



Avendco, LLC (MBE/ACDBE)

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In the bustling landscape of vending machine businesses, George Frazer stands out as an entrepreneur driven by a distinctive vision to care for his family and an unwavering commitment to innovation. As the founder and owner of Avendco, LLC, Frazer has played a pivotal role in reshaping the vending machine industry. His dedication extends beyond mere innovation; he has also been instrumental in introducing beloved local favorites like Ted Drewes Frozen Custard in a vending machine to St. Louis Lambert International Airport. "When I traveled frequently, I often flew into Omaha and noticed Omaha Steaks stands at the airport," Frazer recalls. I started thinking. What iconic St. Louis offering could we bring to Lambert Airport to represent our city? That's when the idea for Ted Drewes struck me."

While this hometown delicacy has been available at the airport for several years, Frazer's Avendco, LLC has taken its vending services a step further by integrating cutting-edge smart vending machine technologies into its business model, propelling both the company and customer experience to new heights.

"We have transitioned into a more expansive type of service than what you traditionally think of in a vending machine," Frazer says. We have a full line of automatic and unattended retail through a kiosk-type setup. Our machines take all major credit cards. We have real-time data to monitor our inventory. We know if there are power outages, we know when doors are left open, and we know when there are changes in machines that are temperature sensitive and this is all managed remotely."

The technology behind the machines is also noteworthy. "It's more than what you see while standing in front of the machines. Behind the machines we utilize all the latest innovative technologies to maintain an approach to keeping the machines stocked. All of our products have traceability when they leave the warehouse, so we know where they are going," Frazer says.

Avendco partners with equipment manufacturers to customize smart vending machines according to specific client requirements, such as the tailored Ted Drewes vending machines at the airport. Notably, Avendco serves as the primary contractor for the airport's Vending Concessionaire Contract, overseeing the management of all beverage and snack vending machines. Beyond Lambert Airport, the company provides vending machine services to local governments, universities, and private sector clients. "Our vending machines offer a diverse array of options, including hot and frozen foods, snacks, coffee, cold foods, and other convenient items like over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, motion sickness medication, and antacids. During the peak of the pandemic, we provided essential personal protective gear like masks and hand sanitizer," Frazer emphasizes.

Avendco's innovative approach in the vending machine industry has not gone unnoticed. The company has garnered recognition from publications like the Wall Street Journal and local media for its groundbreaking vending solutions.

Frazer's trailblazing innovations show no signs of slowing down. "We've developed a state-of-the-art machine capable of storing and cooking on-demand meal preparations directly from the same equipment. The system is equipped with rapid cookers and a conveyor system."

Avendco, headquartered in Hazelwood, is currently collaborating with a local food service company to fine-tune the on-demand meal preparation cutting-edge technology and plans to introduce it to the airport in hopes of achieving the same level of success as the Ted Drewes venture.

Avendco aims to continue its trajectory of growth and innovation by restoring a favorite family product line. "We own a company called Sundance Snacks. It is not in production right now, but the main product is red hot corn chips in an orange bag with a cowboy on the front of the package," Frazer states.

Frazer feels honored to be recognized as a success story by St. Louis Lambert International Airport Business Diversity Development office, alongside other accolades for his innovation and business savvy.

While reflecting on his beginnings, Frazer acknowledges the challenges he faced when he started the company. He was a single father with a nine-year-old special needs son and balancing a full-time job. "I started the business in 2004 out of necessity to accommodate my son's medical appointments and extended hospital stays," Frazer shares. "And much like the unpredictability of entrepreneurship, managing my son's illness required resilience, perseverance, and an unwavering commitment to overcoming obstacles."

Despite the numerous hurdles encountered along the way, Frazer's dedication has undoubtedly paid off. Today, his son is 34 years old, married with a daughter and thriving on his own. Frazer, who is married and the proud father of seven children, often refers to his vending machine business as his eighth child. Avendco has five employees. Frazer credits his success to the incredible dedication of his employees, acknowledging that without their hard work and support, his achievements would have been impossible to attain.

With his bustling family life and thriving business, Frazer finds time to give back to the community by providing internships and scholarships to aspiring young entrepreneurs and supporting local charities and businesses.