

# Edina teens' bath bomb company hits \$20M in sales

"Sisterpreneurs" juggle \$20M bath fizzers company as they look to their futures.

By [Catherine Roberts](#) Star Tribune  
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Jerry Holt/Star Tribune

Isabel Bercaw, left, and sister Caroline continue to be the creative force behind their company, Da Bomb Bath Fizzers.

Isabel and Caroline Bercaw still like to mess around in the kitchen, coming up with new recipes for their bath bombs and other projects.

“It takes us back to the beginning,” Caroline said.

There is not much time to do that these days when it isn't influenced by parameters, market research and client expectations.

Da Bomb Bath Fizzers — the Edina business the two teenagers started at an art fair when they were 11 and 12 — has grown into a \$20 million operation with more than 100 year-round employees and another 100 for the holiday rush.

While the teens' mother, Kim, is the company's CEO, and their father, Ben, the chief financial and operating officer, the teens remain intimately involved in running the company as chief creative officers, juggling schoolwork, activities and work.

Edina High School worked with the family to create a schedule that allowed the teens to complete schoolwork but get off early enough to have time at the office each afternoon. Their parents have pledged to take their lead on how involved they want to be in the business.

So far, the answer is “all in.”

This year, though, Isabel, 18, started college at the University of St. Thomas, creating a new complication for the family business. She works remotely most days, creating a new dynamic and communications challenge. Her parents encouraged her to get her footing, explore her interests and think about if she wanted to step back some from the day-to-day operations.

And the first couple of months, Isabel did take some time. She joined the boxing club. She took time to make new friends. But she has found herself increasing her work time again. She said she missed the dynamics of living what she is learning in business classes.

“I won’t lie,” she said. “It has been a big challenge balancing my business and school.”

Caroline, 17, and an Edina High senior, is now in the thick of picking her college path and will ultimately need to make decisions on her involvement, too.

“Ben and I have always encouraged Isabel and Caroline when the time comes for college to go off and explore their interests,” Kim Bercaw said. The couple realize their daughters need to know more than Da Bomb and might not want to be so absorbed in that business when they are in their 30s and 40s. So they keep the conversation open.

In the meantime, the company has taken over their family time — which is OK with them. Even when they have family dinners or walks around Lake Harriet and decide to talk about other things, the discussion eventually winds back to Da Bomb. Younger brother Harry, 13, also has contributed to the company.

“It gives us unique opportunities to spend time together,” Kim Bercaw said. “A lot of teens are going off and making their friends a focus, we are connected through the business in ways we wouldn’t have been otherwise.”

The “sisterpreneurs,” a term the Bercaws trademarked, spent the summer perfecting recipes for “Good Clean Beauty,” a book coming out in March of DIY recipes for beauty products and cosmetics. This is their second book. The first, “Fizz Boom Bath,” has recipes similar to what their company makes.

Da Bomb — which was among regional winners this year of the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award — has doubled its sales in two years, both by increasing the volume of products and the number of stores in which they are sold, which include Target, Ulta Beauty and other top retailers. Target is selling an exclusive Da Bomb advent calendar this holiday season.

This year, Da Bomb introduced a line of bath-related products, including a “Bath Shot,” which are bath salts, and “Bath Fizz,” a foaming powder. There is also a foaming body scrub for showers. Like the original bath bombs, a feature that sets these items apart is a surprise found after they dissolve, whether it’s a message on waterproof paper or a fun item.

However, the original bath bombs in a growing number of scents and themes are still the bulk of the business. Ben Bercaw said Da Bomb also has made licensing deals, for example landing the “Frozen II” rights for bath products.

“That is big and exciting,” he said. “That’s going to be a key part of our strategy moving forward.”

So far, the company's growth has been funded through reinvesting profits. The family has had offers for investment or purchase, but none so far has piqued their interest. And while all four emphasized they keep an open mind, they don't see selling anytime soon.

"It will be all about circumstances," Kim Bercaw said. "We are not actively seeking it out."

That means it is especially crazy right now for the family filling holiday orders. The company has contracted out some of the work, but the full-year workforce, plus temporary workers, are focused on filling orders right now, which is the busiest time of year for Da Bomb. The 40,000-square-foot warehouse, manufacturing and office space in Edina is at full capacity. The company has space in other buildings temporarily to handle the volume.

What will the family do once the holiday rush is over? Kim Bercaw admits they will start thinking about and developing new items for next year. "We have the holidays all year-round."

Business team leader **Catherine Roberts** oversees the retail, manufacturing and energy beats as well as business special projects. Throughout her career, she has covered topics as varied as cop/fire news to health care, higher education, arts and the advertising industry.

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