



THE CALABASH

By: Project: Living well

Background:

Inspired by a water container called the “Calabash” while in Latin America, we set out to bring an urban version of the container to the market as the flagship for the Project: Living Well brand.



Phase 1: Inspiration

The original Calabash was discovered while drilling a water well for children in rural Latin America. Its form and functionality was unlike anything found in the United States marketplace.

Our team left Latin America, inspired to bring the story of the Calabash home with us.

Phase 2: Market research

To understand the Calabash, we scoured the internet for information on its history. We found that it was one of the most used water containers of all time to carry the essentials to life, and is still commonly used in less developed parts of the world.

We then determined the potential competitors, which included Nalgene, Sigg, Kleen Kanteen and US Canteen. We found that most of the competitors provided containers focused primarily upon function, yet left much to be desired in terms of form, style and a deeper story.

Our team sampled various capacities, shapes and mouth size openings while running comparisons versus other water containers on the market. We arrived at a 28oz. capacity, a curved shape, wide mouth opening, custom carrying case & strap, made from high quality, recyclable & BPA-free plastic.

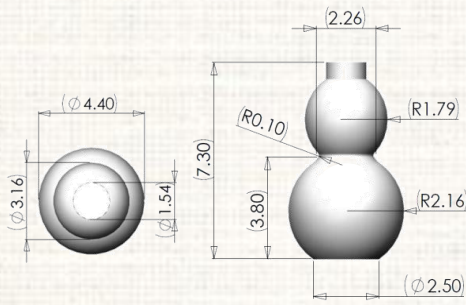


Phase 3: Conceptualization

Our team began sketching to incorporate various elements into the design. Working with designers to create Photoshop mock-ups of the urban Calabash, we began narrowing our designs to only a few choices.

We isolated the single design after seeking feedback from 20-30 potential customers in our target market.





Phase 4: 3D Design

Since the final design requires plastic injection and custom sewn textiles, we needed to bring on a rapid prototype designer and fashion designer. Working with the rapid prototype designer located on the west coast, we created a 3D model of the Calabash using AutoCAD. Once we had the final dimensions, we worked with a Chicago based fashion designer to create the customer fabric case to fit snugly over the bottle.



Phase 5: Prototyping

With a tight deadline, the first rapid prototyped version of the Calabash was created on a RepRap 3D printer with our west coast designer. After multiple iterations to the fabric case, one design led us to a case that was easy to remove and clean, yet still retained a snug fit- a requirement for the final product.



Phase 6: Production

We visited Guatemalan marketplaces to source authentic textiles. And working with ethical and fair wage overseas manufacturers, we determined set up costs, minimum order quantities and estimated turn around times for production.

Phase 7: Distribution

To raise the necessary capital to cover production costs, we crowd sourced the Calabash through IndieGoGo.com. Within 45 days, \$10,000 in pre-orders were made; nearly half our campaign goal. The Calabash also gained the attention of a number of websites including TrendHunter.com, SocialBusiness.org, StartupSlingshot.com, BeCoolBePositive.org, among others.



Final Product

