

Interview with Jamaica Trinnaman, founder of HelloBulk Markets

03/18/2024

Interview with Jamaica Trinnaman, founder of HelloBulk Markets

Meet Jamaica Trinnaman, the owner and founder of [HelloBulk Markets](#), a bulk goods store that offers a selection of items such as body care and household items all for a reasonable price. In this interview, she gives us insight into the process behind starting her company, how she chooses her products, the most rewarding part of her work, and more!

1. Tell us about Hello Bulk Markets. Why did you and your team start the company and what societal needs are you hoping to fulfill?

I started the company after working in the grocery industry for many years and feeling that it could be done better. The first store I worked in had a good bulk department, and they even offered body care products for a while; and it just made sense to me. As I continued to work in grocery, I always wished I could purchase items by weight rather than having to buy the wrong size or deal with the cost and waste of packaging. So, I constantly thought about this concept and eventually began designing the store I wanted to shop at in my head. Many years later, I started seeing stores like that pop up in the UK and Canada, and I thought, 'You know what? I need this to open here in Utah, and I should be the one to do it.' So, I started seriously looking into opening up in 2016.

2. What does sustainability mean to you at your company or organization?

Sustainability means being thoughtful in the ways in which we consume goods. I think there are common-sense solutions to the bigger problems we are facing, and I don't see why we would overlook those common-sense solutions and make them accessible.

3. How does your company incentivize individuals to make the change over to bulk items?

The first thing I would really talk to people about when I was designing the company in my head was the idea of shampoo containers. I felt that it was really relatable for them to think about when they get to the bottom of that shampoo bottle and have to go to the grocery store. Don't you want to avoid having to throw that bottle away or put it in recycling when you're unsure if it will get recycled? Even on a foundational level, don't you want to avoid buying another bottle when the one in front of you is perfectly fine? That's what resonated with people: the idea that why wouldn't you just reuse this perfectly good dispenser of a shampoo bottle, especially if you could refill it. So, that was kind of the thing as I talked to people who weren't familiar with the concept or didn't feel like a natural fit to grasp the concept; they would usually latch onto that pretty readily. It made sense to them.

So even when I would come up against them out in the community, we'd see each other, they'd be like 'Jamaica, you know what stuck with me? Every time I finish my shampoo, I think, what's the sense in buying a new shampoo bottle?' So that is something that resonated well, and I think that if people just start looking around them, at one or two things that they could refill, it's a place to start, and we're always encouraging them to start small. Don't try to go zero waste and collect all your wrappers in a jar for a year. Start small and build from there because you want it to be a sustainable change and a consistent change that makes them feel good about their decisions.

4. How do you decide what items to feature in your store?

We want a good selection, but we have standards around it. Are we offering environmental savings? Are we offering this product in packaging that is reducing additional

packaging waste and helping the planet? So, when looking at things, we're always considering whether it's a quality product and if there's an environmental benefit we're offering. One thing that is really great is bringing in local products because with local suppliers, you often create a circular system where items are returned, rewashed, and reused, which is the ultimate goal. So, we just look for a wide variety of quality products that also offer environmental savings.

5. What is the most rewarding part of your work?

For sure, it's about seeing people value the concept, change their habits, and become happier because they have this option. Now that we've been doing this for about six years, even during hard times, there's always someone who comes in and says, "thank you so much for being here," and you can tell that our regular customers eat well and live better lives because they have this option, solely because it aligns with their values. I think that's my favorite part. It's also rewarding to see the community build around the concept and to be able to tap in and get to know the community better myself, understanding what's going on in the community that's really thoughtful and conscientious.

6. Where can our readers find you and what would you advise they bring with them when visiting?

You can find us at one of two different locations. We have a location on 300 West, at 1185 S 300 W in Salt Lake City. Alternatively, we have a smaller version of the market in a shared market space, located at approximately 2100 S and 2100 E in the Neighborhood Hive. Additionally, we have a website where local customers can arrange for delivery or pickup. They can pre-order items and have them ready for pickup, packaged in paper bags and glass containers that are returnable for a deposit. There are several ways to find us. Most people come for the first time without any containers and simply assess our offerings, which is totally acceptable. However, they may choose to bring one or two containers to refill. Our item list is available online, so customers can plan their visit and see if we have the items they want. This list can be accessed through our Instagram or our website. Alternatively, customers can always bring 1-2 containers and start from there.

7. What vision do you see for Hello Bulk Markets in the future?

I would love to see smaller versions of Hello Bulk throughout the city and expanding to surrounding cities. People ask if I want a bigger one, you know, and I'm like, 'No, I just want this to be accessible to people in some form.' So that they can start creating an impact and living this better life. I would love to see a number of small Hello Bulk stores accessible throughout the valley. Eventually, it would be great to franchise. There are so many people interested in opening these types of shops that I think it would be great if people could just open their own with a start-up kit and function in different communities.

Recent Posts

`$('.justify-content-end').removeClass('justify-content-end');`