

**ESCAPE GETTYSBURG**  
59 N Fifth Street  
Gettysburg, PA  
717-769-5397  
[www.escapegettysburg.com](http://www.escapegettysburg.com)



**Adams County**

**Industries: Tourism**

**Founded: 2016**

**SBDC Assistance:  
Business Planning,  
Marketing Assistance,  
Financial Projections**

Cheryl helped bring our perspectives together and was extremely helpful in incorporating each of our ideas.

*-Rick. Oleszczuk*

**Shippensburg University SBDC**  
405 Grove Hall  
1871 Old Main Drive  
Shippensburg, PA 17257  
P (717) 477-1935  
F (717) 477-4010  
[sbdc@ship.edu](mailto:sbdc@ship.edu)  
[www.ship.edu/sbdc](http://www.ship.edu/sbdc)

## Escape Gettysburg: A Family Adventure

It began on a family vacation in Tennessee. Rick Oleszczuk, his wife Erin and their three kids needed to escape their vacation lodging and find something entertaining, and indoors, to do. Rick, somewhat annoyed and uninterested in the idea, reluctantly agreed to join the family at a local escape room. It “turned out to be a unique experience and a ton of fun,” said Rick.

Back home in Pennsylvania sometime later, Rick, a professional in network security, and Erin, a stay at home mother with three increasingly independent children, were brainstorming possible ideas for a part-time business opportunity. Somewhat “tongue-in-cheek,” as Rick describes it, “I suggested we could do an escape room.” They soon began putting a business plan together.



Rick and Erin next reached out to the SBDC for assistance with the business plan. According to Rick, Cheryl Young, SBDC Business Consultant, “reviewed their initial plan, tweaked it and shared concerns regarding potential pitfalls.” The SBDC assisted in developing conservative data-based assumptions to inform and build out financial projections for the business and explored potential funding options. Rick explained that they were unable to secure a business loan, stating “there was a lack of proof of concept in the Gettysburg area.” This did not deter them – they “self-funded everything.” They established a s-corporation and utilized funds available through their home equity and “loaned the business the money.” They signed a three-year lease on a recently vacated Penn DOT facility and began renovations.

In March 2017 they opened “Escape Gettysburg” with two rooms. They now have three rooms operational and currently are building out a fourth. The business remains a family, and friends, affair. The Oleszczuks’ three children, all in their adolescent years, actively work in the business and, according to Rick, they enjoy it and it is a great learning experience for them.



The first two years have met or exceeded expectations for the business. Rick explained that they have worked to partner with Gettysburg tourism and lodging enterprises and many of these entities greatly appreciate, and actively promote, the new entertainment activity Escape Gettysburg offers visitors. Escape Gettysburg is an experience for folks of all ages - for fun, for teambuilding and, for some, competition.