops, have you thought maybe the Daisy makes is growing so fast that you're eventually gonna consider having to sell that business or just hand it off to someone entirely?

[01:17:49] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah, people ask me that often They're like so like are are you gonna keep on making cake cups Um and so and the answer is yes Although sometimes I do look at the sales of Daisy Pops and Daisy makes and I'm like We put so much effort into those cake pops and like we made that much money in like an hour you know at Daisy makes which is it's wild just because it's a food product versus a 3D printed you know plastic product which is just you know easier to make easier to ship it doesn't expire Um so there's a lot of easier things with this and to scale quite honestly Um but I think that the two of them really three three of them all three businesses they go so well hand in hand Um so even if you know Daisy Pops is like cake pops aren't as popular I'm like you know what I really don't really wanna like add cupcakes or cookies or whatever Daisy Pops is still like it could be the you know the sandbox essentially of Daisy makes right Like so like this is where we figure out all the cake pop problems that we can solve with Daisy makes and then we can make content for Daisy makes the kitchen and actually this is my when we were starting Daisy makes my my father he was like Amy He's like aren't you like shooting yourself in the foot here He's like like you wanna be the main cake pop you know bakery but like if you're making it easier for other people to make cake pops why Why Like isn't that gonna hurt you And I was like you know it it honestly it might you know and I'm okay with that So I was like because like if you are if you are in a in a gold rush right Do you want to be the one digging for gold You you sure don't What do you wanna be doing wanna be the one making the pickaxes right Selling the pickaxes because it's by chance you hit gold but everybody's buying pickaxes from you And so that's kinda like what Daisy Makes has become is that hey if these people eventually become bigger than Daisy Pops with their businesses and if they start taking orders from me okay cause guess what There's there's we're gonna grow with them You know like they're still coming to Daisy makes to get get these um tools that can help them grow their business Which we we did I think we've done that is last year we had fought we sold less cake pops than we have the previous two years, which I hated seeing that pop counter go down but but I was like I I think now I have to like live what I said you know I have to stick to it It's like Hey that's fine Are there so many more cake poppers out there because of these tools Are they taking some of the orders that I could have had Yes But it's fine

[01:20:20] **David Crabill:** Let's talk about that in terms of Daisy Makes, so, 'cause you're running through the list of all the things that are, you know better about the plastic tools you have. You know, they're easier to make, they're, they don't go bad. Easier to replicate too, right?

[01:20:35] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah, you got that.

[01:20:38] **David Crabill:** That competition.

[01:20:39] **Amy Mucha:** Oh yes Competition Um so we were the the first like I said to come out with this system Now there were other tools out there like there were plungers that are different There were 3D molds which are different Um but clearly everybody sees how Daisy Makes is doing and everybody using it They're like yeah I'm I'm gonna get in on that Which I mean no no fault Like yeah you see a good idea and then you know you you try to make it work for you Um which is why we started kinda at the very beginning We're like you know what We we need to patent this You know like this is um this is a new idea and uh we need to protect it otherwise people are gonna be knocking it off left and right Um so as of this past December we officially have a patent uh which is really really exciting And it's a utility patent so it covers the the system Um and so with that we can protect our idea like to an extent Um so some people who are just straight up copying us they changed their design to make it more like a plunger Um which I mean it kind of does the same thing It's just an inferior design um which is why we have a patent so we can protect this design Um but uh but yeah and it's it's really nice I mean it's it's frustrating a lot of the time to be like we're we're the ones that came up with this you know like Nate like came up with this color coding system like how the like it's you know blue and then it's clear and other people do that now too Um you know so it's it's just trying to still be a a kind human protecting our idea which is always a really fine line to walk That's a that's also a big struggle honestly is the whole like IP world It's it's brand new to me I'm still trying like to figure it out How do I like I just said how do I still be kind you know but but this is our idea So so yeah I'm still still figuring it out And thankfully our customers they're always so so great at like telling us like oh this person is copying you I'm like okay Like add add it to the to the list and then we'll check back and then see what if any actions need to be taken

[01:22:44] **David Crabill:** Well, you know, your 3D printers can only take you so far, right? Because you know, 114 printers is impressive.

[01:22:52] **Amy Mucha:** Mm-hmm

[01:22:52] **David Crabill:** you know, oftentimes 3D printers, I mean more and more now they're used for production, but they're more used for prototyping and then, you know, going to injection molding or something like that, which I know is an investment.

But I, I'm sure you've thought about this, right?

[01:23:09] **Amy Mucha:** Yes We we sure have um we have gone gone down the path of even like talking to a local injection molding company who we loved and if we ever go that route we would absolutely work with them Um the the tricky thing about what we offer though is it's not just one thing It's 200 some different shapes They have three different pieces each and they come in four sizes you know so we're talking easily like a thousand different things Like it's it's just a lot And we're like well we could never ever afford to injection mold all of those And plus 3D printing is nimble Like if somebody wants a custom cake popper we can make it for them like the next day you know even Um so we love that aspect of 3D printing I think where it would change is if we eventually start talking to Michaels to Hobby Lobby you know to like big retailers

and they're like well we need you know 20,000 of these And we're like oh like our our 3D printers cannot do that Um so that's when we figure out okay like what do we just sell the most popular size and shape you know like this this is it We just have one injection molded you know product and we sell that Um which I think might be the way the way to do it Um but we haven't had those conversations yet Hope to one day Um we'll gladly take any introductions to uh you know CEOs have said Hobby Lobby Michaels any other craft stores out there Um but uh but yeah but I always say this is another hard thing too like the in between you know like the in-between of that I know probably eventually we need to do that but I don't want to like spend that money and invest in that until I have an order But you can't get an order without being able to prove that you can provide all of those Um so that's that's the really tough thing in you know production manufacturing um out

[01:24:56] **David Crabill:** I know making a mold is quite expensive. Do you have any estimate for, like, if, if you took your, obviously, I'd assume your most popular one. It's a circle. And I know the blue is the, the, the large, the most popular. So you got two pieces there. Like, do you know what it would cost to make, or three, three, you, what would it cost to, um, do in three injection molds for just that?

[01:25:22] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah So I think we could probably do one mold with all three of them but then like everybody would get the cutter the popper and the tray Like you don't get to choose necessarily you just want the cutter and popper Um but I wanna say that 20 to 30,000 is just the like the fee for the injection mold like to keep producing these And that's not even counting the like the actual product that is then being produced Now granted is that product cheaper than 3D printing them But is it I mean how many this is what Nate always says how many 3D printers can we buy for that injection molding price And I was like that's so true It's so true. Um so so yeah But it would be costly well worth it if we need it Yes absolutely Um but we are just not quite to that point yet.

[01:26:09] **David Crabill:** You know, this is making me think, you mentioned you did a pitch competition. You know, it's making me think of Shark Tank, right? Like I'm sure you've thought about it. You know, it's like one of those things where you kind of need something that'll take you from where you are to that, you know, you know, Michael's stage or whatever it may be.

[01:26:31] **Amy Mucha:** Right Yeah And that's I've thought about people always ask like Shark Tank, Shark Tank, Shark Tank. I'm like well and this is another another Nate thing He always says like sure he is like but also if you're doing it on your own do you want do you want to share You know like do you wanna share I was like well I do it just for the exposure Um so perhaps something but I also think connections too is a big part of why to do it So I've been toying around with the idea and actually this is I meant to mention this for the Daisy Makes like expansion Um right now Daisy Makes is in like the cake pop arena solidly you know like if you are making cake pops you can you're gonna use Daisy Makes I am not in like the lifestyle arena at all Like I I need to be in the hands of moms with their kids you know just trying to like get through the day like let's do cake pops today Um so that is actually what I really want to do is uh start selling and we've we've done a few prototypes like we've done a few um presales of it but uh PIY kits so pop it yourself kits that come with the dough that come with the popper that come

with the chocolate the sticks the sprinkles the stand all of those things that you need to do like a fun family activity So I was like there are you know make your own cookie kits everywhere So there need to be cake pop ones too So that's another thing that I would love to to look into and how to expand Daisy makes beyond just the cake pop bubble

[01:27:46] **David Crabill:** Well, you've come really far. Um, I'm sure you know, if you step back even just a couple years, you would never imagine you'd be where you are today. When you look back, what has been meaningful about this, this unexpected journey?

[01:28:04] **Amy Mucha:** The people .Yeah it's absolutely the people you know meeting our Daisy Pops customers meeting my daisy pops coworkers um moving forward to you know like Daisy makes like and I my favorite thing about Daisy makes is that it kind of took me like I I am always much more community over competition rest of the the whole cake pop community as a whole I would like to think is kind of like that too but moving from like just being a cake popper To being like you know Daisy makes like here I'm making the tools to like help you That kind of took me right out of the competition you know like people don't even think of me necessarily that way but it's more so as like a help you know rather than a a hindrance essentially Um and so and I think that's kind of what then made what's popping con be like such a such a logical next move. Honestly, just be like okay like would you come to a conference that another like a fellow cake popper's putting on perhaps but will you come to a conference you know thrown by like one of the supply companies who brings all the other companies in so that you can meet these people and these vendors you know like yeah And so it's made also like presented great relationships with our you know other people in the cake pop world like other um suppliers it's like clear bags We've been buying their bags forever now We're great friends with them You know like we like we'll do collaborations you know we talk often uh stove and Co is where we get all of our our melting wafers and our mix our cake mixes and our frosting And again like we're we're great friends with them now Like we know all of these people behind these companies Um yeah and it's just it's so fun being so deep in the cake pops community and I'm so grateful for all of those friendships those relationships you know um that that have come into my life because of a silly little treat on a stick.

[01:29:45] **David Crabill:** I know you have What's Popping Con coming up at the end of April here, and then, you know, can you also share a little bit about that and how people can find you, how people can learn about Daisy Pops, Daisy Makes, etcetera.

[01:30:00] **Amy Mucha:** Sure yeah well What's Popping Con is April 16th through 19th in Kent Ohio I make everybody come to me. So we have it at our local hotel and conference center which is within walking distance of Daisy Pops. So we do a lot of cake pop workshops that are add-ons that are taught by the cake pops artists you know that you see on social media. So we have those workshops and then our big like your registration ticket covers two and a half days of cake pops fun Um and as you've probably gathered I am much more interested in like the business side of things So this conference is for if you want to I I say grow your business but it's really just improve your business If you're like you know what I'm I'm doing just just fine but it takes up all of my life Well you could do the same thing without it taking up all of your life If you come to what's having gone and you know learn how to do things more efficiently um you know

how to how to market better like how to do so many things just learning from your fellow cake poppers Um so that is What's Popping Con again April 16th through 19th in Kent Ohio Um the website for that is [whatspoppingcon.com](https://whatspoppingcon.com) has all the information there for registration um hotel all of all of the things uh Daisy Makes is [daisymakes.com](https://daisymakes.com) and Daisy Pops is [daisypops.com](https://daisypops.com). And then the social media that uh are attached to all of those as well are all up and running on Instagram on Facebook and on TikTok.

[01:31:27] **David Crabill:** Well, thank you so much, Amy, for sharing your incredible story with us today.

[01:31:32] **Amy Mucha:** Yeah, thank you again for letting me pop on. I've so enjoyed this. Clearly I can talk about cake pops for a long long time but thanks for the great questions and leading the conversation so well.

[01:31:44] **David Crabill:** That wraps up another episode of the Forrager Podcast.

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