



**MUSTAFA
MOHAMED
OWNER OF
KITCHEN SPOT
LTD.**

- **Right now we are focused on growing our product line; sourcing new colours and building our door profile library so we can meet the unique needs of each of our clients.**
- **Along with that, we are beginning to plan our future showroom locations across Canada.**
- **I see a strong future in the industry especially as Canada grows. After all, everyone needs a kitchen!**

Mustafa Mohamed is an Egyptian-born businessman who previously helped build a faucet factory to become one of the leaders in the Turkish market. When he arrived in Canada, he found there was need for a kitchen cabinet company and established Kitchen Spot in Dartmouth, NS in May of 2021. At that time Mustafa recognized the supply chain was challenging so he set processes in place to avoid any potential delays.

Growing company

Kitchen Spot owns a 7,600 sq ft. shop and a 1,500 sq ft showroom with a team of 7. They produce approximately 20 kitchens a month with their current capacity. However, they are in the process of setting up a second operations in Ottawa, ON with a 10,000 sq ft workshop and 1,500 sq ft showroom. Their goal is to open up the second operations in late summer/early fall and it will operate in the same way as the main operations in NS.

The future plan is to open additional showrooms moving west across Canada, but for now that remains a longer term goal.

Mustafa is proud of what he and his team have accomplished and was happy to tell us more about his company.

CKCA: Who is your customer base?



Mustafa: We offer design to install service for our customers directly. This includes new kitchens as well as kitchen renovations for anyone who just wants a fresh new look without the price tag of a brand new kitchen. We are also working directly with builders, specializing in multi-unit buildings as we have the capacity to meet those needs in a timely manner.



CKCA: You have invested a lot in equipment to hit the ground running, what machinery is the most valuable to you?

Mustafa: The CNC and laminating machines are the workhorses in the shop. Almost every piece produced in the shop

is going to pass through one or both of those machines. Fine tuning those machines has been a focus of ours to limit potential waste. Additionally, because we are a small team, our goal is to cross train each of our employees on as many machines as possible, and work together to continually improve our processes.

CKCA: Are you planning on hiring more employees?

Mustafa: Yes, as we grow, we plan to grow our team with us at a comfortable pace. Currently we are in the process of finding our starting team for the Ottawa location. Although, stressful at times it is very exciting when you find the person who fits just right.

CKCA: Based on your experience in the industry so far, where do you think the industry is going?

Mustafa: I see a strong future, after all everyone needs a kitchen. However, this certainly will not come without challenges. Especially things like the labour shortage which involved a bit of patience and creativity to build a strong, lasting team. A factor I think would strengthen the industry is if there was more focus on maintaining quality across the industry with programs like the CKCA certification program. If this were a requirement when builders were looking for kitchen suppliers, I believe this would strengthen the industry as we all begin to reach the same standards. This would surely create confidence in the Canadian cabinetry market.

Growing at a comfortable pace

PROFESSIONALISM
QUALITY
INNOVATION



JULY/AUGUST 2022

From Nova Scotia to Ontario and beyond...

“From anthropology to kitchens!”

From anthropology to kitchens

We also had the pleasure of talking to a very enthusiastic employee and Mustafa's right hand person -Tracy Loveys, the Office Administrator. A student of anthropology Tracy saw the job post and it caught her attention. While her studies wouldn't guarantee her a job, she could relate to the job post that Mustafa used which said “are you a Pam?”. For those who watched the show “The Office”, Pam started as a receptionist and grew more confident in her role and became the office administrator. Tracy could relate to that character and the job, so she applied and got the job. She also continues to complete her studies.

Tracy believes that anthropology will be helpful in the future because it provides her with a wide breath of knowledge and allows her to take on a multitude of challenges with creativity and compassion.

CKCA: What drew you to the kitchen cabinet industry?

Tracy: Its an opportunity to work with people and help meet their needs. My studies in anthropology have more than prepared me for that!

CKCA: Did you even know the industry existed?

Tracy: I suppose I figured kitchens got there



somehow, and it's not magic although that would be fun! It's been exciting getting into the industry and learning all there is to know about the cabinet business. In all honesty, I am pretty sure this year was the first time I heard the term “toe kick”. That being said, I love to be in a kitchen cooking and creating with friends and family. So working in this industry just feels natural!

CKCA: Do you love what you do, if so why?

Tracy: I truly do. In the past waking up in the morning for work was not a particularly thrilling task for me. However, now at Kitchen Spot, I'm excited for what a new day will bring. Our team really helps, as we work together to solve problems as they come up which we all know is inevitable. Working together rather than playing the blame game or pushing the problem onto others, I think is key. It creates an enjoyable work atmosphere, which in my experience can be hard to find.

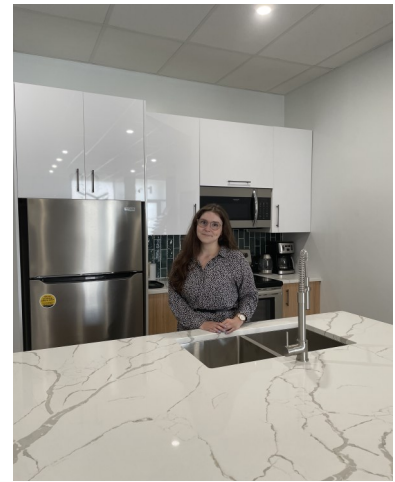
CKCA: Why do you stay working in this job?

Tracy: I have watched many people in my life slog off to jobs that made them miserable every day. I would very much like to avoid this in my life. I think the work culture here is a huge element in why I enjoy my job. Everyone honestly seems to be enjoying themselves, even with all the stress that can come as we set up the business. As cliché as it sounds, teamwork really does make the dream work and that is part of what we are trying to ingrain in our company from day one!

CKCA: What do you think woodworking shops should be doing to attract more young people like you to work in this industry?

Tracy: Personally, I think part of the issue is most young people have it in their mind (or are told so) the best path in life is to go to university to get a nice cushy 9 to 5 job. The thing about that is that no one tells you its mostly just pushing around papers, making money for someone else, not very fulfilling I'd say.

Another element to attract young people is creative hiring practices. You can't just throw a job ad up on Indeed, come back in a few days and hope your perfect candidate found you. It can be a slow, sometimes frustrating process of trying to find the right candidate. So there's a bit of a need to just go out there and find where they're hiding. One quick way to find young people interested in the industry is contacting local trade schools to work with them. We are looking forward to



hopefully having an apprentice or two from the local cabinetry program in the upcoming year. This is a great way to test run potential team members before making the final commitment.

CKCA: Do you think taking woodshop in high school helped to expose you to this industry and at least made it more familiar to you as you contemplated applying for a job in this sector?

Tracy: Yes, it helped initially with just being comfortable when out back in the shop. I think one of the best parts about woodshop in high school is also one of the best parts about working at Kitchen Spot. Seeing the process from design to finished kitchen is so fun. Having a tangible product at the end of all that work is so very rewarding. There is something so nice about building a project with your own two hands, there's just nothing like it!

CKCA: Do you think more women should consider woodworking and if so, why?

Tracy: Absolutely I do. There is so much value brought to a team with diversity. If you don't want to just take my word for it, I've heard from multiple people who've been in the industry for decades who see the immense value added when women join their team. Women often bring a new perspective to shop processes, as well as it being a comfort for homeowners to have a woman present on install. Woodworking and the industry are creative and fun things to be a part of. I think many types of people can find their home in this industry. I think I have!

Love what you DO! Work in the kitchen cabinet industry!

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