

Wild 'n Wooly

Dawson

Started: 1989

Contact: Rene and Romy Jensen

Wild 'n Wooly is a unique boutique that sells clothing and accessories, everything from t--shirts to very expensive dresses.



Getting started: Rene and Romy believed there was both a Yukon and tourist market in the community for a store that sold stylish, quality clothing. They did a business plan to help secure financing from the Federal Business Development Bank and sold many personal possessions to raise adequate resources.

Key to success: Quality service and a relaxed, social atmosphere have been a key to making Wild 'n Wooly a success. The owners and employees spend a lot of time visiting and talking with customers over coffee in the store. There is no pressure on store visitors to buy. In order to help compete with Whitehorse, merchandise is often priced lower to attract business on an ongoing basis. Like most small businesses, there were many years of long, hard work before the business began to provide an income.

Lessons learned: Romy believes it is important to "do your own thing" and not get caught up in responding to other sales trends of other businesses. It is important to look for new products and stay a step ahead. When getting started, the skepticism of some was daunting but maintaining confidence in the concept of the store helped bring people on board. As Wild 'n Wooly helped to make Dawson a destination for shopping, community support increased.

Future of business: Wild 'n Wooly now stands securely on its own. There are no immediate plans for change but the owners would consider selling the business, to benefit from the success of their investment, if the opportunity presented itself. In the meantime, they plan to continue to run the business as usual, enjoying the rewards of an established enterprise.