



MICROHUB HANDBOOK

A complete guide to craft business
model transformation



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PARTNERS





TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Introduction</u>	03
<u>How to use the handbook for LEARNING</u>	05
<u>How to use the handbook for TEACHING</u>	07
<u>Module 1 - Spotting opportunities</u>	08
<u>Module 2 - Business planning & development</u>	28
<u>Module 3 - Business launch & management</u>	53
<u>Module 4 - Financial and Economic literacy</u>	78
<u>Module 5 - Networking</u>	98
<u>Module 6 - Ethical and Sustainable Thinking</u>	124
<u>Module 7 - Branding</u>	144

INTRODUCTION

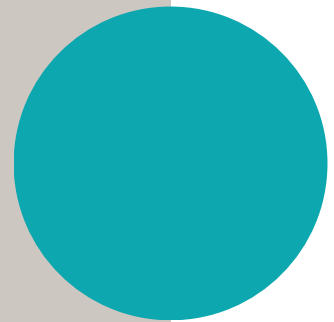
This handbook is part of the project "Microhub ~ Promoting creativity microbusiness through web tools in rural areas" and has been created to help rural crafters and artisans improve their business skills in order for them to achieve more success in their chosen field. Often, business acumen and knowhow are pushed aside in favour of the creative process, which is considered the 'bread and butter' of a maker's life. Creativity is first and foremost on the artisan's mind with little attention paid to the important role that business conduct and knowledge plays in the ultimate impact of the maker's efforts.

Without the relevant business skills to match the crafter's creative talents and enthusiasm, the chance of long-term success is diminished, and financial stability is put in jeopardy. What they make and create does not get the attention it deserves and what may have become popular or profitable gets left behind or idles in relative obscurity. It is only by having a sound knowledge of business principles that a maker can confidently predict that he or she will be able to turn a hobby into a potential career that will support them long into retirement.



Contained in this handbook are various training modules that can give the artisan a unique insight into the business side of their craft. There are seven modules, and they include everything that a crafter needs to enhance their chances of success. Each plan is deliberately and strategically laid out to allow a maker to learn and exploit any business talents they may have. The modules in the handbook are as follows:

- **Spotting opportunities**
- **Business planning & development**
- **Business launch & management**
- **Financial and Economic literacy**
- **Networking**
- **Ethical and Sustainable Thinking**
- **Branding**



This handbook is an ideal guide, but for a more complete experience, please refer to the MOOC (massive open online course) for an additional three modules (8, 9, 10) to facilitate further learning. The MOOC also provides the opportunity for self-assessment and peer to peer exchange of insights and ideas. Along with this, the crafter or artisan will be able to find additional resources, such as links to real business case studies, recommended reading, templates for business and financial planning, and so on.

Extra Modules found in the MOOC,

- Module 8: Additional learning resources and practical case studies
- Module 9: Additional resources for project and peer-exchange based learning
- Module 10: Pre and post-study assessment

The online training course can be accessed via this link:
<https://microhub.erasmus.site/online-tool/mooc/>

HOW TO USE THE HANDBOOK FOR LEARNING

This handbook can be used as a stand-alone course for crafters and artisans looking to improve their skills. Each module covers an important aspect of business and gives a good overview of that area. Crafters can choose to study all modules or pick the ones that he or she feels they are weakest in. They can be studied in any order and at a time that most suits the maker.

For example, if you feel that you are strong in business planning but weak in ethics, you can skip the second module “Business planning & development” and go straight to the sixth “Ethical and Sustainable Thinking”. Or if you love branding (module 7) and promoting yourself as an artist, but you have no idea about the financial management of your personal business, you can opt for module 4 “Financial and Economic literacy”, and then afterwards perhaps delve deeper into those topics you feel more comfortable with.



Before commencing the handbook, there is a pre-study assessment in module 10 of the MOOC, which allows you to take a quick test and gauge your knowledge of the field. You will then be given guidance as to which modules would be most relevant for you to study. Furthermore, there is also a series of multiple-choice questions for you to answer so that you can test what you have learned and your new competences in the latter chapters of the MOOC. This part can serve as a monitoring of one's own progress in each of the themes, and will give the learner more independence and autonomy in their learning.



Both the handbook and the MOOC work in accordance with each other and in a complementary manner. For even greater immersive and educational value, additional information and learning suggestions can be found in module 8, whereas module 9 contains reflection questions and discussion points in an open style forum, and finally module 10 in the MOOC has several self-assessment questions which can give the crafter or artisan a better overview of where he or she stands in relation to understanding and development of their skills and abilities. -

For those without access to the internet, the handbook is a flexible and complete learning resource that will teach you all the skills and knowhow you need in order to bring your business to the next level.

HOW TO USE THE HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING

The handbook is a useful resource for a guide or teacher to utilise in their classes. It can offer a great deal of insight and value to the teacher as it is an all-round course focused on the transformation of craft microbusinesses, particularly considering digital and sustainability driven opportunities. It can be a supplemental resource to their normal teaching, or they can use the entire handbook.



The handbook is also an invaluable tool for a mentor who is looking to guide a crafter or artisan (or group of crafters and artisans) to a better understanding of the required business principles in building and nurturing a stable and strong microbusiness. It is a more than adequate tool to teach the role of business in a crafter's life and has everything needed to bring the maker's skills and knowledge into line with what they should be for immediate and sustained success.

A teacher or mentor can also combine the handbook with the MOOC (massive open online course) to exploit all ten available modules, and maximise the benefit to the artisan or maker. The extra three modules in the MOOC include multiple choice and self-assessment questions where the teacher can test the student's understanding of what he or she has been taught, a recommended reading list to beef up experience and knowledge, and an open-style forum where suggestions are given and which can then be discussed and debated in the classroom.



SPOTTING OPPORTUNITIES

SPOTTING OPPORTUNITIES

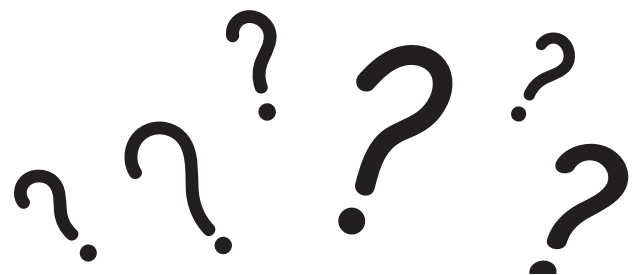
HOW TO RECOGNIZE A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY AND MAKE MONEY IN THE PROCESS

What is a business opportunity?

To put it simply, a business opportunity is *a business investment that allows you, the entrepreneur, to begin or expand your business*. It is the chance to use an occurrence, a favourable condition, in the market to create gain. It is what differentiates a successful business from a failed one. Some businessmen are successful because they can see an opportunity where no one else could and they can use it to create profit. One good example are e-books. Amazon filled the gap in the market by taking the old concept (books) and transformed it into something new (digital e-books), requiring only one digital device (e.g. tablet, smartphone).

But why should you care about business opportunities?

You might have your microbusiness set up pretty well and are happy with how it is. Well, it's a crucial key to success. It allows you to either start your business, grow, or expand it or/and make it successful. After all, a primary goal of your business is to survive and thrive, thus creating profit. A business opportunity can be some problem, a situation, or an issue. It can allow you to use your creativity to bring something new and innovative to the table. It's an opportunity to grow your business by fine tuning your product, perfecting your service for an even more specific target audience or to simply improve your business plan. Finally, it is usually some favourable condition (new resource, new demand, new clientele) which allows you to create more profit.



Now that you know why it is important you can learn how to do it. Spotting opportunity can be broken down to identifying the opportunity, evaluating it, and then acting on it. To use your abilities to create some value (EntreComp, 2016 p. 12).

● **Identifying the opportunity:** When starting any kind of business, you might want to answer this question first: Is your product a solution to some already existing problem? Will it fill the gap in the market? Can you improve an already existing product? Many successful businesses were created by trying to solve some personal need or problem. Founder of the cosmetic brand Malinna was looking for an effective and biodegradable cleaning product and ended up creating a prosperous family business.

● **Evaluation:** When you decide on your product, you should find out if it's viable. This phase is also known as market research or analysis (we are covering it in more detail in the section SWOT and market analysis). In this stage you should get feedback on your idea from real people – do they wish to buy your product? Do they need it? This also helps you to specify your target group (who will be your buyer, how big is the potential market).

● **Action:** If the answers to these questions lead you to believe that your product is needed and wanted, it is time to act on it. An idea will stay just that, an idea, unless you do something about it.



To help you narrow it down, here are some areas where to look for an opportunity:

- **New, untapped, or repressed opportunity:** Ideally, you will create an innovative, new product and mark an untouched territory. Pros? No competition. You can also find opportunity in unexploited resources, such as a new ingredient, material, or manufacturing process. Or you can seize some repressed need that is highly demanded but no one seems to cater for it.
- **Technology:** Technology nowadays presents an inexhaustible resource of opportunities, as everyday new and improved gadgets, processes, software and so on emerge. Can you combine your craft with the latest technology, for example a 3D printer?
- **Competition.** They say that competition is the mother of innovation. Can you do something better than your competitors and create value at the same time?
- **Partnership.** Do you have fellow crafters working in your field of business? Maybe you can come up with something together, or tap into a new resource. There is strength in numbers.



DESIGN THINKING PROCESS

WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT?

Even though its name can be misleading, design-thinking is not designated for designers, nor is it focused on digital solutions. On the contrary, it can be used in a day-to-day business operation. It's a process to tackle highly complex problems.

Design-thinking is a mindset which focuses on the *solution to a problem* rather than the problem and is *human-centric*, which means it is focused on the user. It is thinking out of the box, using all the creativity you have to come up with highly innovative solutions. Design-thinking is about the outcomes rather than the obstacles. It uses non-linear thinking (characteristic of artists) to bring actions.



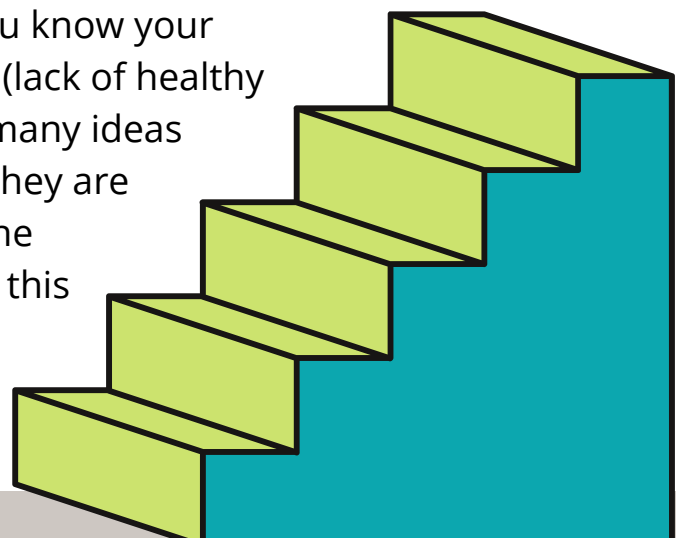
So, do you need to reinvent your business model? Are you trying to adapt your product to be more in line with your values? Do you want to approach new groups of customers? All these questions represent complex problems in which design-thinking can be used to help you come up with the solution you need. Design thinking is used also by big shots such as Netflix, Oral B, Airbnb and UberEats.

Researching the literature, you can find many different steps, stages and/or processes of the Design thinking process. Here is the most used one:

1. Empathise: As was mentioned before, the design-thinking process is all about people. Try to imagine that you are the one in need of the product or the service. What would it feel like? Where are the obstacles? During this stage you should try to understand your clients. So go out and talk to them, ask questions, and notice their emotions. Are they thrilled when hearing about your product, or on the contrary they don't seem to be engaged? This phase provides you with the inputs you need for the next stage.

2. Define: You have a lot of information based on the findings from the Empathise stage. Now you need to piece it together. What are the common topics here? What came up? Once you have that you should define a problem statement, an issue you would like to address. Let's say people are lacking home-made cookies for their dogs which are organic and without artificial additives and colours. Your problem statement then could be: "Pet owners can't find organic and healthy treats in their neighbourhood."

3. Ideate: This is the time for brainstorming and generating ideas to address the problem statement. You know your target group (pet owners) and the problem (lack of healthy treats). In this stage try to come up with as many ideas as possible, and it doesn't matter whether they are feasible, crazy, or totally undoable. This is the creative process. Slowly towards the end of this stage, narrow it down to only a few well-developed ideas.



4. Prototypes: A prototype is a cheap version of your product. This can be a paper model, a digital presentation, or a simple computer model (or in your case a healthy treat baked in your own kitchen). This stage allows you to build (cook) a cheap prototype, and fail, if you must. It's another brainstorming session, only this time you are tweaking your product – adding or eliminating features (e.g, ingredients).

5. Test. In the last stage of the design-thinking process, you take your prototype and test it on real people (in your case on dogs and their owners). You should interact with your target group to get the feedback you need. Did they like it? Do the owners seem happy? Or maybe they wish you used different ingredients or shapes? You might find out that you need to revise the Empathise stage or maybe you will have to go back and create some new ideas to make improvements.



Design thinking process is widely used, be it a non-profit trying to solve social dilemmas, or brands creating new products or services. It's a great way of using creativity to find solutions or to find a new opportunity.

AM I GOOD ENOUGH?

THE MYSTERY OF SWOT AND MARKET ANALYSIS



SWOT stands for S – strengths, W – weaknesses, O – opportunities and T – threats. It is an analytic tool you can use to evaluate the potential of your microbusiness and factors influencing it. It is a useful strategic planning tool that informs you about your actual performance, industry, and product, and it can be very helpful when you are considering a new opportunity.

Firstly, what you should know is that strengths and weaknesses come from within your business. It is something that you can influence directly, but the opportunities and threats are something you have little or no control over, for example COVID-19 or a recession in the market. Let's break it down:

STRENGTHS: list the strengths of your business. What do you think makes your business/product better than your competition? You can list everything – do you have good working space? Loyal client base? Are you using the newest technology? Or do you have handy people around you? List it!

WEAKNESSES: where are your downfalls? What can be done better, more efficiently? Maybe your brand is weak, maybe you work long hours, but you are not gaining as much as you'd wished. We are not trying to demotivate you. In time, you will be able to see the progress you have made by many of your weaknesses being resolved.

OPPORTUNITIES: as we said earlier, opportunities come from outside. It can be a new training programme you have an opportunity to attend to gain new skills; maybe there's a new law allowing you to export to new countries; or you formed a new collaboration. Some opportunities can be threats at the same time. In that case you add it to both.

THREATS: what could harm your business that you have no control over? Threats can be for example climate change causing droughts with negative impact on the crop yield, market oversaturation and so on.



Now that you have finished with your four lists, you should prioritise the items.

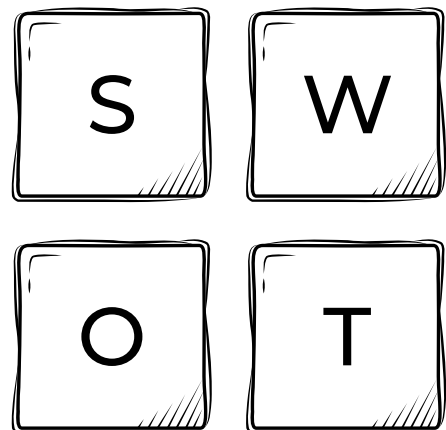
What is most important and has to be dealt with right away?

What can wait till you have more time, resources, or extra help?

Essentially, your strengths should help you to benefit from opportunities and overcome the threats. You should figure out how to overcome your weaknesses. SWOT should point you in the right direction and develop your strategy for the future.

Tips for an effective SWOT analysis:

- Strengths, weaknesses = internal
- Opportunities, threats = external
- Use facts, realistic data, not your opinion
- Keep it short but accurate
(3 - 5 things per category)



You can use paper and pen to conduct a SWOT, but there are many apps and digital templates to help you organise your thoughts. You can directly download a SWOT app to your smartphone, or you can download for free some sophisticated templates.

MARKET ANALYSIS



SWOT analysis is one way to spot new opportunities using analysis of your business. The other one is market analysis. If you are a micro businessman, you probably have enough on your plate besides doing extensive research. You have a business to run and things to do. Big companies have resources and people conducting the analysis for them. So why waste precious time?

Market research helps you to stay in touch with your audience. If you lose your clientele, you lose everything, especially if you're small. First and foremost it opens a door to new opportunities by identifying more specific clientele, suggesting ideas for new products, minimising bad choices, and saving your time and resources, as well as helping you to stay alert and always know what's trending.

Here are some useful tools you can use to help you research the market to adapt to your client's needs. They are usually for free or for a small fee. Please keep in mind that these tools, and social media especially, change over time and what is considered today as "trendy" might not be relevant in a few months' time. Hence it is important to try to stay up-to-date to what medium is currently considered "IT".

SOCIAL MEDIA

QUORA

REDDIT

SURVEY

SEARCH ENGINES

ANALYTICS

Social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and more. By creating a profile on social media, you have access to literally billions of people for free. If you are market researching, join a group of your interest and start reading through the comments. It's a valuable source of information. Once you become familiar with the group, you can ask your potential clients direct questions.



Q Quora – is a social media established with the sole purpose of answering questions. You can either ask a question and get a direct answer from users (a lot of them are actually experts) or you can see what other users are asking and see what is currently bothering them.

Reddit – Reddit is divided into so called “sub-reddits”, which is great if you are trying to know more about specific niches/communities. Search based on your craft can show you pain points of your audience and what they really think. Again, you can just browse and search for a new opportunity, or ask a direct question to a sub-reddit.

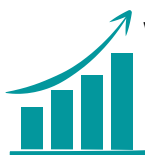


Survey – as a micro businessman you probably don't have thousands of clients. What you can do is use marketing automation software to send an automatic short survey to your buyers. Choose one simple question to see what made them buy your product. Or, what prevented them from buying it? This can also provide you with valuable information about what can be improved or what is effective.

Search engines – you can get ideas also by knowing what's trending. Check out your competition and see what content is the most popular. You can use tools such as Buzzsumo to give you a hint by showing you which topic is searched for the most.



Analytics – if you have a website, you can use information from data analytics.



What do customers click on the most? Which topic/product is most/least liked? What are they talking about in the forum? Your own content tracking can provide much useful information as well. One of the tools to track the behaviour of your clients is Google Analytics

INNOVATION

ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE IF YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH NERVE

If you are a micro businessman and you are still doing the same things, offering the same service or same product over and over again, you are missing out on opportunities. That is why you should be innovative.

"Innovation is the process of creating value by applying novel solutions to meaningful problems."

There are four different types of innovation you can get inspired with:

Disruptive innovation:

Disruptive innovation refers to using innovation and technology to disrupt an already existing market, bringing a high-end product to a regular user. It is usually seen in big companies. Take for example Ford Motors. Ford didn't invent the car itself. But in 1913, they designed the first moving assembly line (new technology), allowing cars to be mass-produced and affordable to all, thus disrupting the whole automobile market. The most common disruptor is in fact start-ups, as they can take the advantage of some overlooked segments of the market and bring a novel, more affordable solution.

Incremental innovation:

Incremental innovation is basically improvement of an already existing product. It represents smaller risk and smaller change to the status quo. An example of the incremental innovation is Cherry Coke by Coca-Cola – they simply added a new flavour to an already existing product and it paid off.

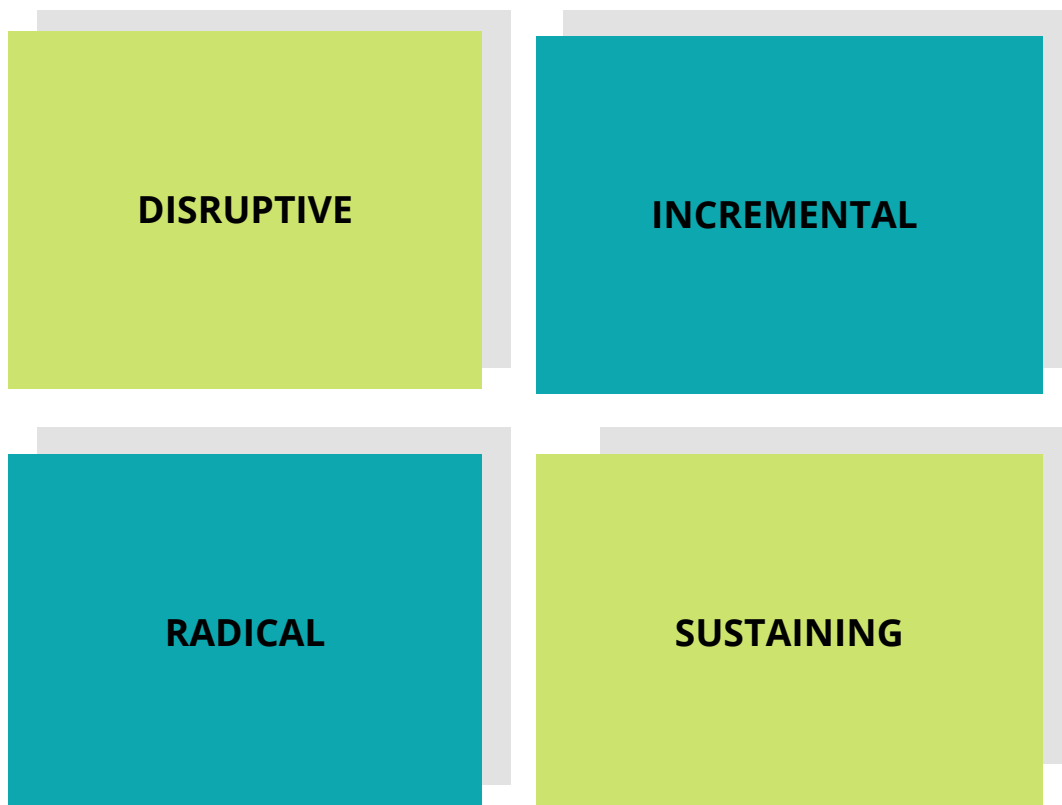


Radical innovation

If you are bursting with creativity and innovation, you can invent a whole new product. This is called radical innovation. An example could be an invention of the aeroplane, or a letterpress. With radical innovation, the timing is everything. If you market your novel product too soon, the acceptance of the new product can be too slow or not work at all. But if you get this right, you can create a whole new market.

Sustaining innovation

This type of innovation refers to creating a new better product with one goal only, to create profit. Take notebooks for instance. First there were desktop computers. Notebooks have the same features and qualities; they only added an extra dimension – portability. When people started to buy notebooks, it created a huge profit.



THE JOYS OF SOCIAL NETWORKING



Creating the audience

For every business, big or small, the clients are everything. Your clients are your biggest asset. Without them your business would be non-existent. You want to attract new ones and keep the regulars coming back. Your clients love the feeling that they are the only ones in your world, that they are special. By using strategic content management, you can build quite an audience.

Here are four steps how you can create your audience:

1. Tell your brand's story

Nothing speaks to your customers like a good story about how you started your business, the idea behind it or what your values are. Make it personal. The more authentic the better. Make your clients relate to you. People tend to prefer small businesses because they feel like they are warmer than bigger companies and they are willing to pay for that extra story.

2. Choose your “weapons”

Now that you told your story, you should engage your customers. Since you are small you probably can't afford to use a lot of strategies. Ideally, you should choose a social media channel and email marketing. This way it's manageable and sustainable.

With social media you should know where your crowd hangs, so to speak. For example, if you are a photographer, your customers will probably have accounts on more visual platforms, such as Pinterest or Instagram. Every social media has its own features, so make sure you are familiar with them before approaching your customers.



3. Meaningful content

Nothing's peskier than spamming your audience with unsolicited, irrelevant information. You should do a thorough research on what's relevant for them, and what they need (remember the part about Market analysis?). There are many tools to help you create spot-on content: Use Google (to do your research), Grammarly (to check for grammar and mistakes), and Canva or Visme (to create visually appealing content).



4. Reach your audience

Once you've built your audience it is time to reach them. Since every day we are overwhelmed by tons of content, you should make yours stand out. There are a couple of strategies to do that:

- Everybody loves free samples: By creating an online competition where the main prize can be a sample of your product you can get a lot of attention. You can also offer free samples in exchange for recommending your business to others. Influencers do it all the time to promote their business, so why not you?
- Like, share, comment, post. Create a sense of interaction with your audience by interacting with them.
- Lead magnets: can you offer a class, workshop, or a seminar where people can try for themselves what it's like to brew a beer, mix up a cream or forge a knife? Nothing creates a stronger audience than a face-to-face interaction with their (soon to be) favourite brand.



A customer database

A customer database is a database full of information about your clients. It often contains information such as name, address, email address or past purchases.

Why is it important to maintain a customer database?

Because information you can gather from it can reveal a potential business opportunity.

For example, if you can track a customer's purchases, you can see how the need for the product is changing.

**Is he always buying the same product?
Why did he stop buying it?
Is it time to create a new one or perfect the old one?**



Maybe you can offer him a complementary product.

You can also track the information of your loyal customers and create a targeted special offer just for them, resulting in fostering a mutual relationship. Customer databases create a lot of opportunities for your business. You don't have to stick to good old Excel (but you can, of course), to help you create and manage your client database. You can use Monday.com, Totango or a simple template by Zapier.



UPSKILLING

BECAUSE IT'S NOT AN OPTION, IT'S A **MUST**



To meet the market demands, it is vital to have an up-to-date skillset. Upskilling can be seen as a part of lifelong learning ensuring you will always have what it takes to satisfy your customer's needs.

Upskilling means to take part in further learning and training opportunities to update or better your knowledge, skills and to move your career forward. It is gaining a higher level of competency in your field of business.

Why you should upskill

Why?

Here are some reasons on why you should consider upskilling:

1. If you are working in a particular field long enough, it might get a little bit boring eventually. Learning new skill might bring you to the areas you haven't encountered yet, bringing the old flame back to life.
2. Improving your skillset by learning will boost your effectiveness, increase your knowledge and expertise. You are more likely to improve your job security if you outperform yourself every year.
3. New technology is created everyday, regardless of the field. As a result, it brings a lot of new niches and opportunities waiting for you to take the advantage. What's more, emerging technology has created skill gaps that needs to be filled.
4. Continuous learning brings positive change into your personal development as well. It makes you more disciplined, knowledgeable, and aware of the current trends.

If you can work on yourself and boost your skills, it can take you places filled with potential and higher profit.

When?

When you should upskill

Today's market is brutal. That's why you need an advantage. If you stay stagnant, you can easily fall behind and miss out on new business opportunities. On the contrary, by upskilling you broaden your horizons. So, the answer to the question on when to upskill is, well, now.

How?

How you should upskill

Today's era is very generous when it comes to upskilling. COVID-19 has thought us that we can rely on Internet when learning new things and we don't have to do it necessarily in person. There are many ways how you can improve your skillset to find new opportunities you are looking for:

1. **Industry events:** Workshops, publications, online webinars, lectures, conferences – they are all a great source. You can meet (F2F or online) with people from your industry and just suck up the information.
2. **Mentoring** is a fantastic way of improving. Find a person in your surroundings you look up to and see if they are offering mentorship. If they don't, try asking them. Maybe you'll be surprised.
3. **Courses:** This is a good option if your time is limited. If you are running a business, but you don't have too much time on your hands and you prefer to learn in your own time and pace, you can enrol yourself to a course. It is also very good option even if you are considering starting your own venture, but you are not quite sure where to begin. However, you should choose a course that completes your already existing skillset. There are many platforms you can choose from. They are usually available for a small fee, like [Coursera](#), which uses mentors from prestigious universities all over the world, [Skillshare](#) offering thousands creative classes or [UpskillCrafts](#) with self-paced virtual craft courses.

For busy start-up owners a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) is an ideal choice. You can dive into specific field without the need to complete the whole course.

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**BUSINESS PLANNING
& DEVELOPMENT**

INTRODUCTION



As an artisan and creative, if you want to make a living, or at least a regular, reliable side income from your craft, you need to take your artisanship beyond being just a hobby. You need to structure your craft activities as a business with a well thought, planned and continuous model of interaction. Such interaction relates to potential customers, various suppliers and collaborators, and other key stakeholders, like for example, licensing and tax authorities, finance providers, etc.

In order to clarify your offering and business model, the latter being the specific manner in which you structure and conduct your craft operations, it is very important that you write it down in a formal way. Hence, that you create your business plan.



You might now question the need for this, given how volatile and fast changing the current market environment is. The answer to such concern is that whilst your business plan could indeed need revision soon after being finalised, without one you would be conducting your craft business without any reference point, like going into a forest without a compass. Moreover, while preparing it, you will get new ideas as new information and knowledge is acquired. Thirdly, besides providing yourself with a clear roadmap for conducting your business, such a plan is also useful and needed for sharing and presenting your business vision, goals, approach and expected results, to others that you may need support from. For example, employees, collaborators, and finance providers.

Whilst there are many formats and templates for formulating business plans (we are also providing you one – the Business Planning Canvas[1]) they all revolve around the same key business requirements. That is: making clear the specific goals and offering (products/services) of the business, the target customers and their problems (needs, wants, fears) that such offering addresses better than competing alternatives, the key activities, resources and partners required to actually deliver a better solution to the customer problem, how much all these cost, and the revenues and overall financial results expected over 1-3 years. Your business plan ultimately describes the way in which value (benefits) can be created through your personal craft and the way you collaborate with others.



As the Chinese proverb says, "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step". So let's proceed towards your business plan by going step by step through a process of analysis and reflection upon its various key elements. We will guide you through it, including by asking questions. It is very important to keep in mind that business planning is an iterative process that requires that you ponder and consider various aspects, often for each of the key elements of a business, before being able to converge on a specific approach to tackle each of them and the business overall. You can then write down your replies and analyse the findings and planned approaches to implementing your craft or creative microbusiness in the Business Planning Canvas template included at the end of this Module. This, as well as other templates needed for business planning and related analysis are also included in Module 9, providing a toolbox for you to apply to your own craft business planning.

BUSINESS

VISION, GOALS AND OFFERING



Let's start with your vision for your craft business.

What do you ultimately want to achieve in the long-term?

Your business vision is very much driven by your core values and competences as an individual entrepreneur. It is then delivered by the long-term strategic goals that you pursue in life, both for yourself and for the ones around you.

What do you care most about?

What are you best at?

What are you striving most for - economic, social, environmental or cultural value (benefits)?

It is very important to consider the importance that each of these aspects has for you, because often a trade-off may need to be made between them. For example, if you strive most to generate social, environmental or cultural value for others, you may need to, or be willing to pursue less economic benefit (profit) for yourself.





Next, what exactly is your business offering?

This is the product, bundle or range of products and services that you provide, especially as described in terms of features, functionalities, benefits and the overall experience they offer to the customers. Features and functions are the factual characteristics of how a product or service works, its functional attributes and reasons for customers to believe in its effectiveness. Nevertheless, the customers are ultimately most interested in the benefits and experience your product (and any connected service) gives to them.

The benefits of a product/service create value for the customer - what makes your customers' life better, addressing and providing a solution to their needs, wants and fears. On the other hand, the experience is the way that owning your product (and receiving your service) makes the customers feel. Identifying the benefits and experience you offer thus requires first a detailed knowledge and understanding of your target customers, and the markets they are active in.



BUSINESS

CONTEXT, MARKET AND INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The overall **business context** that you are operating in is highly influential on your commercial prospects. Both directly, in terms of possible drivers or barriers to you starting or growing your craft business, and indirectly through the impact on your target customers, competitors and collaborators. Such drivers and barriers are most recommended to be analysed and summarised from 6 main perspectives, those being Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal. This is typically known as a PESTEL analysis.



To properly understand the overall **market** situation and current trends impacting it, including from the PESTEL perspectives, you would need to undertake a desktop research of various economic studies, reports and articles, so as to clarify:

- What is the economic sector that you are operating in;
- If it is a priority area for your country and at EU level;
- What are your target customer segments (for example, individuals versus organisations) and markets (local, national, regional, EU wide, etc.); how large they are (for example in terms of number of customers, sales volumes), if they are growing, static or slowing down, at what rate;
- Any other relevant trends and insights into the sector and targeted markets.

Following the above, a more detailed analysis of the market will need to be undertaken with a view to get in-depth knowledge of the target customers by directly engaging with them. Using direct market research approaches, for example questionnaires (easily run via online tools like Google Forms or Survey Monkey), small focus groups or interviews with potential customers, you should get clarity on:



Who are the different and main types of customers you target?

Who exactly are these customers?

Are they individuals or organisations?

Are they locals or tourists?

**Are they the ultimate users of your product/service,
or just the buyers or the payers?**

For example, toys are typically bought by adults (parents and other family members), but they are used by children. Also, craft and art items could be bought by organisations as corporate gifts for their staff, main clients or partners (who would then be the ultimate users of such items).

- What are their main psycho-socio-economic attributes? For example, gender, age, levels of income and education, geographical location / proximity, risk attitude, values alignment, etc.
- What are their specific problems – unmet needs, wants or fears, that your product/service can address?
- How are they currently addressing such problems? For example, through what specific alternative products or other substitutes? The substitutes are not the obvious alternatives – the directly competing products, but more like the customer behaviours to cope with such problems.

Based on the above information, further understanding and prioritisation of target customer segments can be done, so as to establish who could be first and early adopting customer segments for your product. Typically, these should be those types of customers that have the strongest need or want for your product, higher ability to pay, lower risk aversion, or are most reachable (physically, online or from a values alignment perspective, meaning that they think and behave like you, for example being eco-conscious, etc.).



Business literature also indicates that typically the first buyers of a new product are the enthusiasts (for example big lovers and regular buyers of artisan, or tech, or green, or other specific category of products) and these represent only some 2.5% of the total market size. The early adopters are then those visionary customers (some 13.5% of the market) that are ready to adopt a new product because of their ability to see and await its longer-term benefits. It is only in the next step that a move towards product adoption by the majority can be pursued. This requires however a significant step, typically enough evidence of value-for-money when comparing the cost and benefits of a new product, to convince the pragmatic customers (34% of the market). Conservative and sceptical customers (the rest) would always be the last to adopt a new product.

In order to develop a robust business, it is important to be clear who exactly can be your first and early adopters, how you can reach and attract them, but then also how to go further attract the majority of the customers in your target market. This is because not all your target customers have the same psycho-social characteristics, need, ability and willingness to adopt new products. It also won't be the same way to address their problems, so you will need to start targeting customers in the most efficient manner, beginning with those most probable to attract fast.



Furthermore, a detailed **industry analysis** should be also undertaken so as to get a clear view of competitors and the competing products/services they provide. These are not just the direct alternatives to your products/services, but also indirect ones, substitutes used by target customers.

When considering the alternative or substitute products that you want your products to replace, it is most important to assess the benefits and experience they offer to the target customers, their price, how they are sold, paid for and delivered to the client.

Moreover, it is also crucial that you identify who exactly are those that provide such alternatives and substitutes to your products, as well as assess how powerful they are. For example:

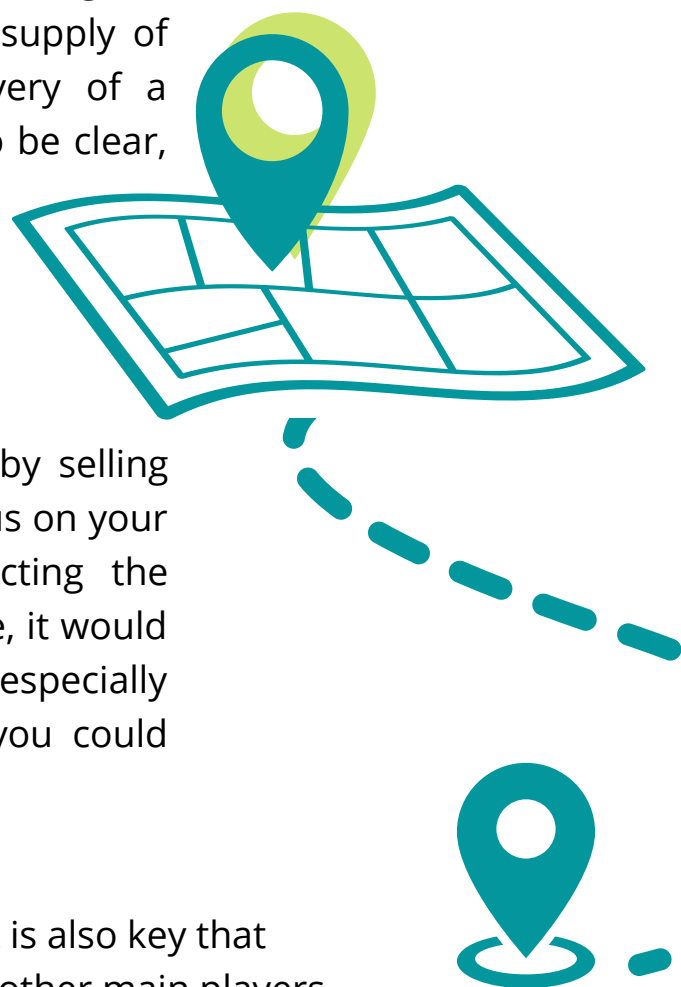
Are there a lot of competitors in your target market?

Have they been long established and selling in your target market?

Do they have a large share of the market?

Are the customers loyal to them?

Also important that you assess if such providers of alternative products have the same or different role than yours in the value chain. Meaning, are they actual manufacturers or just distributors? Or what other role do they play in the value chain - along the sequence of phases from the design, to supply of materials, manufacturing, sale and delivery of a product to customers. This is important to be clear, as if they have the same role like you they would indeed be direct competitors, but if their role is different, they could become your collaborators. You could for example help distributors to expand their product range, and they could help you by selling your products. This could allow you to focus on your craft, doing your products, and contracting the selling entirely to someone else. Otherwise, it would give you an additional selling channel, especially relevant towards target customers that you could not easily reach by yourself.



When performing your industry analysis, it is also key that you understand and map out who are the other main players in the value chain, being those contributing to creating and delivering to the final customers the value embodied in your products. For example, suppliers of the key materials and consumables that you would need to manufacture your product, or of services connected to promoting, selling and delivering your product to your target customers. You need to establish who they are, how many and how strong they are, which of them are most reachable and you could collaborate with. For example, common contacts, same or complementary geographic locations, similar values, etc.

PRODUCT AND SERVICE OPERATIONS ANALYSIS

Besides looking outwards, it is equally important that you look attentively inwards, towards your own business operations.



The first question to ask yourself here: what are the **key activities** you will need to implement to ultimately offer your products and/or services to the target customers?

Think about:

- the various steps of your craft operations and ways in which you could have your products designed, developed and manufactured (for example, in-house, outsourced, jointly with others);
- the kind of customer relationships you would need to have to appropriately offer them the benefits and experience embodied in your product.

Is this possible to be achieved through one-off and automatic relations with your target customers?

Or would a more personal and repeat relationship with customers be preferable?

What should you do to ensure you attract them to buy your products, and make them repeat customers?



· the channels you can use, and what do you need to do to promote, sell and deliver your products, as well as to communicate and interact with the target customers along the entire journey, from finding out about your offerings up to the after-sales experience.

How will you make your target customers aware of your products, allow them to evaluate, buy and receive them, as well as afterwards engage with you for any further information or suggestions, for repairs or maintenance of the products bought, to make further purchases themselves or recommend you to others?

Would such communication and interaction with your target customers be mostly direct, indirect, or through others?

Will it be mainly in traditional, physical forms (for example, in your workshop, at artisan fairs and markets, by cash payments) or even in digital forms (for example via online stores and marketplaces, social media platforms, electronic payment solutions)?



· the actions you need to take for the setting up and maintenance of your workshop, other facilities, tools, equipment, as well as for general business administration (for example, to keep accounts, make statutory financial reporting, manage due payments and legal obligations, etc.)

You should then ask yourself the following question:

What are the key resources that you need to perform all the identified key activities?

Think about:

- The kind of assets you need. For example, what type and size of facilities; what type and number of tools and equipment; what type of website and software;
- The type, number and workload of staff you need. For example, other artisans, marketing, sales or delivery people, administration staff? How many hours per week should each work?
- What services do you need access to? For example, what type of physical and/or online marketplaces (artisan fairs and markets, eCommerce sites), what social media platforms, what other promotion channels (leaflets, billboards, magazines, radio, TV)?

The next connected questions to ask yourself are:

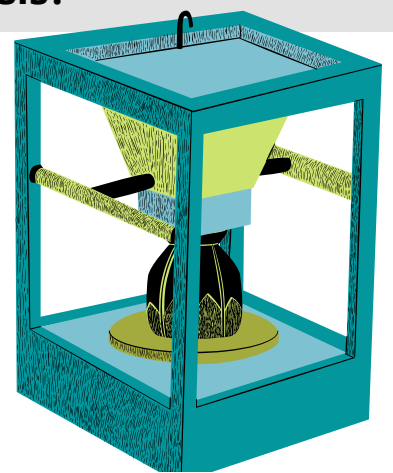
Do you have these resources?

If not, where can you get them from? Is it worth owning the needed assets or employing the staff?

Will you utilise them at maximum capacity?

If not, could you share them with others or access them on an “as-needed” and on a “as-a-service” basis?

For example, by renting (by day or by hour) the access to a glass blowing workshop, or a 3D printer, instead of buying and having your own; engaging marketing freelancers instead of employed staff, and so on.



Can you collaborate with some key partners for accessing and sharing resources?

Or to leverage their experience, reputation and influence to better engage with target customers?



Alliances with other key and more established players in the value chain can help you reduce business risk by generating economies of scale and scope in the manufacturing and provision of your products and services

Building and engaging in collaborative ecosystems can allow you to leverage complementary skills and competences, as well as the power of networks, to share the load of starting and growing a business.

For example, check out how Threadless[2] is crowdsourcing the design and then the manufacturing of products, or how Powered by People[3] offers a wholesale marketplace for small-batch producers.

So, who could be your key partners? Think about indirect competitors (like distributors or sellers of crafts), support organisations, associations or cooperatives of artisans in your region, etc. Like for example the members of World Crafts Council Europe.

[LEARN MORE](#)

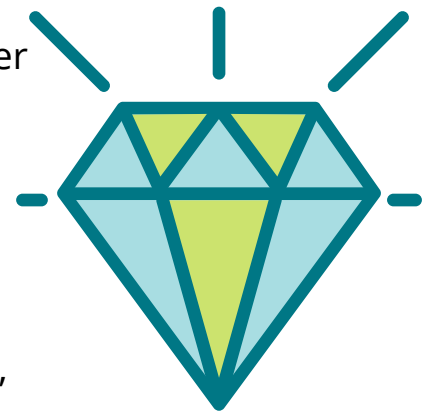


Want to know more? Further information relevant to marketing, branding, sales and networking is also available in Modules 3, 5 and 7.

VALUE CREATION ANALYSIS

Once you establish what are the key activities you have to implement, the key resources needed, and from where and how you can get them, you can then devise the **cost structure** of your craft business. The main drivers of costs along this structure will be:

- The amount of each type of resource that you need (for example, the size of workshop facilities, the number of tools, items of equipment or staff, the number of promo leaflets to print, etc.),
- The unit cost of each type of resource (for example, purchase or rental cost per m² of workshop space, price per promo leaflet, monthly salary of an employee, hourly fee of a freelancer, etc.)



At the start of a business, and when the sales volume is lower or fluctuating, it is typically more efficient to rent and share assets instead of buying and owning them, to acquire freelancer services instead of employing staff. This is because such approaches allow you to avoid high costs of investment in own assets and employees that may not be utilised at full capacity from start, and more flexibility and speed to scale up and down your services requirements in line with customer demand.



However, when a business is operating at full production capacity, such outsourcing, leasing and sharing approaches typically end up being more costly compared to owning and employing. This is due to economies of scale and scope that you can leverage when working at full capacity.

Therefore, as a craft business owner you would need to be aware of the costs of acquiring key resources in various ways, which of your key activities and key resources hold the largest share of the total costs, and at what capacity do you use your key assets and staff.



Based on such information, you should then undertake and compare costs at various production levels and resource acquisition modes (buy, share), so as to try to minimise the overall costs. Any efforts to minimise costs should however also consider their impact on the quality of the manufactured product, its promotion, sale and delivery activities, and if this can hamper the potential to attract and retain customers.

On the other hand, once you've established your offering (product/services range), the different target customer segments and main sales channels, you can then structure your revenue streams. These can be best structured along the different types of products and/or services that you offer and your sales channels (your workshop, artisan fairs, eCommerce platforms). Should you have different prices for different customer segments, possibly linked to their purchasing power or location, then you could also have different revenue streams from different types of customers.

The main drivers of revenues along such structures will be the sales volume and the pricing of your various offerings. Whilst you have less control over the sales volume per se, although this is also dependent on the quality of your product, promotion, evaluation and sale activities, you have total control on the pricing of your products, which in turn further impacts the sales volume.

Therefore, your pricing strategy is very important to your ultimate revenues, and has to be established with due consideration for:



- The market positioning of your product, for example, as a premium or a budget one. Crafts, especially if they are unique or limited edition pieces, could be priced at a higher, premium level.
- The level of market awareness of your craft in general, and interest in your other products. For example, if you are just entering the market and you still need to make a name for your craft, it might be opportune to follow a penetration pricing approach, starting at a lower level, and then increase it as the demand rises for your artisan products.



- Your lowest price point would need to be at least equal to your unit cost per product, as below that you would not only forego any profit but actually start making a loss.

- Beyond this lowest financial sustainable level, your price point has to be also informed by how much your target customers are currently paying for alternative or substitute products, as well as how much they would be willing to pay for the additional value that your product is providing compared to those.



Also very relevant for your future revenues planning is your understanding of:

- how your target customer segments are typically paying (for example, if by bank cards, leading to a decrease in revenue by the corresponding card payment processing commission),
- their buying cycles for alternative products (for example, monthly, quarterly, yearly),
- your estimated acquisition rate of new clients.

Moreover, an understanding of how different revenue models may be applied to your craft business is also crucial. For example, could you provide your craft products on subscription or rental models versus one-off single purchase payments? For example, weekly or monthly subscriptions for specialty food products, or event-related rental of unique and high value jewellery, fashion or decorative items. The latter approach is part of usage-based revenue models that can allow for both more accessible pricing for customers, and more intensive use of the life-span of a product (better for the environment).



Based on all the above mentioned, you would now be able to distil your **unique value proposition**. This is all about what gives you an advantage ahead of the competition, about how your offering addresses the customer problems better than current direct alternatives or substitutes. For example, in terms of specific quality and experiential elements, better price or sale/payment channels, cost and time efficiencies (due to better delivery channels or revenue models), side perks, otherwise. Best to try to come up with a single and compelling sentence that would make everybody understand why you are far better than the competition. That could become your business slogan.

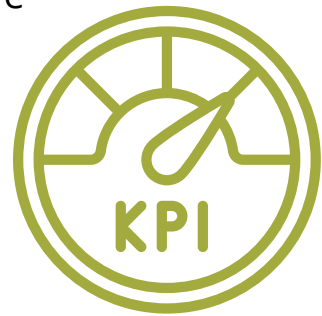


Please bear in mind that the customers are usually incurring some cost to switch from one product to another (at a minimum that of evaluating a different product, changing the place and way they get it, risking disappointment). Therefore, if your product features and benefits are similar to the ones of the competitors, this puts you on par with the competition. The latter already has an advantage by just being in the market before you (for example, extra knowledge of the customers, industry collaborators, experience). Hence, what really matters are your points of differentiation. What is it that your overall offering provides that is of benefit to the target customers, that is not provided by the alternatives? Moreover, it is important that your point of differentiation cannot be easily copied, so that you can sustain (at least for a while) your unique advantage over the competition.

Taking a step back and considering all the various main elements of your business model identified above:

What are your specific operational objectives for the next 6, 12, 24 and 36 months?

What are the Key Performance Indicators (metrics, time-bound targets) to track business progress and success? For example, when do you plan to equip, furnish and open your workshop? How many promo and selling channels to establish and by when? How many customers do you plan to reach and by when? How many products to manufacture and how many to sell? How many and what type of employees and collaborators? How many repeat customers and referrals?



Establishing such clear operational objectives and KPIs along a specific timeline will allow you to properly estimate your costs and revenues, as well as calculate the economic return (profit) that your business would generate, being the extent to which your revenues are surpassing your costs. In turn this would allow you to consider how you could increase your revenues (by more sales, higher pricing) and decrease your costs (by productivity improvements, working at full capacity or sharing assets and staff), hence generating higher returns on the resources used (revenues > costs = profits). Ultimately, such analyses will indicate your business feasibility (if generating profit within a reasonable timeframe), and if and how much initial financing you need to start or grow your business.

Want to know more? Further information relevant to financial planning and management is also available in Module 4.

DEVISING AND UPDATING BUSINESS AND MARKETING PLANS

Once you have gone through all these analyses and assessed that your business would be feasible, the simplest way to prepare a business plan is to use the Business Planning Canvas included in Module 9. This is a very versatile visual tool mapping-out all the above mentioned main building blocks of a business, how they interrelate and ultimately define a product's potential value to the customers and return to the business owners.



The “canvas” nature of this tool allows for it to be easily used by an entrepreneur and its team to co-create and iteratively structure their business model. Through the modular and iterative consideration of the key elements on the Canvas, the overall framework for the successful operation of a business, the business model, can be planned and updated as necessary.

Since a marketing plan is a subset of a business plan, particularly covering those key business elements that are focused on the interaction with the market, the Business Planning Canvas is also a useful starting point and base for devising a marketing plan. The latter will need to revolve around the 4Ps of the marketing mix - Product, Placement, Promotion, Price - by including information on:

- **Product** - the features and benefits of the offered product or range of products, particularly in terms of the added value that it provides in addressing specific customer problems (needs, wants, fears) as compared to other available alternative and substitute products;
- **Placement** - detailed description of the target markets and customer segments, the order of priority they should be approached in (including the rationale for such choices based on market analysis), and the various channels to be used for the sale and delivery of your products to the target markets and customers;
- **Promotion** - the various channels and activities planned to facilitate product awareness among the target customers, the evaluation of the product compared to alternatives and substitutes, and ultimately its purchase/sale.
- **Price** - detailed description of the pricing strategy to be implemented across the entire product range and various target customer segments, including rationale for such pricing



As the business, market and industry context are continuously changing, with new Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal trends, as well as new competitors emerging, your business model and plan need to be regularly reassessed. Various spotted opportunities and threats in the environment need to be acted on so as to allow for the continued operations and development of your business. For example, ethical and sustainability considerations as those presented in Module 6. In such situations, the agility to pivot, change direction, transform your business model, are key to success and overall business development.

However, you need to strike a balance between the amount of time and effort you put into business planning and development as compared to actual implementation of business operations and their monitoring. Thus, whilst it is recommended that the latter is done on a continuous basis, together with informal scanning of the external business environment, formal reviews of business plan alignment, business plan revisions are recommended to be done only on a yearly basis. Of course, should a major shift in business context and market trends be noted, or significant opportunities or threats to your business spotted, you should consider and address them with priority.



Some of the best ways to stay up to date on the most relevant business developments in the crafts sector is by membership to local, national and European professional networks and associations (like World Craft Council Europe, European Association of Craft and SMEs, European Creative Hubs Network), reading the news on their websites and social media pages, participating in their information events, and actively seeking good practices, expert and peer opinions in relevant craft industry online groups and platforms (for example on Crafted [4], Craft Industry Alliance News, The Design Trust, Crafts Council UK Stories, LinkedIn International Arts & Crafts Network, Etsy blog, etc.)



Business strategy adjustment and business plan updating can be easiest done using the same methodology and template of the Business Planning Canvas presented above. Moreover, the online version of the training provides other templates, as well as the opportunity for self-reflection and discussions with peer artisans and creatives in an Open Forum, that would ultimately support you to apply all the learnings from this training programme to your own specific craft business.

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OTHER WEBSITES

[1] <https://microhub.erasmus.site/mt/courses/module-2-business-planning-development/lessons/additional-resources/>

[2] <https://www.threadless.com/>

[3] <https://www.poweredbypeople.com/>

[4] <https://www.poweredbypeople.com/blogs/crafted>

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**BUSINESS LAUNCH
& MANAGEMENT**

GETTING STARTED:

CHOOSING A LEGAL STRUCTURE FOR YOUR BUSINESS

With your business idea developed and tested, you are now ready to formally set up your business. The legal business structure you choose will influence everything, from day-to-day operations, to taxes and how much of your personal assets are at risk. You should choose a business structure that gives you the right balance of legal protections and benefits.

Start by analysing your company's goals and the laws that will regulate your business. Remember that you can change your business' legal structure further along the line, as it grows. Here are some examples of Business forms used in Europe:

The majority of new SMEs register as Private Limited Companies, designated as Ltd. or Limited.

- **Proprietorship** is a type of business entity that is owned and run by one individual – there is no legal distinction between the owner and the business. Sole Proprietorships are the most common form of legal structure for small businesses.
- **Nonprofit corporations** are organised to do charity, education, religious, literary, or scientific work. Because their work benefits the public, nonprofits can receive tax-exempt status, meaning they are not required to pay state or federal income taxes on profits.

-
- **Partnerships** are the simplest structure for two or more people to own a business together. Limited partnerships have only one general partner with unlimited liability, and all other partners have limited liability.
 - A **corporation** is a legal entity that is separate from its owners. Corporations can make a profit, be taxed, and can be held legally liable. Corporations offer the strongest protection to its owners from personal liability, but the cost to form a corporation is higher than other structures. Corporations also require more extensive record-keeping, operational processes, and reporting.
 - A **cooperative** is a business or organisation owned by and operated for the benefit of those using its services. Profits and earnings generated by the cooperative are distributed among the members, also known as user-owners. Members can become part of the cooperative by purchasing shares, though the amount of shares they hold does not affect the weight of their vote.



SETTING UP

AN ETSY-BUSINESS FOR SELLING YOUR PRODUCT ONLINE

To get your micro-business up and running, you can begin by presenting your products online by starting an Etsy-shop. Etsy is the perfect place for makers to sell handmade goods. It takes very little time to set up an Etsy shop, and it has a low barrier of entry. While it is free to create an account, you must pay a small fee for listing your item, and a transaction fee upon a sale.

Here are the steps to take:

1. Create an Etsy account

In order to create a seller account, you must first have a consumer Etsy account. Navigate to “Sign In” in the top right corner, and a dialogue box for credentials will open. After signing in, next to the shopping cart in the top right corner is a grey circle with a silhouette on it. When you click on the circle, a drop-down menu gives you an option to click on “Sell on Etsy.”



2. Add your picture and bio

By adding a brief bio and photo in your Etsy shop, you can show potential customers the artisan behind the shop. This is a place where sellers like to share their inspiration for what they do.

3. Enter Your Shop Preferences

Here, enter your shop preferences; language, shop country, shop currency and whether your shop is your full-time income or not. When finished, click “Save and continue” in the bottom right corner.

4. Name Your Shop

You can name your shop and it must be unique from other shops. Your name may only have unaccented roman letters and numbers, without spaces. Enter the proposed name you want and click “Check Availability”.

5. Create Your Listings

Now you will create your listings. Etsy recommends having a minimum of ten different listings for a greater chance of visibility.

Your listing should include:

- Photos: At least one photo is required, and you can add up to ten photos.
- Videos: While not required, a video can set your product apart from your competition.
- Listing details: List the title of the product, who made it, when it was made, whether it's a physical or digital product, a detailed description, materials used and tags.
- Inventory and pricing: What is the price of your item? Make sure to factor in the cost of materials, labour, and shipping
- Product variations: Does your product have multiple sizes or colours? List them here.

Shipping: You can have Etsy calculate your shipping costs for you based on your origin zip code.



6. Enter Your Credit Card Details

You need a credit card to pay for your Etsy fees.

7. Open Your Shop

After you've entered your credit card details, the "Open Your Shop" button will turn black and you can click on it. Congratulations — your shop is open! Now you can share your shop with your friends, family and followers.



DEFINING YOUR COMMUNICATION, MARKETING & ACTIVITY

STRATEGY

When planning your business it is important to think about your strategies for marketing and communication. A good start is to look at your position in the market today compared to your competitors. Start by identifying your Target Market by naming who your key customers are: Who is your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing customers? Then look at your geographical market by identifying the physical location of your target market. You can also define your position in the market compared to other entrepreneurs in your field by doing a competitor analysis. Ask yourself: What do I offer that no other company, product, or service does?

List your top competitors as well as the following information for each competitor:

- Comparative Strength – What are your company's assets that this competitor does not have?
- Comparative Weakness – In what areas or attributes do your competitors outperform you?
- Counterpoints – If a comparative weakness is mentioned in sales negotiations, which counterpoints can be used to address those weaknesses?

Competitor Name	Comparative Strength(s)	Comparative Weakness(es)	Counterpoint(s)
Competitor A			
Competitor B			
Competitor C			

Learn more about your company's value proposition, market analysis, branding, positioning, and campaign marketing plan in [Module #2: Business development](#).

Now that you have identified your market position, you can find new market opportunities and start working on your communication plan to reach your customers.

COMMUNICATION

PLAN

Another way to create market interest is by communication in the relevant channels of your target groups. You will get the best attention by planning your communication activities ahead of time.

Start by **identifying your current status** in the social media sphere. Analysing social media reports and tracking your media exposure coverage will be critical when it comes to informing the direction of your strategy. Clearly define the communication goals and objectives within your plan. Write down the details of who you plan to communicate with and why. Are you planning a campaign or do you wish to build long-term awareness among your future customers? And who are your customers? Try to define them clearly!

The next step is to craft your strategy by choosing the channels for your communication. Determine the communication channels that will be used, when you will use them, and whom each channel is intended for. Here, you can ask yourself:

Which channels are the most efficient for reaching your target audience?

Where will your communication be taking place?

There are many potential communication mediums to be used in your marketing strategy such as:



Social media

Engage with new and potential customers, find influencers, track competitors, and address customer complaints.



Email marketing

Communicate with your subscribers to promote events, new blogs, and move them further down the marketing funnel.



Print

Connect with consumers through physical brochures, newspaper articles, or signage.



Digital ads

Make sure you're well-aligned with your paid advertising team so you can ensure the ads you have running are relevant and topical to any current campaigns or upcoming events.



Online media

Reach out to journalists with story pitches or press releases to reach a wider audience than those who already follow you or are subscribed.

List all the social media groups, magazines, newsletters, websites and other channels who are covering your topics and direct your message towards these!

**What message are you trying to communicate?
How can you attract interest among your audience in the
best way?**

Your communication should then be amended to convey a more enticing value-prop, and you should work to refine the way you represent your product. When you have made your action plan, decide who will be responsible for executing it and in what timeframe. It can take more time than you realise!

Last but not least: define your budget for the communication activities. And don't forget to follow up the results so you can revise your plans for next time.



SETTING UP

A WEBPAGE AND CHANNELS FOR COMMUNICATION

It is vital for small businesses to have a website. Using social media alone does not provide much control over your customer base and marketing. Moreover, customers prefer to see a website to have more trust in a given brand.



Building a solid website with an excellent design used to be out of reach for many small business owners. Nowadays, however, there are web tools that make it easy for an individual to create a website without having to enlist professional designers or programmers. Website builders are a perfect option for small businesses that are on a tight budget, or with limited time and skills. They allow you to save money and spend it on growing your business instead of paying professionals. On top of that, you can create websites with a good design quickly and easily. Today there are many options of free website building programs to choose from, such as:

Webnode: <https://www.webnode.com/>

Squarespace: <https://www.squarespace.com/>

Webflow: <https://webflow.com/>

Wix: <https://www.wix.com/>

HOW TO NEGOTIATE BUSINESS DEALS AND WRITE BUSINESS CONTRACTS

How to negotiate a Business deal

When you have established contact with an interested customer there is often a moment of negotiations where both you and the customer want to get the best deal. There are many things to consider here, as you will most likely want to build a long term relationship with the customer! Here are some important tips for business negotiations:

1. Come prepared

Before you negotiate, figure out what your prospect is most likely to want and what you are in a position to offer. For example: Why your prospect needs what you are selling and how badly they need it.

2. Speak second

By letting your prospect initiate the conversation, and listening carefully before you ask questions, you may pick up on cues that the real reason they are in negotiations is because they are:

Concerned your product or service won't live up to expectations;
Worried your company won't meet their needs long-term;
Or they may be uncomfortable with the idea of justifying
or taking responsibility for their buying decision.



3. Strive to come together

A negotiation should always be viewed through a teamwork lens. Both sides are coming to the table with their own needs to be met and everyone plays a part in making it work. You need to work together. The right attitude goes a long way with a deal that has everyone smiling! Be clear on your needs, take the time to understand theirs, and be prepared to lay it all out on the line when the time comes.

4. Learn to handle objections

There are plenty of tips online for dealing with rejection as a sales professional. One big key to handling objections during a sales negotiation, however, is learning to be a problem solver.

While it is smart to go in prepared with a lower-priced option that meets your prospect's needs, you should always be on the lookout for opportunities to build value around your original offering instead.

5. Walk away if necessary

Don't be afraid to walk away from a deal that won't progress despite your best efforts to reach an agreement. If you're trying to decide whether a prospect really values your offering, here are two signs that the person you're negotiating with may be a difficult prospect who is all too likely to become a dissatisfied client:

They make unreasonable or unprofitable demands or they have needs that can't be met under your most lenient terms and conditions



6. Build relationships: win/win

Make sure you are always working to build relationships, identifying buyer needs and offering solutions as part of the negotiation framework.

Rather than a “winner takes all” situation, a successful sales negotiation is one where both parties leave the table satisfied and looking ahead.



How to write a Business contract

Once you have established a long-term business deal, it is important to get it in writing to avoid misunderstandings over time.

1. Get it in writing

In the business world, most agreements should be in writing even if the law doesn't require it. A written agreement is less risky than an oral agreement, because you have a document that clearly spells out each party's rights and obligations in case of confusion or disagreement.

2. Keep it simple

Create short, clear sentences with simple, numbered paragraph headings that alert the reader to what's in the paragraph.

3. Identify each party correctly

You need to include the correct legal names of the parties to the contract so that it's clear who is responsible for performing the obligations under the agreement (and who you have legal rights against if things go wrong).

4. Spell out all of the details

The body of the agreement should spell out the rights and obligations of each party in detail. Don't leave anything out: if you discuss something verbally and shake on it but it's not in the contract, it will be next to impossible to enforce. You can always create a short written amendment. Or, if you haven't signed the agreement, you can handwrite the change into the contract.





5. Specify payment obligations

Specify who pays whom, when the payments must be made, and the conditions for making payments. As you might guess, money is often a contentious issue, so this part should be very detailed. Consider whether you are going to pay in instalments or only when work is completed to your satisfaction.

6. Agree on circumstances that terminate the contract

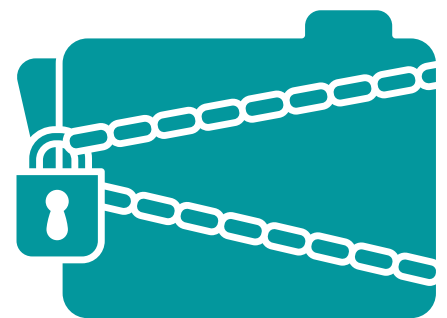
It makes sense to set out the circumstances under which the parties can terminate the contract. For instance, if one party misses too many important deadlines, the other party should have the right to terminate the contract without being on the hook legally for breaching (violating) the agreement.

7. Agree on a way to resolve disputes

Write into your agreement what you and the other party will do if something goes wrong.

8. Keep it confidential

Your agreement should contain mutual promises that each party will keep any business information learned of while performing the contract strictly confidential.

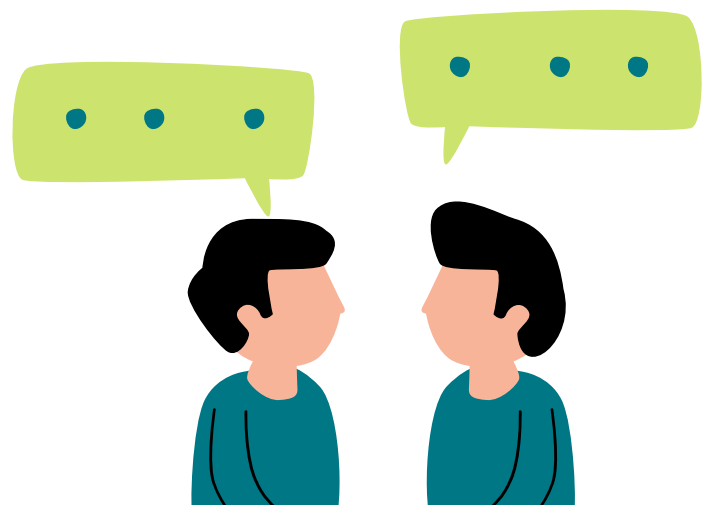


MONITORING YOUR BUSINESS WITH ONLINE TOOLS

Understanding how your business is performing relative to your expectations and your competitors is the key to achieving consistent improvement. If you want to get simplistic about the success of your business, you can say all business survival comes down to two metrics: profitability and cash flow. Not only do you need to understand the many factors that contribute to those metrics, but you also need to know various other things that reflect the health of the business.

Automating post-purchase email surveys

Getting feedback from customers is vitally important, yet it's something that many businesses overlook. Some prefer to avoid negative comments altogether, deciding they are not representative of how customers really feel. It pays to be proactive, and one of the most reliably effective ways to gather feedback is through **automated, timely email surveys**. For instance, you can have a survey email triggered 24 hours after the completion of an order because one sent immediately after may be confused as an order confirmation. You can then send a more detailed survey a week after the product has been delivered. You may also consider **using a live chat feature** to help visitors. It makes it easy to maintain 24/7 chat representation, scales perfectly under heavy demand (given adequate processing power), and can markedly reduce phone calls and wait times.



Pay attention to how your industry is doing in general.

**What are the general trends?
And how are your competitors doing?**

If you find that certain competitors are thriving in notable areas while you're struggling, that gives you a strong idea of how to improve. Look at what they're doing and relate it to your efforts. Are they using different tactics or just executing better? While you can't access competitor analytics (meaning you can't compare *directly* in every regard), you can do things like **monitor social media mentions** for your main rivals to see how they are doing. You might see that their mentions dip when yours do, meaning the issue is something unrelated to your specific company.



DEVELOPING YOUR ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS WITH THE HELP OF ONLINE TOOLS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT, PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND OTHER TOOLS

As an artisan and entrepreneur you can save time in managing your business by using digital tools for planning, communication and selling. Here are some tips!

Useful digital tools for planning management and selling

Trello: A visual work management tool that empowers teams to ideate, plan, manage, and celebrate their work together in a collaborative, productive, and organised way. Whether you and your team are starting something new or trying to get more organised with your existing work, Trello adapts to any project. It helps you simplify and standardise your team's work process in an intuitive way. But don't let its simplicity fool you! Trello is user-friendly, yet still able to handle your team's most robust projects.



Google Workspace: With Google Workspace, businesses can collaborate more efficiently, streamline their work, and save time with integrated productivity tools and insights. Many businesses operate in physical spaces. But now, organisational settings are transforming rapidly. We no longer hold meetings in the office, instead turning our homes into workstations.



With Gmail Client, Google Drive, Google Meet and Google Chat, you can facilitate virtual meetings with your team members. You can also use document collaboration applications like Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Google Slides to edit documents. Using Google Vault, you can preserve essential data for as long as you need to. You can also set data retention rules, even for suspended accounts and deleted documents.

Zoom: A communications platform that allows users to connect via video, audio, phone, and chat. Using Zoom requires an internet connection and a supported device



WHAT IS AUTOMATIC COPYRIGHT AND HOW TO REGISTER

COPYRIGHT

When you create an **original artistic work**, you are protected by copyright. Nobody apart from you has the right to make the work public or reproduce it. In EU countries, copyright protects your intellectual property until **70 years** after your death or 70 years after the death of the last surviving author, in the case of a work of joint authorship.

Outside of the EU, in any country which signed the Berne Convention, the duration of copyright protection can vary but it lasts **until at least 50 years** after the author's death. If you want to prove the existence of your work at a certain point in time, a registration can be useful.

Copyright protection grants you the following exclusive rights:

- Economic rights – guaranteeing you have control over your work and remuneration for its use through selling or licensing
- Moral rights – usually protecting your rights to claim authorship (right of attribution) and to refuse a modification of your work (right of integrity)
- If you create literary, scientific and artistic work, you automatically have copyright protection, which **starts from the moment you create your work**, so you don't need to go through any formal application process.

However, you may need to advise other people that you are the author of that work. You can attach a **copyright notice** to your work – such as the "all rights reserved" text, or the © symbol – together with the year the work was created.



Copyright arises directly through creation. There is thus no need to register with any authority or a notary public. Through a number of international agreements, copyright in many countries also applies directly. Within copyright, a distinction is made between economic and non-material rights.

How to protect your creations as effectively as possible

To protect your artwork against copying or counterfeiting, it is important for designers to protect their designs. This protection is essential **at each stage of the creation process**: from the first sketch of a design drawn on paper to its presentation to the public, for example during a fashion show, a showroom, an event, etc

You don't need a law degree or a lawyer to protect your rights. However, the question is how to prove that the work was created on a specific date. Several means exist. The most effective is the bailiff's deposit, and there are services such as Copyright.eu to save you the time and trouble of having to go through the process.



By registering with Copyright.eu, you grant legal protection to your creations by providing **proof of their date and content** (the copyright).

- Each certificate is time stamped and registered in the Copyright.info register,
- It is **internationally valid** (+177 countries),
- The certificate of anteriority is **valid for life**,
- Allows a proof of anteriority **while keeping your creation confidential**,
- Optionally, you can obtain **an official bailiff's report (authenticated deed)**,
- It is possible to file **unlimited additional deposits for a fee**.

You can learn more and register your products at Copyright.eu, **With Copyright.eu, you can obtain your certificate of anteriority online in less than 15 minutes!**



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**FINANCIAL AND
ECONOMIC LITERACY**

THE BASICS

OF ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL TERMS

Even when a company uses outsourced bookkeeping, a CEO still needs to be knowledgeable about all facets of successfully running a business because not everyone has the opportunity to study accounting. When phrases that we use in daily transactions have distinct meanings in a financial environment, the language of accounting can at first seem confusing. You can talk about and manage money with confidence if you are familiar with basic terminology. This section aims to introduce some basic terms of accounting and finances that will help entrepreneurs better manage the finances of their business.

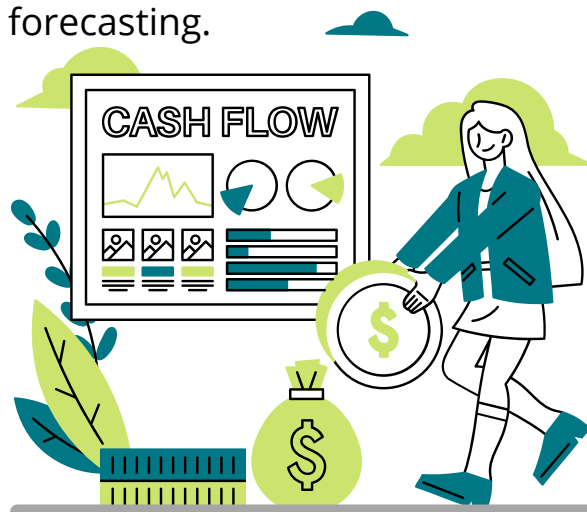
Term	Definition
Accounting	The procedure for monitoring and planning financial activity. You are keeping track of each transaction, or monetary event, that takes place. Data and reports generated by accurate accounting can be used to create well-informed corporate decisions.
Accounts	A record that compiles related types of transactions, such as liabilities or assets. Financial accounts can be divided into five categories: assets, liabilities, equity, revenue, and expenses.
Assets	Benefits to the economy now or in the future that an entity controls. This could be something tangible, like money, tools, or real estate, or something intangible, like copyrights, patents, or brands.
Liabilities	What you owe; the sum of money or other financial responsibilities that an organisation owes to another party. This covers money owed and unpaid services. Liability accounts are often those that finish in "payable."

Revenue	Financial benefits derived from commercial operations like selling products or rendering services.
Costs	The monetary value of expenditures for supplies, services, labour, products, equipment and other items purchased for use by a business or other accounting entity.
Equity	When a company is a sole proprietorship, equity is the worth of the company that belongs to the owner or shareholders (if a business is a corporation). Equity is the amount of value a person has in a personal asset.
Accounts Payable	Money that a company owes. When an entity makes a transaction but does not immediately pay cash, this account is frequently utilised.
Accounts Receivable	Amounts owing to a company. Although the goods or service has been delivered and accepted, payment has not yet been made.
Balance Sheet (Statement of Financial Position)	A record of all the assets, liabilities, and equity of a company. A balance sheet is a record of a certain financial period. The components of a balance sheet are reported in the order that they appear on the sheet since the basic accounting equation is assets = liabilities + equity.
Basic Accounting Equation	Assets = liabilities + equity The basis for both double-entry bookkeeping and accounting itself is this formula. Making sure this equation is balanced is one of financial recordkeeping's core objectives. The graphic depiction of this equation is a balance sheet.
Cash	A class of assets that includes both traditional financial instruments like cash and digital ones like the amount in bank accounts. It is the most liquid asset.
Credit (Cr)	The right column of a T account, at its most basic. Using the fundamental accounting equation, the following occurs when recording a transaction on the credit side: Assets and costs decline, Increases in Revenue, Liabilities, and Equity

Debit (Dr)	The left column of a T account at its most basic. In the fundamental accounting equation, the following occurs when recording a transaction on the debit side: Assets and costs both rise, Revenue, liabilities, and equity all decline.
Double-Entry Bookkeeping	A fundamental accounting technique that calls for the dual recording of each transaction. Every increase has a corresponding reduction, and every debit has an equivalent credit. This "double-check" aids in finding mistakes and maintaining the stability of the fundamental accounting equation.
Financial Statements	Documents that detail the financial position of a company. The balance sheet, profit and loss statement, and statement of cash flows are the three primary financial statements.
Profit	Profit describes the financial benefit realised when revenue generated from a business activity exceeds the expenses, costs, and taxes involved in sustaining the activity in question. Profit = Revenue - Costs Net profit is the amount of money your business earns after deducting all operating, interest, and tax expenses over a given period of time. It is the actual profit after working expenses not included in the calculation of gross profit have been paid.
Invoice	A record of the specifics of a sale or purchase between a buyer and a seller. Typically, this comes with a demand for payment by a certain future date.
Inventory	Current assets waiting to be sold, for example crafted products.
Operating Cycle	The amount of time it takes for a company to convert its inventory into cash.
Payroll	The money owed to employees of a company in wages, salaries, and other forms of remuneration. Payroll taxes and other taxes that are withheld are also included.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF A CRAFT MICROBUSINESS

Whatever the size of the company, sound financial management is the cornerstone of all successful enterprises. Even successful and possibly profitable businesses will collapse without it. A craft entrepreneur should know how to manage and track small business cash flow and implement financial planning and forecasting.



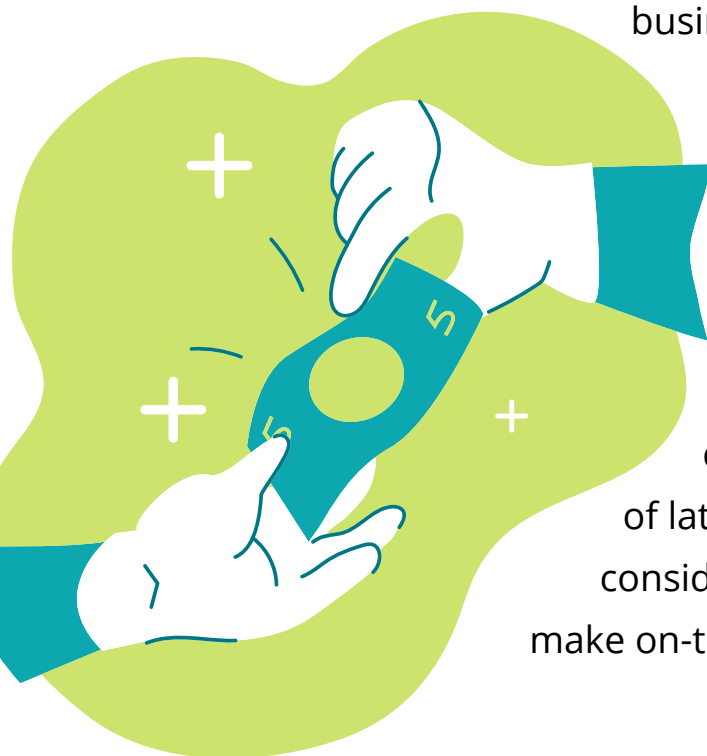
The amount of money that flows into and leaves your business during a certain time period is known as cash flow. If you want to stay in business, you must have "positive cash flow," which is when you get paid more than you spend. If your company has sufficient cash flow, it will be able to pay its debts on time and cover any unforeseen expenses. There could be times when you have "negative cash flow," for instance, if you purchase a new piece of equipment, or if a customer's payment is past due. To compensate for this cash flow shortage, you could have to rely on a bank overdraft or short-term loan. But as long as the negative cash flow has been anticipated and your company returns to a position of positive cashflow, it shouldn't pose a significant issue for your small business. Typically, cash flow is monitored throughout a predetermined reporting period, such as a month, quarter, or year.

What can you do, then, to prevent your company from going bankrupt and failing?

Making a cash flow statement and projection is the greatest method to keep a close check on how much money is coming into and going out of your company. You may compare your projected monthly cash flow with your actual monthly cash flow using these very basic financial records. These days, a cash flow statement ought to be one of the regular reports in your accounting software. If not, you may easily construct these documents on your own without any prior accounting knowledge if necessary.

Choosing adequate payment terms is a crucial step in managing the cash flow issue for your small business. Many companies that sell directly to consumers accept payment right away.

On the other hand, extending credit to clients and customers may be a successful strategy for generating new business and fostering trust, but it will also have an immediate effect on your cash flow. There is also the ongoing issue of late payments to consider. It is important to consider how you can encourage your clients to make on-time payments because late payments are a major source of cash flow issues.



Small businesses must be picky about who they hire and run a credit check on potential clients before agreeing to deal with them. It takes a strong will to reject prospective new contracts based on a credit check, but doing so can be the best thing for your company. Assuming a prospective client has a great credit history and you're willing to provide your products or services, the next step is to make sure they are aware of the conditions under which you are willing to conduct business. Although you could first agree on your payment terms verbally, you should make sure that verbal agreements are followed by written agreements that are absolutely clear on the terms of payment.

Building relationships with those who will be making the payment is always good since it lowers the possibility of payment delays. Delays may be minimised by making sure the invoice was delivered to the appropriate location and has all the relevant information. It's also a good idea to inquire about potential delays in payment before submitting the invoice because most individuals will make every effort to keep their promise.

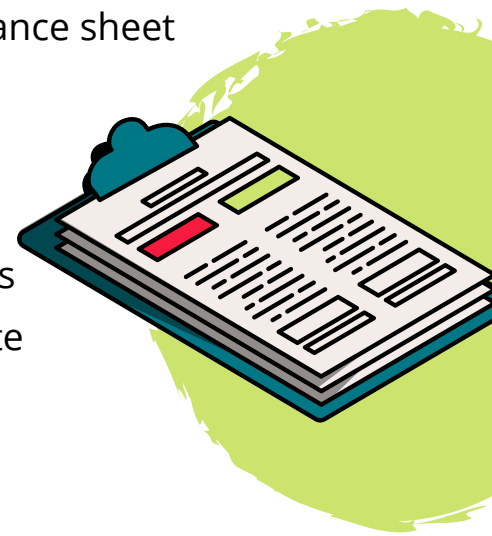
In any small business, financial documents are essential. They may be used for a variety of things, including internal revenue and tracking spending and demonstrating your company's viability to investors and lenders. Keeping up with your financial planning and forecasts can also help you see possible problems before they happen and provide you with the information you need to decide how to run the company.



There are four main financial planning and forecasting documents that every small business owner should produce and regularly maintain.

Those documents are:

1. Balance sheet: A balance sheet provides you with a current picture of your company's financial situation at any given time. There are three components to a balance sheet: assets, liabilities, and equity. The net worth of your company can always be determined using these three pieces of financial data. A positive balance on the balance sheet indicates that your small business is based on sound financial principles. The balance sheet also provides a clear picture of the business's financing to outside parties like the bank and potential investors. Liabilities will be worth more if you lack the capital to participate in the company yourself (equity).



2. Profit and loss statement: The business's annual income and costs are summarised in a profit and loss statement. You may determine your net profit or loss for the time period using those numbers.

Your ability to track your profitability over time and, more importantly, identify your breakeven point (the amount of income needed to cover all operating costs) depend on maintaining an accurate profit and loss statement.

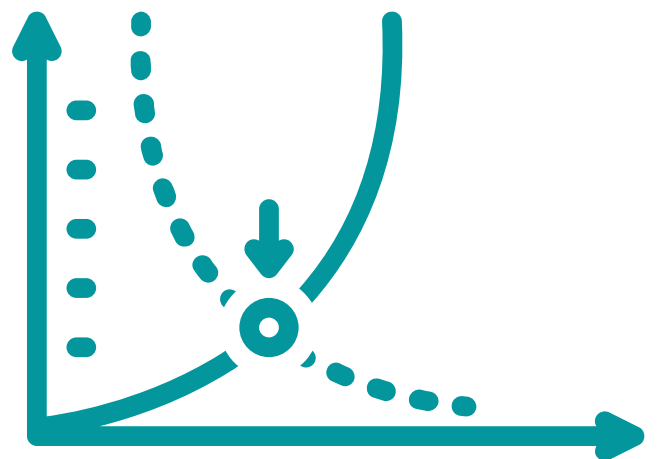




3. Cash Flow statement: A cash flow statement shows how much money comes in and goes out of your company's operations over a given time period, usually a month or a quarter. It enables you to ensure that there is enough money in the company to run it successfully on a daily basis and to take action before issues arise.

4. Break Even analysis: The number of units you must sell or the amount of income you must generate are determined using a breakeven analysis. It's common for small businesses to experience losses in their early years of operation.

On the other hand, if a company fails to break even over a longer period of time, it may not be financially sustainable. By calculating the **breakeven point**, you may assess a possible business expansion or new project and determine if your pricing is too high or your expenses are too low.



HOW TO BUDGET YOUR PRODUCT

You need funds to develop a new product or service since your efforts are not free. If you have a **strategy**, you'll have the money you require. Examine the launch phases and estimate the expenditures for each phase so you can fund your efforts until the product or service generates a profit. There are four phases you need to analyse in order to define the final budget for your product: development, production, promotion, and contingency budget.



The price of creating your new product or service must be estimated. Determine the new payroll costs for the workers who will design or produce the product. As an illustration, if you are making a new product, you will want more production personnel as well as supervisors to set up quality control standards and protocols. You must determine the actual cost before buying an existing product to resell, as well as if you need to educate salespeople to sell it. You will need more people to deliver a new service, and you will spend money training your sales team to promote the new service. All the preparations required before you actually launch the new product or service onto the market are included in your cost considerations for the development stage.

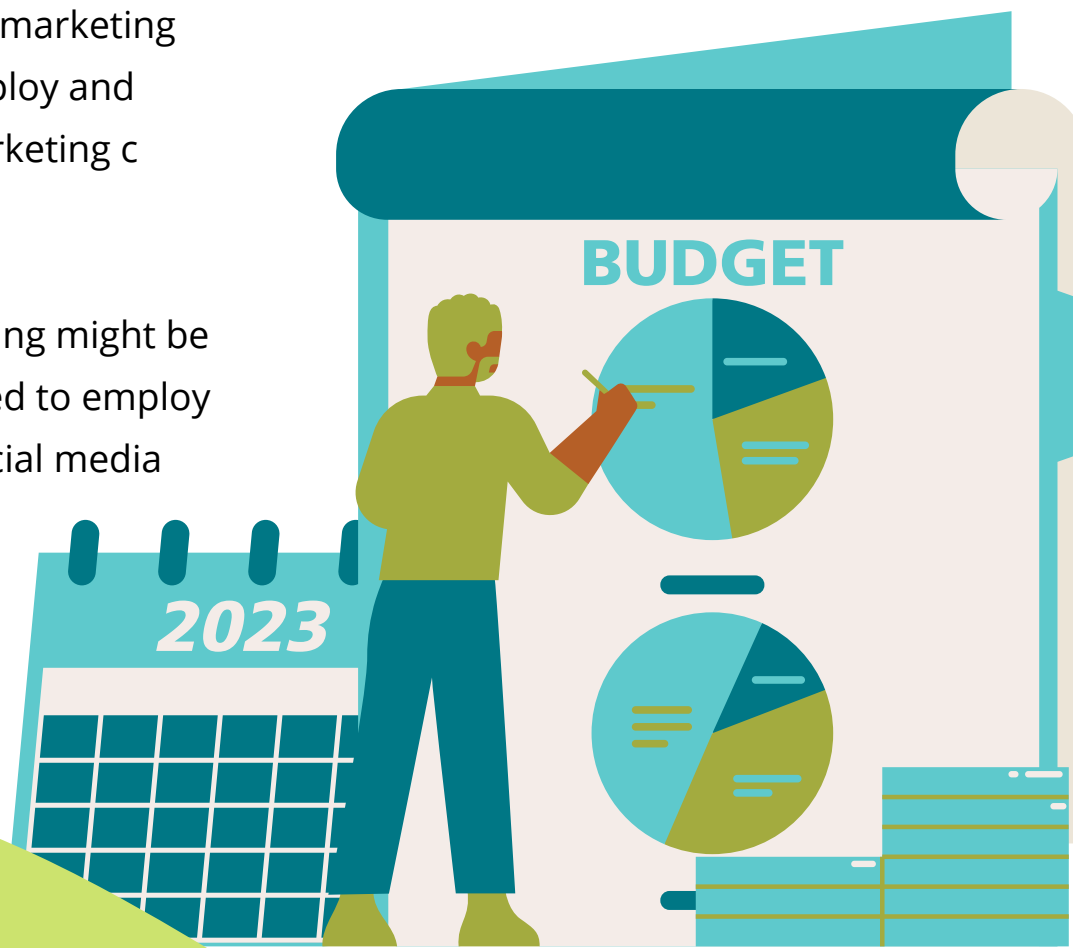


Establish a **budget** for the production of your novel goods or service. A service necessitates production in the sense that you need to estimate how much it will cost you to procure the necessary computers, software, equipment, travel expenses, and expertise. A product you produce will need unique supplies, procedures, tools, and storage.

Ordered goods need to be stored, shipped, delivered, and packaged. Your production phase includes all activities involved in getting a finished product that can be handed to a consumer or in producing a service that they can use right away. Additionally, you must base your estimates for manufacturing your goods or service on an expectation of the level of demand.

Marketing expenses must be included in your budget. You should call potential clients, invest in signs, publish press releases, and promote. Establish the mix of marketing strategies you'll employ and the cost of each marketing component.

Even social networking might be expensive if you need to employ a professional in social media platforms.



Think about the potential costs associated with different eventualities. If sales of your product exceed your expectations, you will need money to buy or make more. If a new service is well received, more employees and resources may be needed. You must budget for the expenses of remanufacturing or vendor returns if you suffer a high rate of returns on new products. You might need to deliver the service again at no extra cost to the consumer if it is substandard. Make a contingency budget that will carry you through the process of adjustment as you figure out how to provide your new goods or service and get past barriers in the market.



Your overall budget for a new good or service covers all expenses, from creation through distribution. This sum will be far more than the direct expenses related to producing or acquiring the product, as well as the price of rendering a new service. In fact, you could discover that you need to boost your profit margins to pay for concerns with customer service, marketing, and product development. Your entire budget will help you determine how much you need to charge in order to cover costs and make a profit.

DEVELOPING A FINANCIAL POLICY

A policy is a documented set of concepts or strategies used in decision-making. You should have sound financial rules and processes in place before you make your first transaction or hire your first employee. Every financial policy should work to keep your company's finances stable. Every financial policy's overarching goal is to guarantee that the company has sufficient funds to continue operating. A financial policy makes sure that resources are used effectively and efficiently and that best practices in accounting are adhered to. A clear financial policy can also shield workers from any financial hazards that can arise in the absence of rules. A list of financial policies and processes that you ought to implement is provided below:

1. **Division of Duties:** Establish who has access to and is in charge of maintaining your company's financial documents.

2. **Authorizations:** Who is authorised to sign corporate checks? The owner could be the only person on it, or it might also include one or more important staff. Whatever you select, including credit and debit card use in that policy. Keep in mind that any alterations to a checking or savings account require permission.

3. **Receipts/Disbursement Procedures:** When money is received in cash, look into credit card or wire transfers to find out who received it and how it was documented. Create a system of checks and balances to ensure that no employee is operating alone.



4. **Payroll:** Give one person responsibility for creating, preserving, and protecting employee files. Include details on who processes payroll, keeps track of vacation and sick time, and eventually signs checks.

5. **New Vendors:** These regulations would provide instructions on how new suppliers should be approved and who should have access to them. Along with defining specific steps for new vendor establishment, it would also address payment conditions and authorizations.

Your business will determine the rules and procedures you'll require. Consider the key areas of your company where consistent guidelines would be beneficial. Some rules and procedures you should consider are:

- Which employment types are permitted to approve different business actions
- When and how to create new bank accounts
- New vendors and selecting them
- New clients and managing them
- Buying and purchasing, such as how to decide when to purchase materials, machinery, and stocks
- Collection of debt
- Security plans and risk management

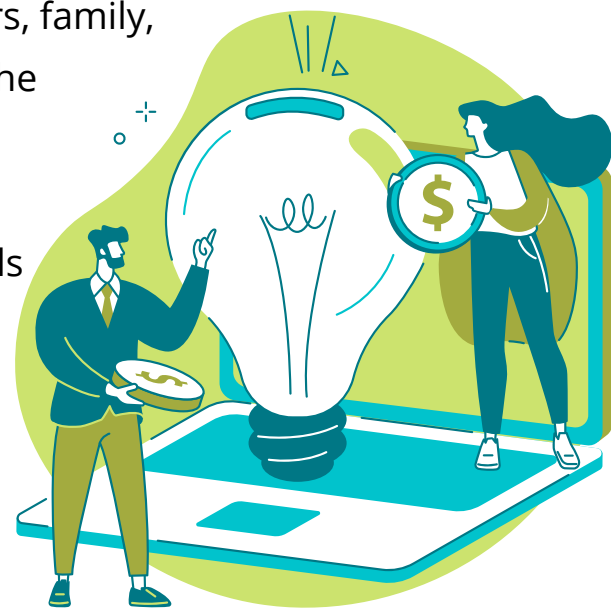


FUNDING

OPPORTUNITIES

At some point, you will likely need to look for business financing throughout the growth of your small business, whether it's to address short-term cash flow concerns or to fund the expansion of your company over a longer period of time. Depending on the type of your company, the specific difficulties you confront, or the chances you wish to seize, there are a variety of business funding choices accessible to you. There are several ways of funding your craft microenterprise, traditional and alternative, that will be presented below.

1. **Bank Loans:** Traditional bank loans are still one of the most popular sources of debt financing for small businesses and start-ups. This option is suitable for a business that has a good relationship with its bank, a sound credit history and a compelling business case. You should research loan types, terms, and interest rates thoroughly to find the most appropriate deal for you.
2. **Crowdfunding:** Crowdfunding is the practice of using modest sums of money from many people to finance a new business venture. Crowdfunding uses social media and crowdfunding websites to connect investors and entrepreneurs. By enlarging the pool of investors outside the typical circle of owners, family, and venture capitalists, crowdfunding has the potential to boost entrepreneurship. A very common platform for content creators is Patreon, which provides them business tools to run a subscription service.



3. Venture Capital: Professional investors known as venture capitalists make substantial financial commitments to businesses in exchange for stock stakes. In order to help the firm grow swiftly and realise a fair return on their investment in a reasonably short period of time, they often invest in young companies with significant growth potential. Venture capitalists often provide both money and experience, but you must be willing to give up a sizable portion of your company.



4. Business Angels: A private individual who directly invests some of their assets in start-up and expanding private firms is known as a business angel. They are typically high net worth individuals with prior business experience.

Business angels can make individual investments or participate in syndicates, where one angel often assumes the leadership position. In addition to funding, they offer contacts, company management expertise, and talents. Angel investors with experience are aware that they might have to wait for a return on their investment. As a result, they may be a reliable supply of "wise and patient" capital.



5. **Micro Funding:** Microfinancing is a sort of finance that, particularly in the developing world, has a big impact on enterprises. Business owners in the social sector, who might not have access to traditional financing, face particularly severe funding challenges. One approach might be microlending. Microfinance loans are made to assist ambitious business owners in generating income, accumulating assets, managing risks, and meeting their basic necessities. Low-income business owners who might not be eligible for typical credit and lending choices might access financing through microfinance. Small loans, or microloans, savings accounts, and insurance coverage are all types of microfinance products (microinsurance).

6. **National Funding programs:** Each country has its own national strategy for development, and offers different types of funding, based on the objectives of each national strategy.

Those programs are being managed by the Ministry of Development and Ministry of Finance of each country, as well as by other private organisations.



7. EU Funding programmes: Grants, financial instruments, subsidies, trust funds rewards, and procurements are some examples of the various forms of funding. The Financial Regulation of the EC and the calls generally govern the implementation guidelines for all forms of funding. There are several EU funding programs available for crafters and artisans, for co-creation, upskilling, residencies and mobilities:

- WORTH Partnership Project: It is supported by the European Commission through COSME, the EU Program for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises' Competitiveness. It is the only project in Europe where designers, SMEs, manufacturers, and tech companies collaborate to create cutting-edge, design-focused business ideas.
- European Solidarity Corps - Solidarity Projects for Individuals: A Solidarity Project is a non-profit solidarity project that young people themselves design, develop, and carry out for a duration of two to twelve months.
- Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs: It's a cross-border exchange program that enables aspiring young businesspeople to collaborate with and learn from more seasoned business people running small enterprises abroad.
- Education, Training and Youth - Key Action 1, Mobility projects: The fundamental goal of those projects is to assist students to acquire information, skills, and attitudes, including language proficiency. Their employability will increase, and their career prospects in the labour market will improve.



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- Culture Moves Europe: By enabling artists and cultural professionals to work, perform, and co-produce across borders, Culture Moves Europe was developed to increase mobility opportunities, foster international collaborations, and open up career opportunities. This gives them access to new markets, helps them draw in new audiences or followers, and strengthens international collaborations.
 - Startup-Europe (Horizon Europe): Startup Europe is an initiative connecting high tech startups, scaleups, investors, accelerators, corporate networks, universities, and the media to accelerate growth of the European startup scene.
 - STARTS programme (Horizon Europe): A platform called S+T+ARTS aspires to better connect technology and creative practice in order to address the social, environmental, and economic difficulties that Europe is currently facing. Through the cooperation of artists, scientists, engineers, and researchers, it promotes the development of more innovative, inclusive, and sustainable technology.

HORIZON EUROPE

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A large, light green, stylized number '5' is centered on the page. The number is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes that create a layered effect. The top bar of the '5' is a solid light green rectangle. The vertical stem is a darker green shape that overlaps the top bar. The bottom curve is a large, light green shape that overlaps the stem and forms the base of the number. The overall appearance is modern and graphic.

**ONLINE NETWORKING
MATTERS**

DIGITAL TOOLS

FOR COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Digitalization is all around us. In order to fully contribute to a digital society it is necessary to have the right digital skills and the knowledge on the right digital tools. Only then will you be able to successfully communicate and collaborate. Digital technologies have an important place in innovation, contributing to change, offering flexibility, but also transparency, as well as creating a more modern society. Since the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) are among those innovative ones, the lack of digital skills in the creative industries will result in the lack of sensitivity to changing cultures. Therefore, digital tools give new possibilities, but are also a challenge. Further speaking, with big amounts of data and more users online, **you as a crafter can benefit from the exchange of knowledge, initiate, collaborate or simply communicate with others through digital tools.** Especially collaboration has grown in importance with the increase in remote working and staying connected regardless of the location. The situation has also provided for increased flexibility and increased use of technology has ensured that distance is no longer a constraint to communication.

When you think about communication, it is about staying in contact.

When you think about collaboration, it is about sharing resources, cooperating and inspiring others.

But what digital tools can you use for communication and collaboration?

Still one of the most basic digital tools you should make use of is email, since nowadays everyone has an email. It is recommended to have a web mail provider, such as Gmail, since you will already have access to other Google products that can support your professional activity, e.g., Google Sheets for calculations, Google Photos for storing your pictures, Google Meet for online calls or the well-known YouTube acting as a stepping stone to speaking to your potential customers. The Google account is also beneficial in such a way that you can use it for verification on other online portals. However, emailing is not a digital tool for immediate response. For immediate response you can use WhatsApp, Skype or Messenger, the instant messaging solutions.

While you can use those previously mentioned also for video conferencing, some other examples are Click meeting, Zoom or Microsoft Teams.



Useful tools for document sharing are Dropbox and WeTransfer.

Did you know?

Flickr, YouTube, Wikipedia, and Facebook were the first digital channels for the creation and sharing of user-generated content, with the assumption in 2005 that internet use became more social and communal. Internet no longer a new media in 2007, it was “disturbed” by the iPhone, and in 2022 over half of Internet traffic was on mobile devices (60.66%).

Have you heard about social intranet tools?

Digital communication is also supported by the so-called **social intranet tools**. These digital tools include blogs, forums, wikis, and they are intended to increase collaboration.

Blogs offer more personalised content in comparison to websites or newspaper articles. Through blogging you can address specific needs, sharing your own perspective or localising your product. A craft blog can serve as guidance or inspiration (DIY crafts blogs), while also being a platform for promoting your work and networking with others.

Forums will support communication and sharing your insight in a shorter text form when compared to a blog post. Forums can also be platforms to start selling craft products or network with other crafters.

Wikis plays the role of a knowledge-based tool and is built by queries of most FAQs.



Some examples of social intranet tools for crafters:

- **Spruce Crafts** is an example of a DIY craft and hobby blog. Etsy Journal is a blog to explore ideas, buy material and network with crafters.
- **Craftvillageblog** is a collection of stories of crafts from all over the globe.
- **Lettuce Craft** is an online community and forum for crafters and DIY ideas and advice.

You can find ideas to get inspired to create your own blog exploring the 80 top blogs on crafts (dated 2022), by visiting the blog post available under this link [URL: <https://www.mavenart.com/blog/blogs-on-crafts/>].

The choice of the digital tools you will be using also depends on the form of communication / collaboration.

- Intrapersonal communication, to oneself, using clouds to store files and Google Sheets, Photos, Calendar to keep records of data or manage time.
- Interpersonal communication, with peers and close collaborators, using Google Drive to share documents, holding online meetings via Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Skype.
- Group communication, with 3 or more people, using cloud sharing solutions like Dropbox, WeTransfer or Google Drive, and any kind of video conferencing platform.
- Public communication, when passing on information to a wider audience, through social intranet tools – on blogs or forums.
- Mass communication, when a larger audience is involved and through various online media, through advertisements or the internet.

Remember that you should not use a digital tool just because it is available, but after you consider what you need it for. Then you can focus on the activity. Also keep in mind the requirements, if you need a subscription or internet access, for example. Not neglected should be the preferences of others, therefore the availability of the tool, and your flexibility to adapt to the channels of communication that most of the representatives of the sector are using.

Communication and the Cultural Creative Sectors (CCS) are interconnected.

This means that through their objects, the form of their work, design, colours, etc., crafters or artisans are communicating their emotions, feelings, opinions, interpretations of the world around them, and digital tools can support the process, with more (or new) audience finding out about them (and their works).



ONLINE PLATFORMS

FOR NETWORKING WITH CRAFTERS AND ARTISANS

Online platforms ease networking. However, when using the internet, you should be aware of some basic rules known as the **netiquette**, and these include using respectful language, not excluding others, respecting others privacy, reviewing information before publishing it, avoiding spamming, updating information published online (e.g., on social media accounts). Especially for **craft blogging** there is a set of rules to follow:

Self-promote only where it's acceptable, which means promoting your work on the sites of others only by their acceptance. This aspect must be considered when you are sharing your work on social media channels or popular blogs that have their own policies that you should know and follow.

Build your crafty network list by request, which means that you cannot collect the data of your followers or notification recipients without their consent due to the GDPR.

Regularly respond to your blog comments. In this way you are appreciating that others are reading your blog, and you are also building your network of contacts.

And remember to *give credit to the work of others* you are sharing on your own blog.





Following the netiquette, you will be enhancing networking opportunities, “looking more professional” online.

The most influential online platforms for networking are **social networking sites** (SNSs). Whether it is Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, you can build a public profile, view other profiles and create a network of connections. Accounts are free after setting up profiles. With a profile you can also create a page under the category ‘Crafts’ or ‘Arts & Crafts Store’.

Pages · Create a Page

Create a Page

Your Page is where people go to learn more about you. Make sure yours has all the information they may need.

Page name (required)

Use the name of your business, brand or organization, or a name that helps explain your Page. [Learn More](#)

Category (required)

crafts

Crafts

Arts & Crafts Store

Source: Facebook

You can also join different groups, whether they are on Facebook (e.g. Art and Craft public group, Art & Craft Supplies - buy and sell public group, Craft Living Marketplace public group) and Pinterest (Craft Community Board collection), to network with other crafters or to put up your crafts for sale.

ONLINE PLATFORMS

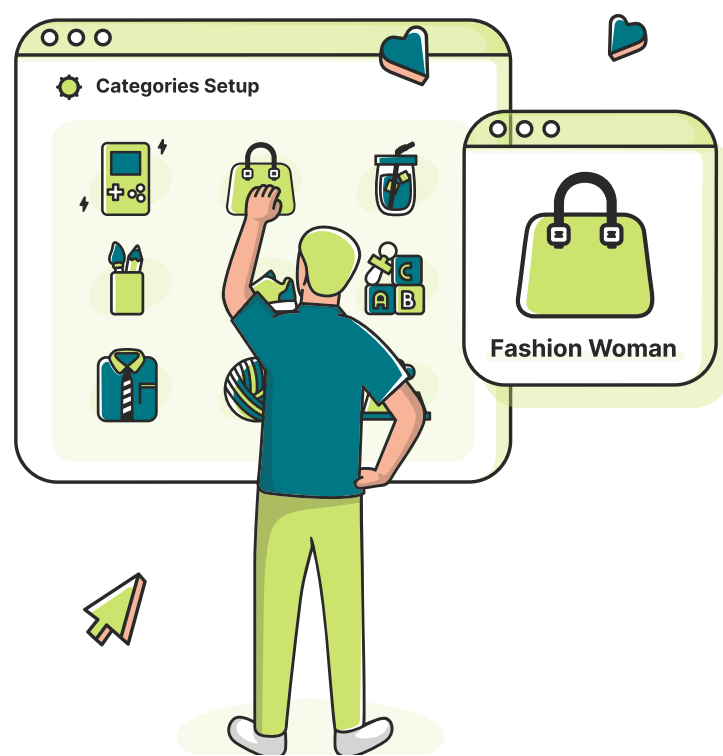
FOR MICROBUSINESS ONLINE PRESENCE AND SALES OF OWN PRODUCTS

Digital technologies make it easier for crafters to promote their microbusiness, find buyers of their goods and to grow their network of contacts.

Crafters can decide to sell their products on their personal website, as well as use digital collaboration platforms and content management systems (CMS). The choice depends on the size of the business, who you want to reach, the purpose and sometimes also the costs. A CMS will assist you in turning an existing website into an e-shop, support the introduction of new features, manage orders and integrate payment providers. With a CMS the ecommerce owner will write, update and publish content on the web without coding, whether text, graphics or page layout. Therefore, with it, it is easier to manage and sell products or services, which happens directly from your ecommerce site.

Popular examples of ecommerce CMS platforms to explore for your craft microbusiness:

- **PrestaShop**, allows you to develop a web store from scratch, and it is also a good choice for beginners in ecommerce or those with a lack of tech skills.
- **OpenCart**, an option that will also work well for ecommerce beginners, a free multifunctional solution.



-
- **Wix**, although not an ecommerce CMS, it is a website building platform for online business, especially for ecommerce beginners and non-coders.

Another option is to use a shared online platform (marketplace).

- **Etsy** is an example of a platform where crafts makers can create their own market fronts, but also find rare materials and tools that allows them to create unique pieces. Etsy is a marketplace for handmade items.

Learn how to set up an Etsy-business for selling your product online and find out about some other online platforms for selling artisan and craft work online in module 3.

- **Bonanza**, as a marketplace, also has the feature of advertising your products in different places, e.g., Google Shopping, and is a cost-effective Etsy alternative.
- **Ebay** is another popular marketplace and it is based on an auction-style model.
- **Shopify** is a marketplace especially for ecommerce beginners and small businesses.
- **ArtPal**, an online gallery where you can sell your work, whether it is prints, paintings, crafts or other artwork.
- **Handmade at Amazon** is an example of a marketplace, one that is for specifically handmade products.



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- **Society6** is another marketplace aimed at artists and designers, functioning also as an online community space.
 - **Powered by People** is “the wholesale marketplace for conscious buyers.” – as they describe themselves on Instagram ([powered_by_people](#)), concentrating on small-batch makers, and ethical, sustainable, and social impact.

Worth mentioning is also [ArtFinder](#), an art marketplace for connecting artists with buyers, a platform supporting independent artists and authentic hand-crafted art.

Online auction sites like eBay and online stores like Amazon simply moved a traditional commercial exchange to the realm of cyberspace.

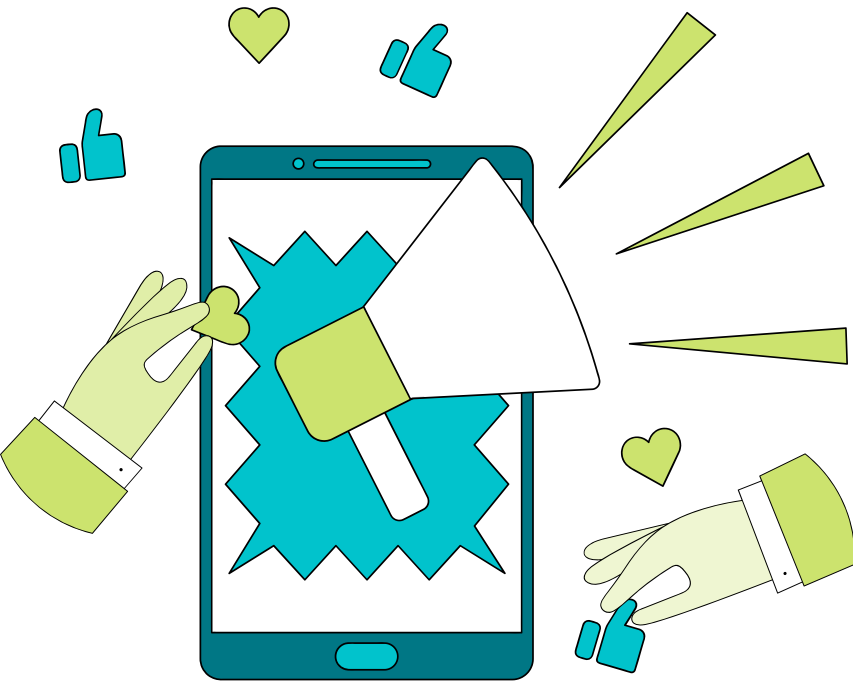


Yet another solution is joining a crowdfunding website and [Kickstarter](#) is an example. You can share your ideas with a wider community who you can connect with and find funders to your own projects. The platform cultivates creativity supporting networking opportunities for crafters from all over the globe. Crowdsourcing on the other hand is a solution for finding new ideas, but you can also take the advantage to network with other crafters to create mutual initiatives. [Upwork](#) is an example of a platform where you can collaborate to create economic opportunities, and one that has also turned into a marketplace. While [Threadless](#) is for crowdsourcing creativity among an artistic community.

Find out on some other, besides crowdfunding, funding opportunities in module 4.

SOCIAL MEDIA

FOR MICROBUSINESS PROMOTION



Social media can reduce the cost of microbusiness promotion online. And if you want to promote your craft microbusiness online, you need to master more than one social media channel.

Why?

Social media is a powerful tool, provoking attention, causing reactions, alerting on new releases or on novelty items, but also serving the purpose of tracking market trends or behaviours – of individuals and groups.

Social media is nowadays more often used for increasing **user generated content**.



Although the first was Facebook and although it was designed for university students, now there are other similar platforms that are willingly chosen, also to support microbusiness activities. The choice of social media channels for business purposes will depend on the type of business operation. Instagram or Pinterest are recommended for more "visual sectors" (art, furniture, culinary), while YouTube if you will be sharing video demonstrations of your product (product assembly) or live streaming an event, for example. The most professional social media channel is LinkedIn. It is also useful in job seeking – information included in your profile will be viewed by potential employers and you can search the job offers on the platform to directly apply for the job. Twitter is for short messages with up to 280 characters. While Facebook remains to be quite universal, both for business and personal profiles.

Further comparing social media channels...

- **Facebook** has the most active users of any SM platform.
- **Instagram** is photo based; a more visual SM compared to Facebook.
- **Pinterest** is another visual SM platform, but not only for showcasing products, but selling & buying, inspiration for e-commerce for the creative sector.
- **TikTok**, used mostly on smartphones and the most downloaded app in 2020, is a SM for gaining awareness, either product, service or achievement. It can also be a channel for trend alerting.



And have you heard about the Dots?

The Dots is a LinkedIn for creatives. You can connect with other creatives and search for collaborators, apart from showcasing your work, which it can also do.



What is more is that social media is creating new potential for craft microbusiness, by:

- selling for building e-commerce,
- adding value to reveal the hidden stories behind the craft object and its maker,
- building audiences and
- networking to share information and resources and promote creative, collaborative opportunities.

Convinced?

If your answer is YES, then you should start thinking about your social media strategy.

Start from choosing the social media platform you want to focus on, so you can learn how it works and use it effectively. Ask yourself a few questions:

- Who is your target audience?
- What channels are used by your clients?
- What do you want to get out of the social presence for your craft microbusiness?
- How much time can you devote to managing the SM?

When you make your choice, learn how to use the channel, decide on additional tools you can use to save your time, e.g., scheduling posts.

Moreover, to link your work or ideas with others, create associations, start using #hashtags – in this way you will be generating leads. Hashtags will connect with similar products (#pottery), services (#moulding), events (#craftevent), professions, and support networking with others to share and exchange experience or create mutual initiatives to promote craft microbusinesses. A tool that will help you with this is [Hashtagify](#).

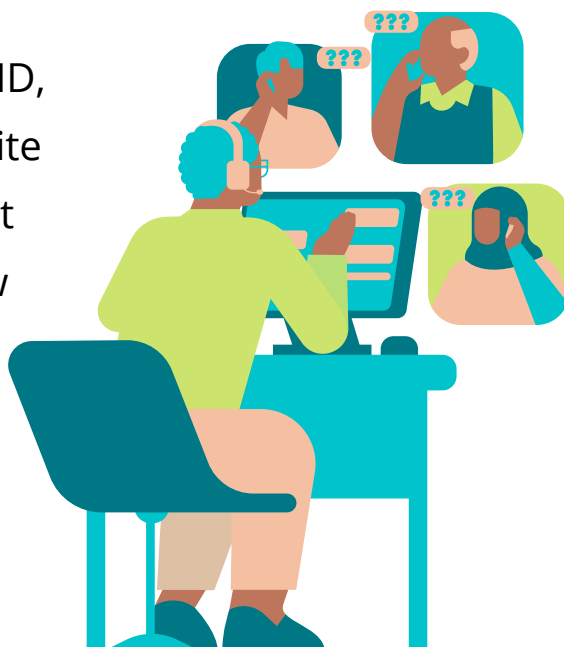
Go to module 7 'Branding' to find out about a 'Smart Pinterest Strategy', Tik Tok for creative microbusiness, Facebook Ad Success and showcasing your brand on Instagram.

Now, if you have a social media strategy you need to know how to **analyse data collected through social media**. The simplest activities are observing received likes, comments, shares and saves, but the next step is monitoring mentions and discussions of your craft work. In other words, you will be tracking engagement. [Google Analytics](#) will also be a valuable support to see how much traffic to your website comes from your social media channels.



To set up Google Analytics you only need a Google Account. A good idea will be to have a separate account for your microbusiness, which will make it easier to track page visitor data. An additional asset is that you can also collect data from mobile apps, under the condition that you choose this feature. Once you are on the Google Analytics page, sign in and choose the Analytics feature providing basic information about your website, finally clicking the command 'Get Tracking'.

At this point you will see your Tracking ID, which you need to install on your website to start gathering data and presenting it in the form of a report. There are a few ways to do this. If your website is built on WordPress, then install the plugin by WordPress under the name Google Analytics by Monster Insights.



In the Settings screen you need to perform authentication to receive a new code. Don't forget to confirm the website URL you will be tracking in case you are managing a few websites under the same Google account.

But if you are not using WordPress, after logging in to your Google Analytics account go to the ADMIN screen. There you will verify the website URL and in Tracking Info you will have a Tracking Code, which must be placed in your website's php. Once this is done you can send a test traffic command to finalise the set-up.

To understand customer behaviour, you can also choose to use HubSpot, a marketing automation platform. It can be integrated with Shopify, for example.

HubSpot



While to find out if others mention you in their blogs or articles, write about you in publications or information about your work is shared online, you can also set up Google Alerts.

ENGAGING CONTENT

FOR CREATIVE MICROBUSINESS

ONLINE PRESENCE

When you want to present your craft microbusiness online, you should think about the strategy for creating engaging content. You can do this in a few ways: visual identity design, illustration, storytelling, copywriting, web design, advertising. These previously mentioned are examples of communication design.

Essentially, what you need to do is use a combination of text and visuals to attract your audience.

In the first step what will be useful is to rely on your brand logo and to build other visuals around it. In other words, use the colours, style and message from your logo to create a consistent visual identity. Illustrations are another interesting way to “present yourself” since with a strategic illustration you are creating “a picture” associated with your craft product, service or brand. This can be a sketch, vector or drawing. Illustrations can also take the form of infographics and make your presentation “more attractive” while also being an interesting addition to break longer descriptions. You can also take your illustration one step further and write a story. Digital storytelling on blogs will unfold new emotions by combining visuals with text to tell the story behind your work.

Did you know?

Some digital platforms used for craft such as Adobe® Illustrator and 3CooD printing, were created primarily for the design industry, whereas other such social media and online shops were not, but often do rely on some design skills to be successful.

Newer technologies are also offering ways of presenting products, services and content.

Augmented reality (AR) might offer ways to better convey the physicality of craft objects or artistic works when they can't be touched in person.



Cad Crowd is a platform for 3D PRINTING ideas – crowdsourcing, a creative community of 3D modellers and designers who work on real creative projects from clients worldwide using all different types of CAD software.

Now let's also consider your website.

When taking the decision of designing a webpage for a creative microbusiness you need to look at the bigger picture, and make sure it is responsive and adaptive, so it fits to different screen sizes on different devices. Especially for the “visual” sectors you need to “show” things in the best way.

This means your content layout should be simple and “clean”, e.g., two-column page, with user friendly navigation, and a balance of text and visuals. All the elements should be related to the visual identity you have created for your brand, product or service. Unless you do not yet have a logo or are just starting to turn your craft into a microbusiness, the website is not the first place to start. You should set up a website when you have defined your craft brand strategy.

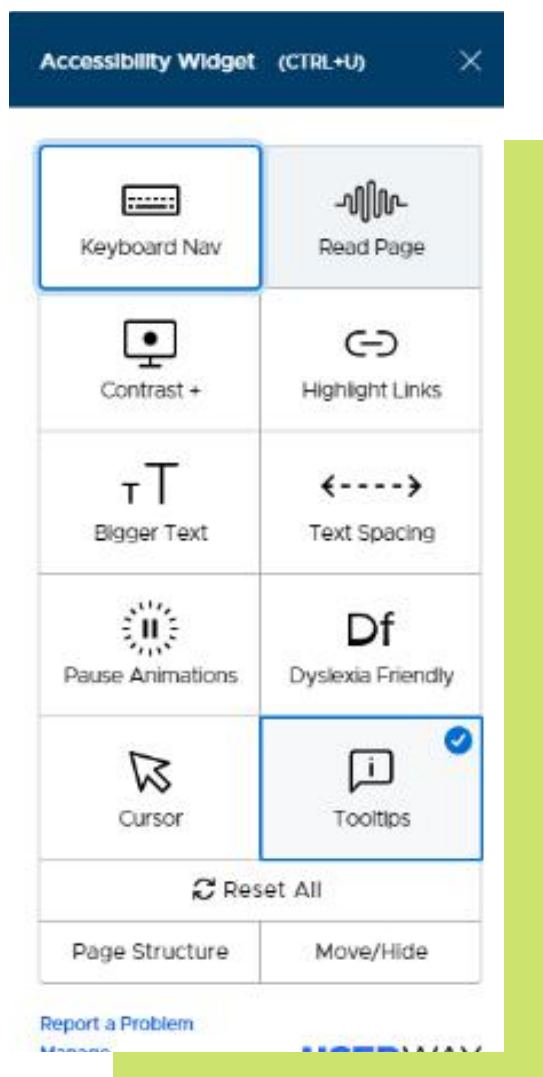
Digital marketing is also a solution for engaging content, along with the promotion of own products with electronic devices, and you can decide to use one of the following:

- Search Engine Optimization
- Search Engine Advertising
- Content Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Email Marketing



Online advertising can be more advantageous in the respect that you can check visits to product pages, review traffic by location, and evaluate the feedback to improve your e-commerce strategy.

What is often forgotten is to provide inclusive content. The simplest way is using an accessibility widget, which will be placed at the top right corner of the site, enabling the following features:



However, the aspect of inclusivity and digital tools should also be analysed in a wider perspective. **When we consider rural areas**, internet access occurs to be a challenge, and **therefore online presence** will not necessarily be a win-win situation **or online networking might not be an option**. With that said, it is worth engaging with the local community through joint activities. Here are some ideas you may initiate:

Friday coffees with artisans, to share experiences or “the works” with a cup of coffee!

Rural housewives circle, to create crafts together and learn from each other!

Monthly lunch break chats with “the craft makers,” when each month another crafter or artisan is interviewed on their profession!

And while you meet with your local community, you can **work towards the creation of a virtual online communication showcasing your work** like the

Wiltshire Makers have (find out more about them in the case studies section).



YOUR DIGITAL ARTISTIC BIO

We will start by introducing what an artistic bio should include. It is a short story about your professional life, a text about you as an artist or craftsman: from the significance of your work. It is not the same as an artistic statement, which is the description you start with, but when you include your portfolio of products, then you are speaking about an artistic bio.



In the **digital space** you will find a few platforms that will help you to create a portfolio of your products or the so-called artistic bio.

Linkpop

(by Spotify) is a curated collection of your links to social media channels in use, therefore you are “owning” the so-called social bio that can be shared across the online space.

Dribbble

is a community of creatives to share artistic bios, get inspiration and also find designers you want to work with.

ArtStation

is a community of artisans which showcases artwork for games, film, media and entertainment.

DeviantArt

is the largest online art gallery and community to connect through art creation and sharing.

Behance

is also a platform for showcasing and discovering creative work, where you can create portfolios of your products.

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**ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE
THINKING**

ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE THINKING FOR CRAFTERS AND ARTISANS

BUYING SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

This is one of the biggest ways a maker can improve the sustainability of what they do. Are the materials currently used by crafters sufficiently sustainable both for their needs and for the environment's?

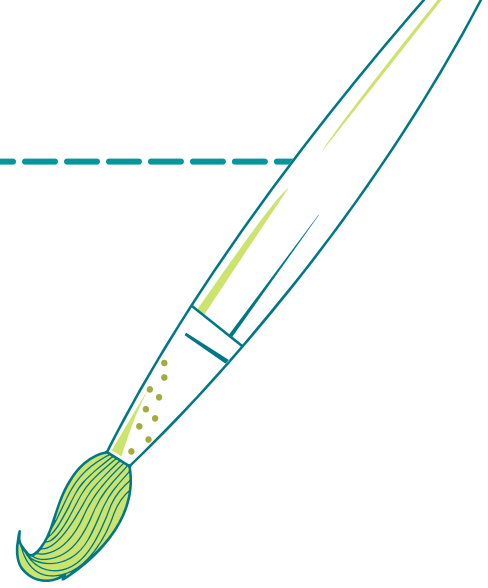
Sometimes sourcing more sustainable suppliers can incur a financial cost. Being 'green' and responsible with materials can damage an artisan's bottom line. This will often hamper their ability to act responsibly as they tend to work on very tight profit margins as it is.



If we can bring down the cost of sourcing the right materials – or promote those firms and companies that are fair with their pricings – then this can have an important knock-on effect towards the continuing decision to purchase more eco-friendly materials and sources.

Some examples of these type of materials are:

- **Paint brushes:** wooden or bamboo with synthetic bristle fibres to avoid plastics.
- **Paint:** There are more natural sources for paint including homemade oil paint and earth paint.
- **Outdoors:** Many sustainable materials can be found in your own locality and in the great outdoors. Natural materials that can be broken down, but which can also inspire creativity.
- **Recycled materials:** Anything recycled has been used again and qualifies as being more sustainable. Includes steel, wood, yarn, and rubber.
- **Plant based Polyurethane:** Superior to other forms of polyurethane and is biodegradable.
- **Sheep's Wool:** Particularly ideal for rural Ireland and other countries where the raising of sheep is popular, this can work as an alternative to traditional types of material. Breathable and absorbs volatile organic compounds.



PRODUCTION AND WATER

Water is not just essential for human life, but also important for a range of other purposes, such as domestic, industrial, farming and crafting. Our water supply needs a huge amount of processing to make sure it is suitable for our needs, be it drinking or for waste uses or for when it's involved in production.

In order to be sustainable when it comes to water use – particularly with many areas around the world experiencing droughts – there needs to be a concerted effort to use it sparingly and wisely, and in consideration with other industries and societal needs.

According to the WHO, over 2 billion people in the world live in water-stressed countries, which makes conservation even more important. The 5 biggest threats to our water come from:

- **Drought and aridification.**
- **Mismanagement of groundwater.**
- **Saltwater intrusion.**
- **Pollution.**
- **Land degradation.**



As the globe warms and potentially becomes drier, water wastage is getting more attention as it is discovered that much of the time too much water is being consumed. To ensure adequate water supplies in the future, we need to ensure we use it efficiently so there's enough to go around and enough to satisfy the most essential human needs.

The materials that use the most water are things like textiles and garments, so any ways to consciously reduce water usage in these areas is welcome. For example, some retailers and fashion designers (H&M and Stella McCartney) are committing themselves to farmers and suppliers who use more sustainable methods. This can also be extended to the administrative side of a crafter's business as every page of A4 paper takes over 5 litres of water to produce, so managing accounts, advertising and so on in a digital manner could help cut down on wastage. A further benefit to saving water is that in many countries water is a chargeable commodity and must be paid for, therefore the less that's used the less a crafter needs to pay.

Ways of saving water may include,

- Turning off the tap when performing such activities as cleaning.
- Fixing leakages when they are discovered.
- Using a plug or bowl to reduce the amount of water used.
- Using materials that aren't so water intensive.
- Collecting and harvesting rainwater.

USING SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS AND CERAMICS

Artisans and crafters can be encouraged to use certain materials that are more kind to the environment. Things like porcelain, stoneware and earthenware are just some of the major types of pottery ware that's produced by heating natural materials (often clay) to remove water, which can then be used for thousands of other uses, everything from crockery to jewellery.

Natural clay is plentiful and easy to extract. This means that extraction, fuel consumption, and transportation costs are all kept to a minimum during the production process as they are often located near relevant factories. Efficient production plays a major role in materials being considered truly sustainable.

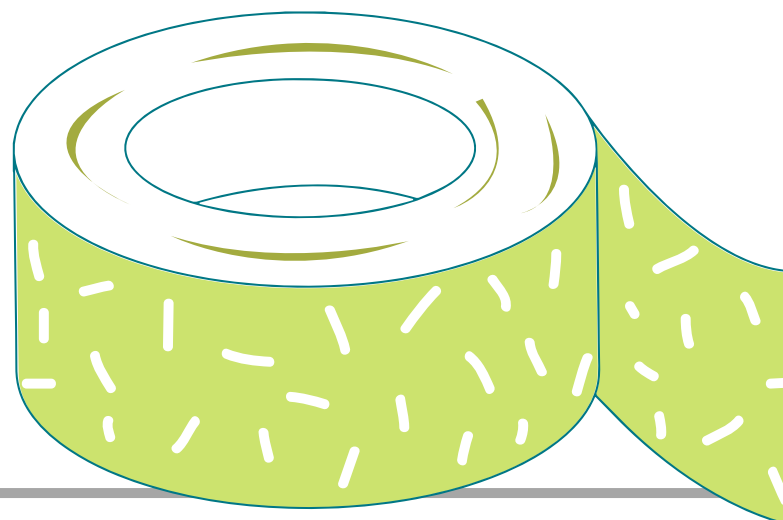


Many of these materials are more natural but also are versatile and lend to the making of beautiful creations! Adding to the benefit of using ceramics, they can be easily recycled, and cleaned and maintained without using harmful chemicals. As already touched upon earlier, other good forms of sustainable materials also lend themselves to being greener and more harmonious within the natural environment. Some more examples include,

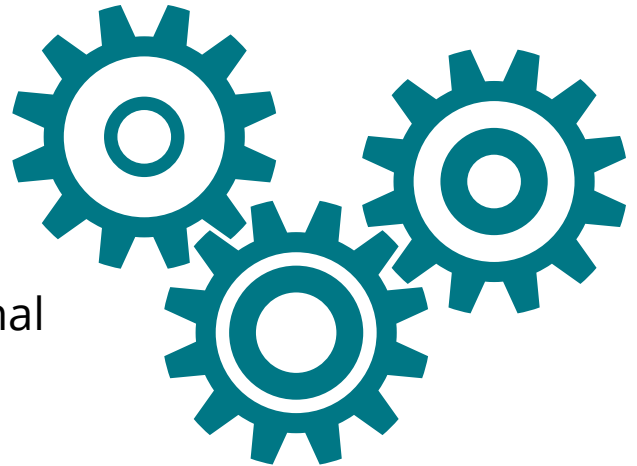
- **Glazes** often used by crafters to produce unique effects to their work. The key is choosing ones that are non-toxic and use more naturally derived dyes, and which steer clear of colourants that contain heavy metals, such as lead.

- **Jewels** can be sourced from areas where there is conflict or exploitation so ensuring they are certified as having been mined in a sustainable manner can lead to fairer extraction methods both in labour and mining terms.

- **Adhesives** come in many forms of sustainability, such as those which are derived from renewable materials like beeswax, those that dissolve in water and leave behind no trace of residue, and those glues that have no petroleum derivatives in their formulations.



- **Steel** already one of the friendliest types of material that a crafter can utilise, the continued shift to electric ark furnaces (EAF) will reduce emission levels by up to a further 60% on traditional blast furnaces.



- **Rubber** a popular material in a crafter or artisans' work. Traditional rubber is harvested in areas like Southeast Asia and Brazil and forests are being lost at an alarming rate so that rubber can be harvested. A switch to a more sustainable type of rubber protects against deforestation and helps to reduce human rights' violations.

OURCING MATERIALS

THEIR ORIGIN, TRANSPORT, AND LOCATION

Where are the materials sourced from?

**Are they local or do they need to be transported from far
away or abroad?**

If it's abroad then we don't know what their extraction is doing to a particular environment or country.

Adding to this is the issue of transport. If materials are sourced from a longer distance, then additional transport is required to bring them to the new place. This of course involves greater amounts of fuel and pollution of carbon into the atmosphere, the extent of which depends on the type of transport used. If the main core material comes from an area local to the crafter or artisan, it immediately cuts down on damage to the environment and automatically makes it more sustainable.

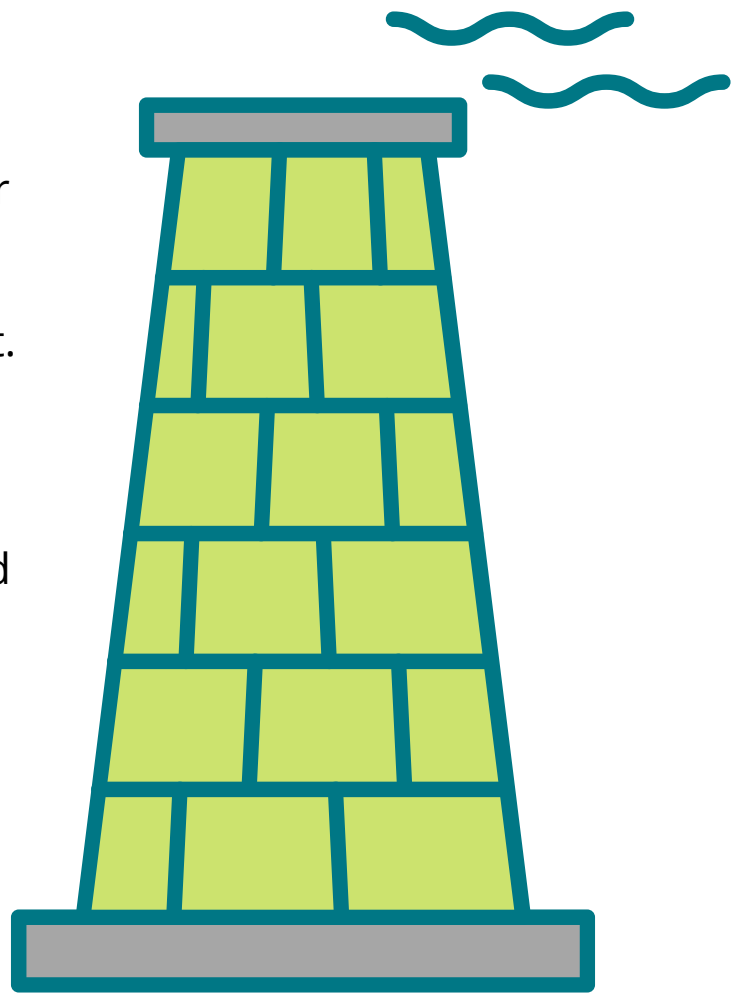
Can the transport be made greener, like the method of transportation used, or if for example the type, like if electric vehicles are utilised? Greener fuels like hydro-treated vegetable oil are also being exploited by some delivery companies.

SUSTAINABLE AND ALTERNATIVE FUELS

If you're a crafter who uses a kiln, then by considering the energy supply to the kiln is also a way to make the firing process more sustainable. Changing your electricity supplier to a green tariff increases the demand and profile of renewable energy. Considering local materials when sourcing wood kindling or other fuel is also a more sustainable approach. They are more likely to be readily available and more easily accessible.

Since fuels are vital to many creators and their livelihood, and because so much is used in the production of their pieces and creations, a global switch to cleaner fuels would go a long way to promoting a healthier environment.

Such fuels include waste vegetable oil (WVO) and sustainably produced biodiesel.

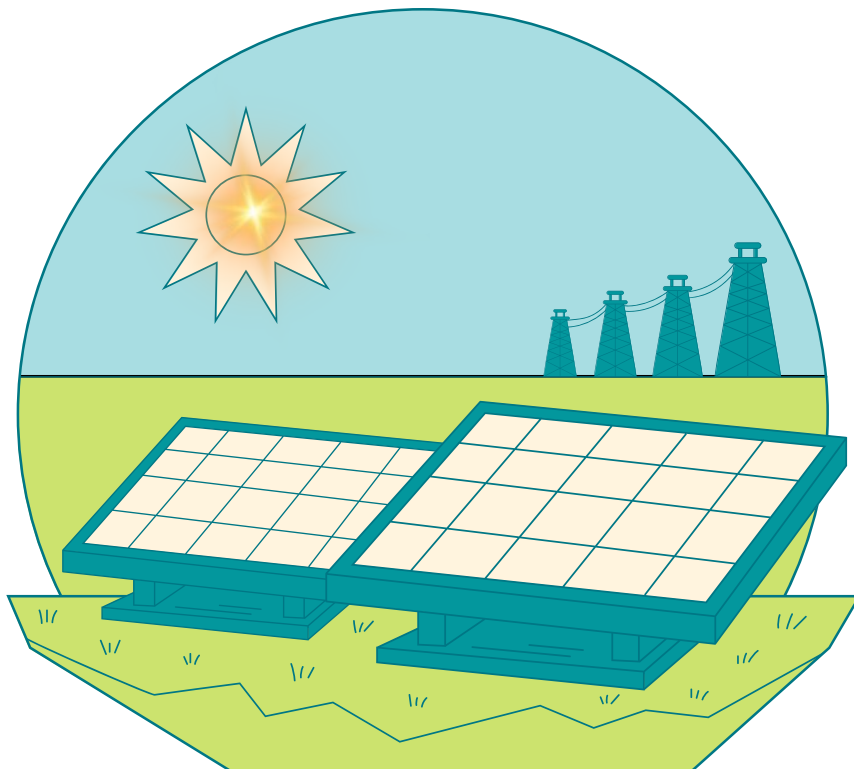


Also prevalent in rural areas are green energies such as wind, hydro and solar power. These can be easily implemented (depending on access to water and sunshine) and save a lot of carbon release and monthly/yearly costs for the crafter and artisan.

- **Hydroelectric Power:** One of the cheapest sources of electricity, it is completely sustainable once the water cycle continues to work. It helps to fight climate change as it doesn't use fossil fuels and reduces CO2 emissions, and according to Enel Green Power it has a carbon footprint that is almost 'insignificant when compared to coal or oil'.
- **Wind Power:** Particularly applicable to those artisans and crafters who live in wind abundant locations, this form of power has minimal environmental impact, has good conversion efficiency into electricity and fits in well with the circular economy model due to the plants themselves being almost perfectly reversible because of the recyclable nature of the components and land that's used.



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- **Solar Power:** Even if a crafter doesn't live in a place with lots of sunshine, installing solar panels can help to lessen electricity bills. This form of power can add value to your home, qualify for government subsidies, and reduce dangerous pollutants such as sulphur and nitrogen oxides.



- **Tidal Energy:** This is using the power of the ocean to generate electricity. As it covers 70% of the earth's surface, this type of power can be utilised and harnessed by much of the population, particularly those artisans and crafters that live near coastal areas.

COMMUNICATIONS: SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT THE GREEN ETHOS

One of the ways that makers can contribute to more sustainability is by using their influence to reduce the **environmental impact** of their own practice. Leading by example is one of the most effective ways of changing the narrative and the habits of everyone around you. From big producers and companies to the smallest of consumers, our actions can have a distinct impact on the type of choices which are made and how the world operates and changes.

This can be done through simple signs erected on logos on packaging from work. If there is a delivery info printed on a car or spread the word. Special be offered to those who purchase that have been certified as more sustainable.



advertising campaigns, or premises or stamps and purchases of a crafter's to be made, then perhaps van may also help to discounts or offers could certain products, like those

Suppliers who adhere to the **green ethos** can be highlighted or promoted on the crafter's website or social media pages.

Furthermore, engaging in dialogue with suppliers and clients can also have a beneficial and far-reaching effect. Much of the time if people are aware of others making better choices – and how they can also make similar choices through information and education – then this will inspire them to follow suit. A crafter or artisan directory or group initiative can be set up to teach and inform them how to be greener so the public know who is doing their part and how. They can also register their current suppliers, noting what they are currently paying and using and how much material/stock they order on an annual basis.

In some countries there is the option of government funding for small business owners to apply for special grants or loans to help with the transition to a greener operation. It is worth keeping a look out for this as it can be spent on any number of sustainable or environmentally friendly options.



ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

By ethics we mean the processes by which a crafter or artisan engages in to create their products or art. Do they source raw materials from suppliers or companies that also act in a sustainable manner, therefore creating a chain of responsible actions for others to follow and learn from? Do their processes scream sustainability? Are they merely paying lip service or do their actions and decisions tell of a deep commitment to the protection of the environment around them?

When independent crafters and artisans develop, promote, and sell their creations in an ethical manner, they affect the whole process by which the industry operates from the bottom up. Ways crafters can demonstrate good ethics:

- Construction/Creation
- Methods of selling and to where?
- Sourcing materials
- Transport
- Customers
- Engagement/Education



Dealing with competition in an often-saturated market can also tell a great deal about how an artisan follows a good code of conduct.

Do they try to find cheaper and less sustainable materials to save money, or do they act responsibly despite the competition being potentially more successful?

Do they use reputable suppliers, or do they source their materials from unethical places and companies who exploit and pollute and damage?

The question is, how do you as a crafter or artisan react to the pressures as an independent maker without much of a safety net supporting you?

The other side of ethics is the more personal side and includes things that are fair on a wider societal level. For example:

Does your practice source goods or materials from child labour - either directly or indirectly through a supplier?

Many modern companies exploit young children in third-world countries as it is seen as more profitable than paying wages that are higher and less-sustainable for long term growth.



How well do you treat your employees if you have any and are they well compensated for their work?

Employees are often our gateway to lasting success and it bodes well to treat them with respect and dignity.

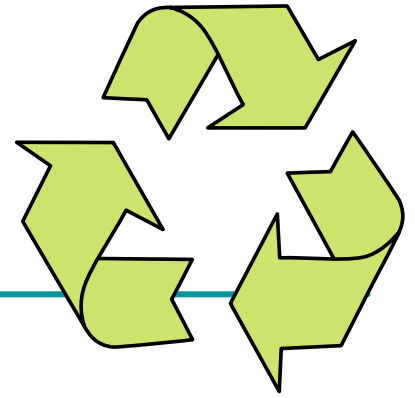
With ideas and designs being stolen being a common theme, are you ensuring to be honourable in how you come about your creations or designs, that they are original and unique to you, and if not that you inform or give recognition to the person or group that you copied or built upon?



Is your advertising accurate and not making claims that aren't factual or in-keeping with your product?

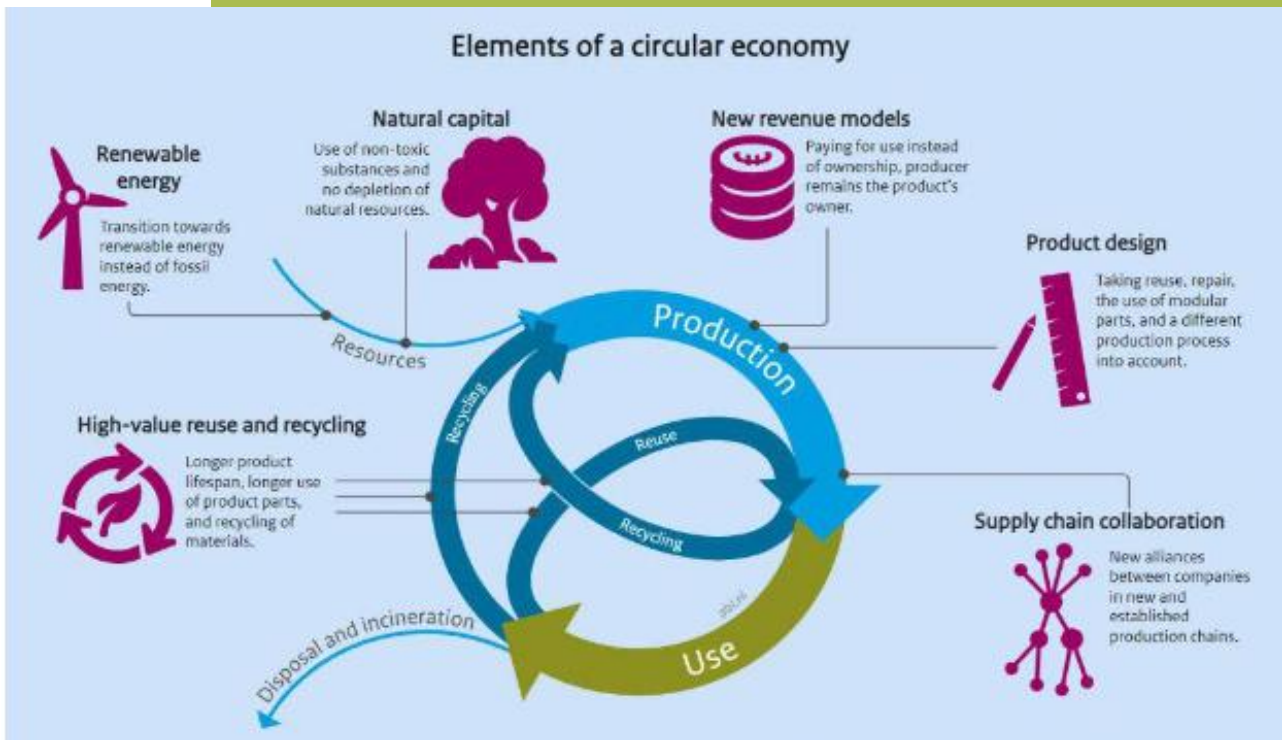
Advertising is the window to your offerings and should be seen as a source of verity and truth.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Growing in both popularity and importance, the circular economy aims to keep current products in use for longer. Rather than throwing away items and objects that may have been deemed as old or worthless, they are instead repurposed or repaired and sold or given away. Doing this allows things that would normally be dumped to stay in circulation and have a longer life. It encourages a certain 'love' of things that may not have been up until now as trendy or fashionable, but instead relies on practicality, money-saving, and consideration for the planet. Benefits of the circular economy,

- Can help combat climate change through the wiser and more sparing use of materials.
- Saves money due to not always buying new and creates value for both the consumer and the artisan/crafter.
- Can help to regenerate national systems. It can help protect and sustain everything from food to materials to natural resources.
- Eliminates waste.
- It can support local economies by utilising the resources available in the area and helps to keep money in the locality which goes towards supporting smaller or more disadvantaged towns and villages.



Microbusinesses can especially utilise this relatively new development by recycling and reusing materials they may have built up or have in storage. They can scour areas like second hand stores, scrap yards or natural areas like forests and beaches for items that have either been 'pre-loved' or those that don't damage the environment by their removal. It also allows for a great level of creativity as things are repurposed into something new and fresh.

What needs to be ensured to support this initiative is for bigger companies to start making products that are designed to last, rather than the current phenomenon of 'planned obsolescence', where things are purposely made to fall apart after a certain time.

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BRANDING

CREATING A COMPELLING VISUAL BRAND



Visibility is everything for a small business and it is most challenging when you're just starting out. A distinct, strong, unique branding adds to the value of your business and is like a flashing light attracting attention to your brand, through the fog of other advertisements.

Every day, from the first moment we glance at our phones, until the moment we log out and finally close our computer/tablet laptop before bed, we are bombarded with brand information and ads. As creative business owners, and I know many crafters resent the term, we are still, at every moment, a customer of thousands of brands who are fighting for a short moment of our attention. As a potential customer all this non stop visual content can be exhausting.

When all of your brand assets come together they not only tell your story but they help you make an emotional connection with your customer. This connection is the beginning of a relationship that makes your brand special. It adds value to the product or service you provide and it keeps your customers coming back for more.

So how can us crafters, who we are by definition a small business, get some visibility through all these bright and flashy ads, how do we manage to showcase the value of our product? An essential first step is to create unique and engaging brand assets, so we can build a relationship with our customers, in a way that they will not forget.

Problem addressed: how to choose a name for your business, online and offline tools for logo design, how to present the logo Colour Palette, Photos/graphics.



How do I find MY Brand Identity?

When finding your brand identity you should spare no time and energy, and even though the steps are “simple” it is an essential part of your branding and “creative voice” that will support your crafting microbusiness.

In this part of our training we will be outlining the steps that will help you identify the goals and mission of your brand, and in this way you will be able to connect your Brand Values to the Visual Identity of your brand.

1. Define Your Audience

As with everything that relays communication to the recipient, the audience will also adjust the tone, energy and mode of conveying any sort of information. By defining our audience we are able to determine the language that we will use to connect with them, the terms, and the tone that will best relate to our primary buyer personas. Through this list of questions you will be able to create targeted versions of your buyer personas. Who is our ideal buyer, the one that will connect, appreciate and purchase our craft?



ACTION TIME: Take out a piece of paper and start figuring out the answers to the below questions. Remember that your ideal buyer personas can be more than one type.

- What is their gender, occupation, financial status / job, education level and age?
- What makes them tick? What is their personality like? What are their hobbies, interests, values, and interests?
- What type of lifestyle do they live?
- What do they worry about?
- What solutions are they looking for?
- What other brands do they like?

2. What is YOUR Mission

So now you have your audience, what is that you have to offer to your customers and clients? You know your craft and products of course, but what you need to consider is how you provide these products and offerings to your client base and why? What are the solutions they bring?

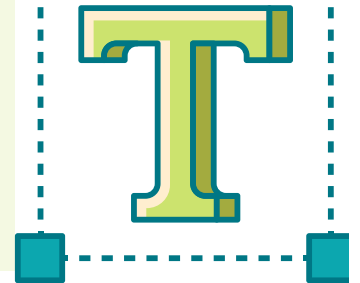
Ask yourself:

- Why do we provide these products or services (if you also offer training / workshops)?
- What are we hoping to change for our client?
- What improvements are we aiming to bring to their lives?
- Why do we think that it is important to do what we are doing?
- What are our values, what do we stand for?

What Creates a Brand's Visual Identity?

Listing out what makes a brand's visual identity is the easy part. A visual brand's identity comprises of:

- Imagery (also known as logo)
- Typography
- Colours
- Creative design (Imagery and composition styles)



The million dollar question however is how does one get to the heart of these elements and use them to communicate to an audience who you are as a crafter, what you stand for, and why they should choose your handmade product over machine made or other artisan products? What is it within your branding and personal story that makes your visual identity YOURS, that actually tells your story in relation to your creative passion and craft.



All of the elements mentioned above should guide followers and customers to define their perceptions in relation to your brand. If we are to simplify it, your visual identity is made up of the visible images associated with your crafting practice and via proxy your crafting microbusiness. That is why it's important to match your visual identity with the overall identity of your brand, of your narrative. The visuals even more today represent a much larger message and theme than what defines the word visuals. They set the tone of your entire branding, which will also in a way define your connection with your customers/ audience.

3. What is YOUR Brand Personality

You now have a grasp of your brand mission.

**It does sound a bit weird, the personality of my brand?
The personality of my logo and visual identity?
What do you mean by this?**

As peculiar as it may appear as a concept, a brand does have a personality and persona and you need to figure out what this personality is so that you remain consistent in your communication and visual identity. This allows you to transfer the message and promote your craft in a way that reflects your values, creativity and personal touch.

As out of the box as it may be, try to think and do spend some time on this one, if my brand was a person who would that person be? What type of person/personality/persona would be a good image/reflection of your business? How would they appear/look? How would they communicate/talk?

A simpler way could be trying to answer the below question:

If I could have anyone on this planet to act as the spokesperson for my brand, who would that person be?

From this point you can start describing and expanding the personality of your brand. When you finally find the person/personality that would best fit as the representative of your brand, then you have found the tone you need to use to communicate that in a consistent way. You will need to keep this messaging tone across all communication and marketing channels including email and social media.

4. Emotional Appeal Development

Crafting is an intrinsic human creation that demands dedication, time, energy and passion.

Emotions are very important in this process.

These emotions need to be infused into your

brand, so in turn you can deeply connect and leave a lasting image in your customers memory. The image that you want to communicate and share.

Once again there is a list of questions that you need to ask yourself to reach that. Branding may be a taxing and exhausting process but it is essential for you to be able to communicate your craft, creation, passion with the words, images and ideas that better define and transfer YOUR narrative.

So let's buckle up to connect emotional appeal to the visual image of YOUR brand.

- When you share something visual, how do you want your audience to feel when they see it? What is the emotion you want to evoke via the marketing material you will create and share?
- You already have your line of products that you have created, however what emotions are evoked when your customers use your products/services or interact with your brand?
- What emotions lie at the core of the story of your brand?
- Which emotion makes more sense for your brand to be connected with? Does it make sense for your brand to be connected with a sense of belonging, guilt, fear, competition, comfort or some other emotional appeal?

Congratulations, when you answer these questions, which are harder than they appear to be, you will have collected the building blocks that will help you build your marketing strategy.



5. Let's put all those Blocks together! Build Your Visual Brand

You finally have the answers to all the above questions, so now it's time to start building the image of your brand and the images to support it. To do so, the below information is a step by step process once again that should keep you focused on doing so.

- Choose a colour palette. Now that you are familiar with the personality and emotional appeal of your brand, use Colour Psychology to pick a shade that matches your identity.
- Choose your typography. Choose two fonts that compliment each other and that will represent your brand.
- Define imagery choices. As abstract as it may feel, the more precise you are the better the management of your visual brand. Describe what type of images represent your brand in the best way (i.e., is it an abstract photo with geometric shapes in pale colours, is it a landscape photo in black & white or a brightly coloured animated graphic, is it a photo of different textures, is it a photo of community or a photo of a process etc.?)
- In case you already have a logo, revisit it taking into consideration all of the questions answered above. If it does not connect, or match with the persona, emotions and narrative of your brand, then consider a redesign of your logo.
- Create a branding guide. This is time consuming, but it will save you time whenever you are producing new marketing material or delegating to someone else to prepare it for you. To create a branding guide you need to list ALL of the elements of your brand identity in one guide. This guide/document ensures that every single element of your branding will follow the same consistent guidelines.



6. Branding Consistency is KEY

For a marketing brand consistency is one of the most if not the MOST critical strategy. As we communicate our brand via different channels that appeal to different audiences (i.e. TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Website, LinkedIn etc) it becomes increasingly difficult to actually maintain this consistency while appealing to the audience each of these mediums of communication is targeted at.

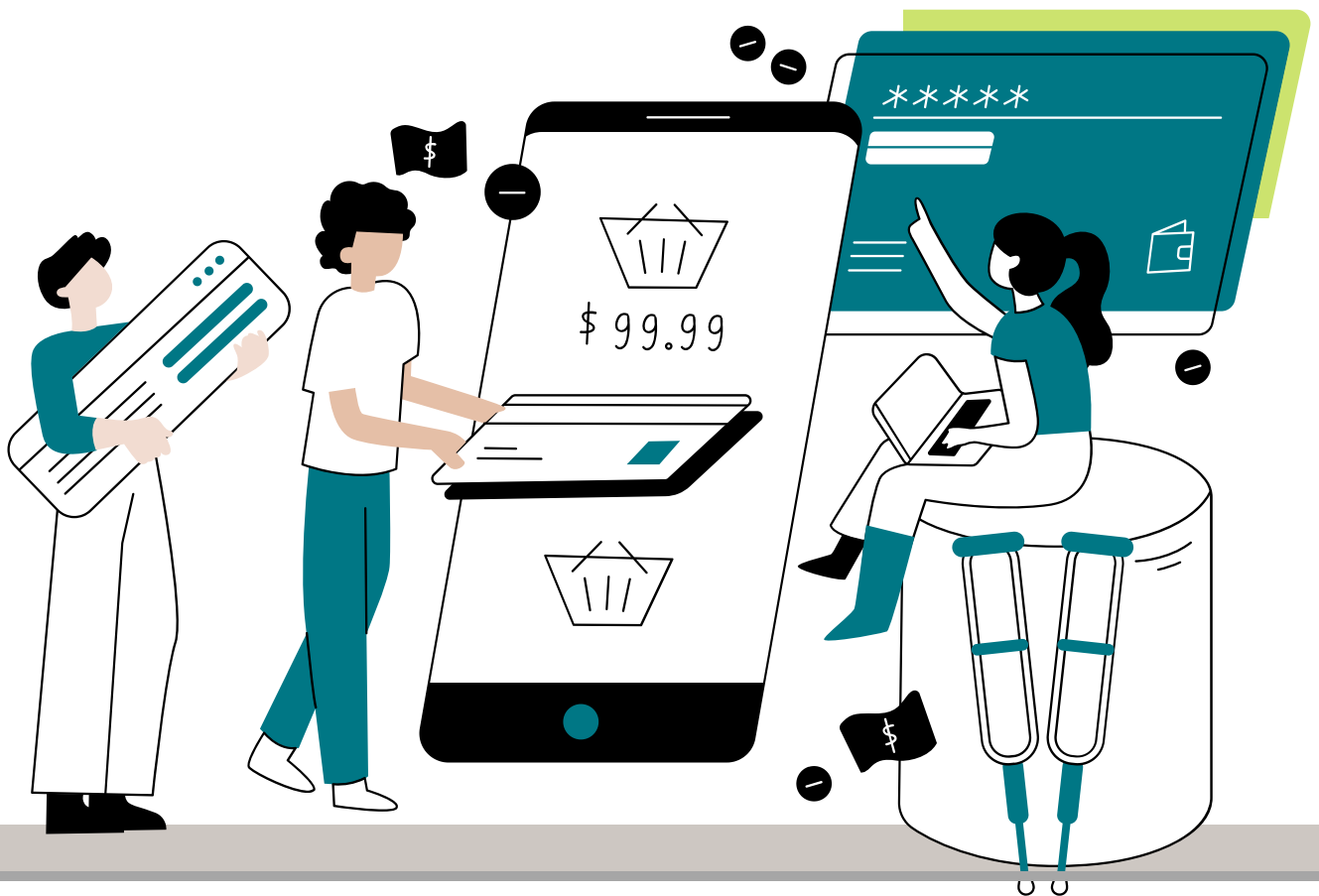
Even though it is a challenge to unify all these communication channels, it is essential in order to present a concise, consistent and above all CLEAR brand identity which will revolve around the substance, values, story and style of your brand.



style

How do I keep a consistent style?

You don't need to reinvent the wheel, you can get inspired and figure out the logistics of it by following the marketing of larger brands, even of products and services that do not match your own. You are not seeking marketing inspiration but rather the way that they keep the narrative, substance and story of their brand consistent across all these multidisciplinary channels.



If you ever saw an Apple or Nike product commercial in printed media, television or Instagram, most probably you were able to recognize the hipster upbeat music, the lifestyle of the young and fit, and of course the trendy photography imagery which lead you to figuring out that it was advertising for an iPhone or new trendy sneakers before the logo or product appeared at the end of it. That's because both of these brands are extremely successful with their marketing style and keeping it consistent.

The fonts, colour palette and simplicity create an immediate visual recognition from their audience and was achieved by being consistent throughout all of their communication platforms, even when they appeal to different age/ demographic audiences.



Keep in mind that consumers respond to familiarity with overwhelming positivity, so let your visual identity create comfort and a sense of familiarity, whether it's a feast for the eyes or stripped-down and simple.

ESSENCE

Your message, what you want to communicate through your brand alone is not enough to connect with your customers/audience. It is the tone and attitude of your message and the way that you will communicate it that will make all the difference to attracting attention and maintaining that connection.



If you have defined a lighthearted visual identity but your text copy uses direct, rigid statements, then you are confusing the recipient of your communication campaign, which is totally opposite from your aim to create/build trust and comfort. The visual tone should be concise with the language used.

Where is the creativity though?

Could being too consistent become blunt and boring for your audience?

Well, consistency does not translate to boring repetition, but rather keeping within the same values and visual guidelines. Great campaigns and brands are built on a very consistent idea, but also offer variation as they aim to keep their audience engaged and intrigued as to how the experience of the next campaign message will be.

NARRATIVE

Congratulations!

You have now created
an amazing visual style

and backed it up with some incredibly well crafted /selected images.
It's time to consider and create your story.

The story behind your brand will take you a few steps back to your mission. Aren't these two the same, you might ask? Well, not quite, the mission of your crafting microbusiness orientates your brand in a particular direction; your story is the one that will showcase how you act on a daily basis on reaching and fulfilling this mission. As with all when it comes to branding and visual identity, this story should also be consistent with the type of brand identity you decided and are trying to build.



Even if you manage to create the most amazing visual identity, what will connect you with people, with your customers, with your audiences is your narrative, and this is something that you need to hold onto and remember.

Brand Identity SHOWTIME!

Time to shine! You can celebrate for a moment now that you have a clear visual brand identity, and then start using it to expand your visual marketing efforts. You can implement your branding into the following platforms to spread a consistent, clear message for your crafting microbusiness.

- Website
- Physical Marketing Materials
- Branded Apparel
- Store Environment & Atmosphere
- Social Media Presence and campaigns
- Visual presentation at crafting exhibitions/fairs
- Videos/tutorials

Lights
CAMERA
ACTION!

Keep in mind that when you use consistent, to the point, **strong brand imagery**, it will have a higher return on investment (both monetary and timewise) as it will resonate more deeply with your client base and will create a memorable and cohesive brand experience that will make your customers return for future purchases.



FROM BRAND TO EXPERIENCE

Adding creative character to your brand, voice, typography, custom packaging, custom displays, and sounds.



What is Brand Experience?

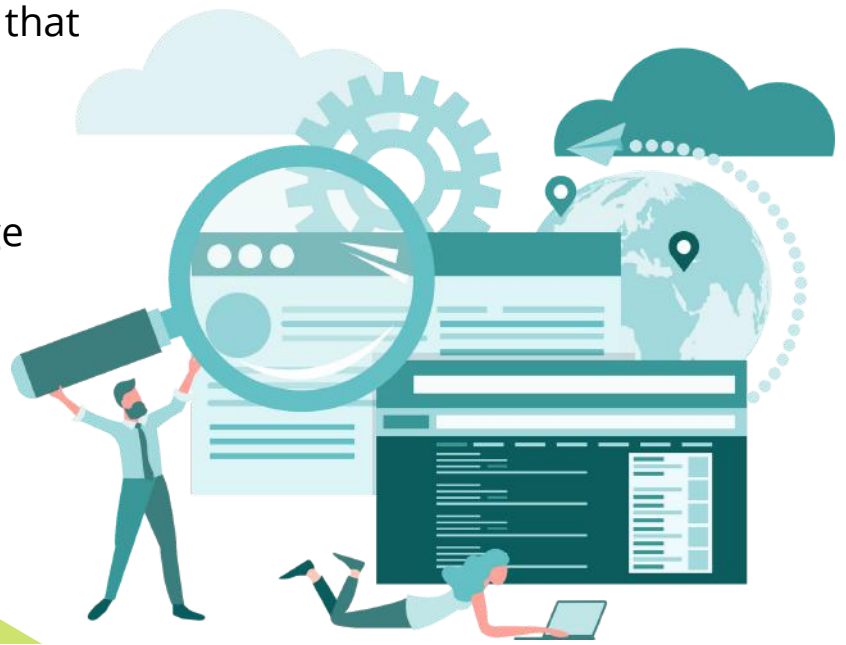
Brand experience to put it simply is how a customer feels about your brand before, during and after their interactions with you. Why is it important to invest in your brand experience? Firstly to ensure that your brand experience is indeed the one you want to put out into the world as mentioned in the previous chapter about communicating your story and mission. Also the impression, the lasting image and feeling of your brand experience will affect if a customer returns for a future purchase and if they would recommend your brand to others.

To sum up a brand experience is the sum of all thoughts, feelings, sensations and reactions someone has in response to your brand. It does not rely on one specific communication channel or type of media, it is the result of the long lasting impression that stays with someone after they have interacted / seen your brand in any environment.

What makes brand experience important?

Positive experiences help the creation of deeper connections, tend to inspire the audience, and what you are most interested about at this point, deliver results. Your brand experience, the lasting impression it leaves, can be the deciding factor on whether your brand will be chosen, revisited or recommended to a friend or other company. Having said that, it is now easy to comprehend why companies will invest a large percentage of their marketing and branding budget to find ways to create impressive and attention grabbing brand experiences.

However attention grabbing does not mean letting go of the consistent brand experience, the consistent brand experience is the foundation for all interactions and impressions. Brand consistency is KEY in creating lasting customer relationships and increasing brand recognition, which in turn will increase sales and client base. There is a balance to be found between consistency and exciting campaigns. You need to take the middle road and do both well, creating exciting campaigns that are fresh and trendy while remaining as consistent as possible to your brand image and narrative.

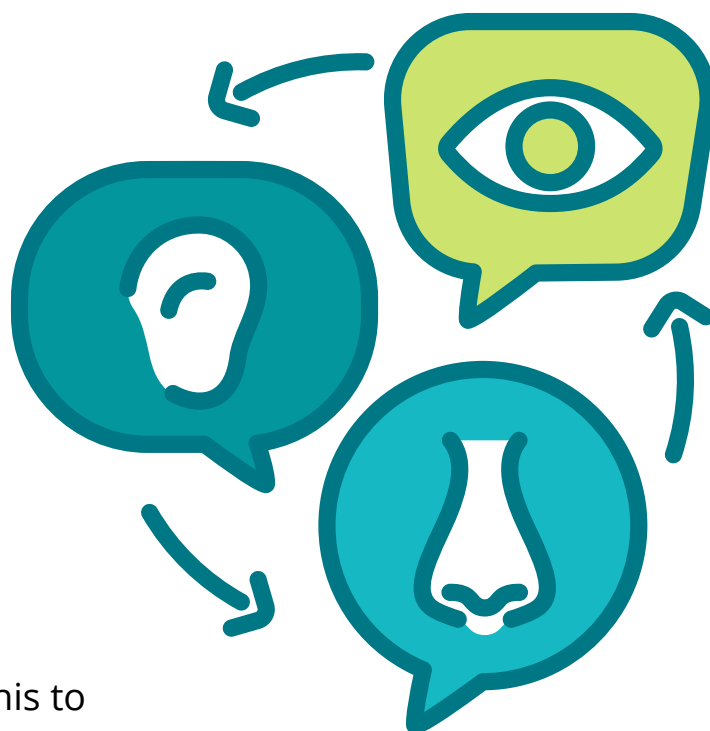


How to create a great brand experience strategy

To create a great brand experience strategy preparation is needed, which we did in the previous chapter where we identified and understood our audience/client base. Before creating any strategy you need to make sure you have an understanding of your audience, what they need and want, and what you want to communicate to them. When you understand and balance these two, only then you will be able to create a meaningful, memorable and authentic experience that will appeal to your audience.

1. Engage the senses

Sensory experts have illustrated that when we appeal to two or more senses while having an experience, it makes the experience more compelling and memorable, which is something that totally makes sense.



Brands such as Sharpie have used this to make their products more memorable by having their markers being audible, and add a potent smell. Other brands will offer free samples for their products so that they connect on different sensory levels with their clients and not just the digital and print marketing.

In the crafting world this is not so hard to achieve, it is after all a very tactile and sensory end product, and lucky you, senses go hand in hand with experience. Find a way to connect the sensory input of your product to your brand experience and you have a winner. How do you achieve that? Well there are several ways of achieving this, some include the creation of effective product content, which the new technologies make more achievable everyday, such as 360 photography, which can give the feeling to your customer that they are exploring the product in real time, or short auditory snippets of your crafting process, which would connect your client to the process, sounds and images of you preparing the product before putting it up for sale (visual + auditory input).

2. Participate in events

Even though it is self explanatory, by participating in craft fairs, events etc it is a great way to win the attention of your desired audience and gain their loyalty through the direct sensory appeal and extended exposure to your products in the physical realm, in addition to the luxury you have of conveying your narrative, mission and story directly to them.



3. Participate in popular culture

Keep up with Pop Culture, even though it is short lived and focuses on the time, it does provide endless opportunities for exposure, and for you to use your brand experience via these trends to connect with your existing audience, but also to attract new ones.

This could be achieved by participating in the latest TikTok challenge or latching onto the latest season of a hit TV show, or Instagram trend. Be careful during the implementation phase of these activities as it requires careful timing and attention to detail, but when done right, it can be pretty powerful.



4. Personalise the message

You found your brand, you figured out your story, your narrative, your mission and now you are communicating with your audience. While you focus on all of the above to tell your story, at the same time you need to figure out how your product/service mission becomes a part of your customers' story. You need to prioritise personalisation of your brand experience, as it will help you gain the trust and connection with your customers.

To make this point a bit more tangible let's take Ikea for example. Ikea, a furniture selling company, invested significant amounts of money to create an augmented reality (AR) application to help their clients to visualise their products in their own space.



They achieved this through the engagement of their client, and the placement of their product (even on a virtual level at first) within the reality of the client and their living environment, hence creating a connection. This level of personalisation is maybe out of reach for the micro crafting business but it was used as an example to comprehend what we mean by personalisation in terms of stories, narrative and connection.

The general idea of the personalised message is that it helps the brand communicate what you want to share but in a way that matches and fits into the personal life and experience of your customer, while at the same time showcasing how your brand and products will enhance this experience.

SMART PINTEREST STRATEGY



**Pinterest?
Really?**

As a branding tool for your crafting microbusiness?

Even though it may come as a surprise, since Pinterest has been known as a go to place for discovering home decor ideas and recipes, it is a platform that is so much more than that. It is in fact the most famous and used visual search engine, which hosts zillions of graphics, links, inspiration and photos for basically almost anything you want to find.

How does that connect to your crafting microbusiness? Well Pinterest when used correctly is basically the go to place for business with original images and photography as per the statistics of Pinterest. Over 55% of their users are logging in to search for photos of new products and results have shown that the platform is one of the best social media outlets to drive traffic to your website.

How to create the right Image?

By the right image you are looking for the image that will boost engagement and will generate the most clicks. To do so there are a few hacks or tips you can follow to try to utilise this platform in the best way possible.

1. But first let's Brand your profile

In chapter 1 of the branding module we went through how you can build an engaging and coherent visual brand image for your crafting microbusiness.

Using this engaging coherent visual brand you will now brand your images, with your crafting microbusiness logos, fonts, graphic style and a discreet watermark. It is always a good idea to add your website URL so your audience will have easy access to where they can find additional information/resources on your brand.

So let's dive deeper on how you can give a personal touch to your Pinterest profile and how you can make it your OWN.



First Step is to make sure you create a **Business Pinterest Account**. This will allow you to have access to essential tools such as rich pins, analytics and more.

Then you need to personalise the profile so that it becomes easy to recognize and connect to the coherent visual identity of your brand that you created in the previous chapters, adding your own personal touch to this new online platform.

Choose a cover board

What is a cover board? A cover board on Pinterest is the board that will appear at the very top of your profile, and will show pins from this board. The visitor to your profile will not be able to click on the individual pins of this board, but there will be a link to the specific board that one can explore at the corner of the cover design.

This board is the ideal place to include a branded board for your craft microbusiness, which should include product shots, other designs from your company, blog posts, and graphics to ensure that you give your profile a branded look.

Check out the examples below [Ideas in 5 minutes](#), [Sundance catalog](#), [Sundance catalog boards](#), [Melyssa's cover board](#), [Fern Street Pottery](#)

Make sure that you have at least one Pinterest board exclusively with content from your website or business.

Select up to five showcase boards

You can select up to a maximum of five boards to showcase at the top of your profile which will appear directly underneath your bio and name and the best part is that these will also appear and slide from one board to the next as seen [here](#) on Melissa's profile or [here](#) for Sundance Home. These boards are the best place to feature your blog boards, services, and products, and an ideal place to share the experience of your brand in a very visual way.



Upload a profile photo

As with all social media platforms, let alone with the largest visual platform, you'll want to upload a profile photo that represents in the best possible way your crafting microbusiness. This is likely just your logo set into a **square 165 x 165 pixel image** or an image of you with your craft. It depends on the strategy of your visual brand that you decided on in the previous chapters. If you are the face of your business, however, you might instead consider uploading a professional headshot of you.



Write your bio / crafter statement

Consistency and coherency is key here.

As mentioned in chapters 1 & 2, your bio/crafter's statement should be more or less the same across all media platforms. Pinterest has a limit of 160 characters. To help you write your bio/crafter statement, we created a step by step presentation with time limit questions after which you should be able to compose an engaging bio statement to use across all platforms.

You can access the presentation [HERE](#)



Brand your board covers

Pinterest offers you the possibility to select specific covers for your boards. Why is this important? Well if managed and curated in an inspired way, you can make them match your branding and the rest of your Pinterest profile, giving it a coherent image.

To achieve this there are a few ways you can do it, one is to create and upload separate board covers for each board and then link them to your website / e-shop / online presence; or you can keep it simple and just pin an image from each of your boards that matches your brand colours so that there is an obvious colour scheme/pattern throughout your profile, and which is coherent with the visual brand you created in the previous steps.

Verify your website

We are almost done with the setting up of your Pinterest profile, however before we wrap things up you will need to do one more thing: verify your website. By doing this you will be able to get access to analytics for your website on Pinterest and observe which pins share more information about your link, if your audience relates better to the articles, products, tutorials or other information you share.

To verify your website, Pinterest will provide you with a code snippet that you will have to place on your website. There are WordPress plugins that can help, or your developer can handle it for you.

Even if you don't have the capacity to analyse and utilise this information, analytics from the beginning is a good practice to set up from day one, so when you will have the capacity to analyse your audience all the data is already in place and you can go through it.



2.

2. Determine your content strategy

So you have your Pinterest Account all set up with analytics and all, so here comes the question of what types of content should you be sharing on

Pinterest? Pinterest is a very organic platform, there is a variety of content that performs exceptionally well on the platform from infographics to product pins or blog posts. All have received exceptional engagement.

For the sake of this online training, we will try to go through some of the most popular content, and you can keep the ones that resonate with you, your brand and the objectives of your crafting microbusiness.

After all this training and text, visual input is better, here is a link to [50 Amazing Pinterest Accounts Every Creative Needs to Follow](#) to translate all these words and knowledge into a visual image.

Product pins

Social media users are on Pinterest for the visual content, whether it is clothing, gifts for family, home decor or functional items. If your microbusiness is a retailer or you already have an online shop you should definitely invest time and effort in creating stunning photos of your product, services or narratives and turning them into pins.

Why should you invest time in this? Well, an interesting Pinterest statistic is that 72% of the users of the platform stated that they get inspired to shop by the visual narrative of the product even if they were not looking to purchase anything. Appealing product/services photos will support your efforts in catching/engaging audience attention and drive this impulsive inspiration to buy towards your retail crafting microbusiness brand.

Blog post graphics

Blog posts that promote the articles that you publish on your website or eshop, are an amazing pin type given that they are paired with a suitable engaging graphic. You need to ensure that these graphics are very well designed, vertical and should stand out on someone's feed, like the pins [HERE](#)

Lead magnets

Another effective content strategy for Pinterest is to make lovely vertical visuals to advertise your lead magnets. Make sure the lead magnet design is eye-catching and encourages users to click and download your stuff.

3. Join community boards

Creating and participating in community or group boards is a fantastic Pinterest marketing tactic that can help spread the word about your content. It's the ideal technique to expose your material to brand-new audiences because Pinterest users can invite others to contribute to a board.



Look for well-known Pinner in your niche and see if they have group boards for your sector.

Take a look at the description of that board to see if you can locate any regulations or a link to apply to join. Often, all you need to do to get added is send the owner an email or fill out a contact form and follow their account.

Once you sign up, you should continue to be active.



4

4. Focus on Pinterest SEO

Since Pinterest essentially functions as a visual search engine, it has its own algorithm and SEO guidelines. To watch your ranking rise, you must concentrate on your Pinterest SEO and use these guidelines to your own profile.

With your Pinterest marketing plan, you should concentrate on using keywords in three main places.

Your profile

Utilise keywords in your name as well as your bio to show up in search results even when people are only seeking information on your items. You have a total of 65 characters to use for your Pinterest name and 160 for your bio; we advise making the most of these characters to naturally include the most popular keywords in your sector.

Your pins

Make sure your title and description contain pertinent keywords related to your pin.

You don't want to simply "keyword stuff," or cram the description with several keywords that aren't naturally used as part of a sentence or paragraph, just like with any other sort of search engine optimization. Instead, you should make sure that your pin description includes the main keyword as well as a few more secondary keywords so that both users and the Pinterest algorithm can quickly understand what the pin is about.

This will increase the likelihood that your pin and related pins will appear in search results.

Your boards

Last but not least, you want to make sure that the names of your pin boards include target keywords rather than cute or humorous ones. Even if you could enjoy the concept of using playful titles for your pin boards, SEO is crucial in this case.

Keep your next board title simple, such as "Pinterest Strategies," rather than "Pin, Pin, Pin!"

Along with your primary and secondary keywords, you should also include board descriptions that explain to users what they can find on the board.

5. Schedule out fresh pins

Continuously sharing new content on Pinterest is the final phase in your five-step Pinterest marketing approach.

By doing this, you can raise the calibre of your profile and increase the chances that Pinterest will include links to your material in search results.



SCHEDULE

START FROM SCRATCH A YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The way we consume digital content changes as the digital environment does. It is now much simpler for internet users to access video material because of speedier connectivity. Thus it comes as no surprise that video is giving advertisers amazing results.

For 95% of video marketers, video has improved consumer comprehension of the product or service, increased traffic for 87%, and produced leads for 83%.

In fact, 80% of people have noticed a rise in sales as a direct result of videos. This demonstrates how important a role video plays in your marketing strategies. It's interesting to note that video tends to matter more in B2B marketing than in B2C marketing. The Content Marketing Institute reports that 71% of B2B marketers and only 66% of B2C marketers use video in their content.



With all of this in mind, it's about time to focus on YouTube, which is the preferred medium for video content. Because you've never utilised the platform for content marketing and are unsure of how to launch a successful channel, you may have previously avoided it.



Check out this training to learn how to create a YouTube channel from scratch and leverage it for brand expansion.

Step 1: Creating a Google account

You can skip this step and go on to the next if your small-scale handicraft business already has a dedicated Google account. If not, you should start by making one.

The name and email address do not need to be connected to your brand since Google won't publicly link your account credentials with your YouTube account. To keep your personal and professional interactions distinct, it's preferable to use a specific company account. Also, having all of your YouTube messages and notifications in one location would make it simpler to manage.

In the beginning, visit the "[Create Your Google Account](#)" page. You have the option of using your current business email or setting up a new one. Input the required information, click "Next," and you're done.

1

Step 2: Creating a brand channel

It's imperative that you create a brand account even if you already have a personal YouTube account when you set up your Google account. This will make it simpler to share access with others, brand your channel with information about your company, etc.

A large, stylized number '2' in a light green color with a dark teal outline, set against a light green rectangular background.

Initially, use your new Google account to log into YouTube. Choose "Settings" by clicking the user icon in the top right corner of your screen.

You will then have the option to create a brand account by clicking on "Create a new channel". Click "Create" after entering the name of your company or the name you want to use for your official YouTube channel.



You can monitor the performance of your channel and videos by having access to crucial YouTube analytics data if you have a brand YouTube account. After that, you may use these findings to motivate your video marketing campaigns.

Step 3: Branding your channel

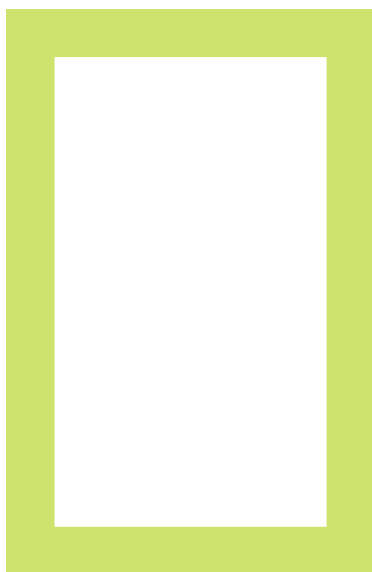
Similar to other social media platforms, YouTube requires that your brand identity be consistent and clearly displayed. People should understand your brand's identity and mission as soon as they view your videos or visit your channel.



Optimising your channel art is the most effective approach to achieve that.

You may quickly and easily create your own YouTube channel art, covers, and any other visuals you'd like to tailor to your business with DIY tools like VistaCreate.

You can use the same profile photo and cover photo as you use on other social media sites to maintain consistency. Nonetheless, even if you intend to create channel art specifically for YouTube, make sure it adheres to your brand colours and visual identity.



As their profile image, National Geographic employs the company's distinctive yellow rectangle logo. Also, despite using the channel cover image to advertise fresh episodes of their "Cosmos" program, they continued to trademark it by adding a logo at the bottom.

Step 4: Planning your content

The process of coming up with content ideas is one of the most difficult processes in starting a YouTube channel. The type of goods you offer and the demographic you're trying to reach will both have a big impact on the theme of your YouTube material. Yet, instructive and enlightening videos ought to command attention in general.



Your primary goals should therefore be to enlighten, educate, and reassure your audience with testimonial films while also showing them how to do something.

Chewy, a provider of pet supplies, posts educational films on its own YouTube channel that pet owners will find quite helpful. Along with presenting their goods, they offer advice on how to install pet gates, brush your dog's teeth, create recipes that are suitable for pets, and more. They occasionally even post footage of Q&A sessions with veterinarians.



Finally you should see which videos perform best when you've released a variety of styles and your channel has gained more traction. You should also think about conducting a survey to find out what your subscribers want to see from you.

Step 5: Investing in the right equipment

To establish trust on YouTube, just as on other social media platforms, you need high-quality material. This goes beyond just coming up with concepts that your audience will adore.

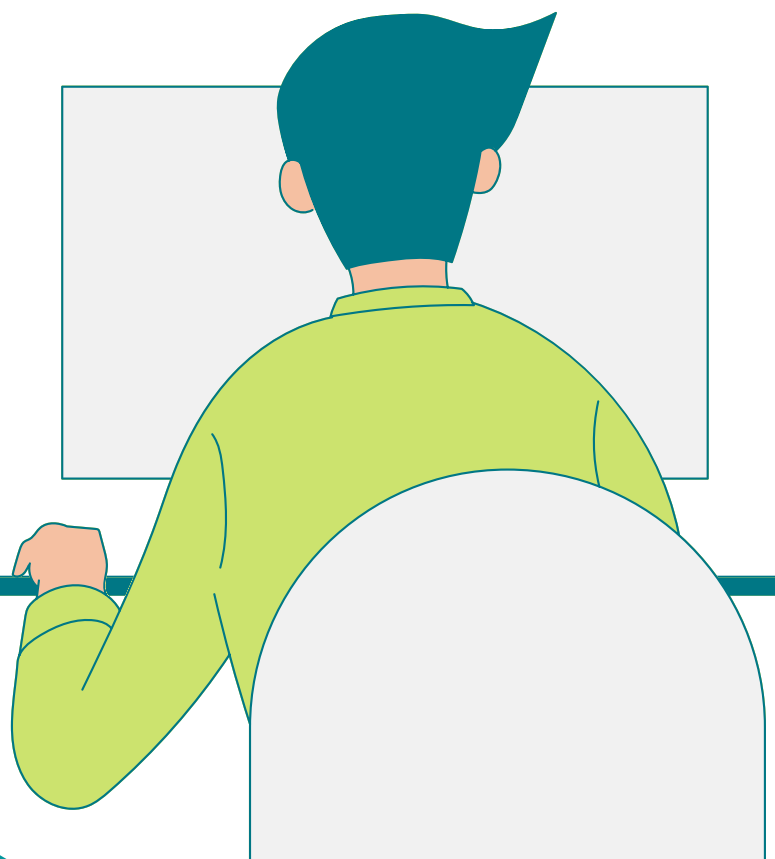
5

Also, you should spend money on supplies and tools that will make it easier for you to implement your ideas. The bare minimum will be a DSLR or mirrorless camera and a respectable microphone, but if your budget allows, you should also think about studio lighting and tripods.

You can find different suggestions [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) keeping in mind that technology is always changing.

For basic edits, you'll also need basic video editing software. This will enable you to remove pointless sequences and gaffes, lower background noise, etc. If you're just getting started, try freeware apps like Windows Movie Maker or Apple iMovie before you decide to spend money on more sophisticated tools.

More resources on easy tools for editing your videos [HERE](#)



Step 6: Optimising for YouTube SEO

You need to concentrate on expanding your network and acquiring more subscribers in addition to simply starting a YouTube channel and hoping for the best. You need to increase your chances of being found by the proper people.



This entails optimising your channels and videos for YouTube SEO so that when users look for pertinent information, they are more likely to find you.

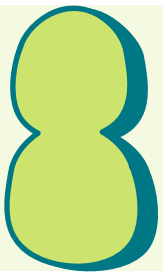
To start keep in mind the following:

- In the description of your video and on your channel, use pertinent keywords. Common keyword tools, such as [Ahrefs](#) and [Keywordtool.io](#) can give you keyword suggestions specifically for the platform.
- Tag your YouTube videos to increase the likelihood that people will find them. The YouTube search engine can better understand your video's content and determine when to show it in search results when you add pertinent tags to it. Use devices like the [Tubics YouTube Tag Generator](#) to get tag recommendations.
- Employ eye-catching thumbnails to encourage viewers to click on your video and raise the number of views. Your chances of discovery increase with the number of views you receive. To make your thumbnails stand out, pick enticing photographs and apply text or graphics as overlays. Look at how the thumbnails for the top search results for "DIY home décor" are appealing.

Step 7: Creating a channel trailer

By including a promo film explaining what they may anticipate from you, you can further engage viewers when they visit your channel. Provide a brief description of your brand and the types of videos you produce so that viewers will understand right away why they should subscribe to your channel. When someone visits your channel, this trailer video will automatically start playing and capture their attention.

You can use this portion of your channel to describe what your channel is about in addition to what your product accomplishes and how it improves people's lives. Hello Fresh welcomes visitors with a film that has testimonials from actual consumers.

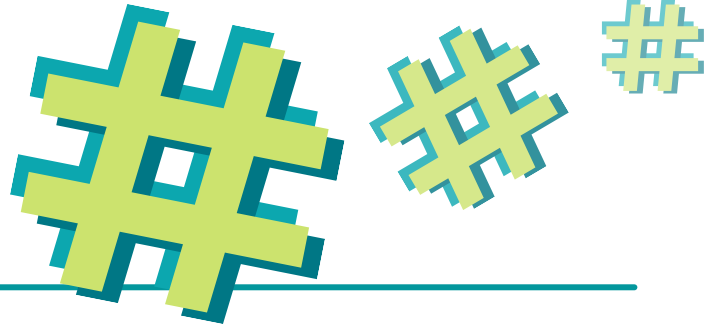


Step 8: Growing your network

After completing the fundamental procedures to launch a YouTube channel, you should focus on expanding your network to fully utilize the site. This will require a lot of promotion work, including posting links to your channel everywhere and promoting your videos on various social media platforms.

To attract customers whose interests match those of your items, you may also place advertisements within the platform. Moreover, use retargeting advertisements to connect with users outside of the platform. Keep track of website visitors who have expressed interest in your company, and retarget them with social media advertising that highlights your YouTube channel. To accomplish this, make use of Rebrandly's link retargeting tool

TIKTOK FOR BUSINESS



How TikTok differs from other social media apps and how to begin to find content on the platform that you enjoy

The most popular short-form video network, TikTok, is where trends are created and authenticity is rewarded; a place where businesses of all shapes and sizes may be found, gain visibility, expand their networks internationally, and realize significant benefits.

With TikTok, users follow one another and keep up with specific influencers. But, TikTok's biggest draw is its automated For You page, which places people at the bottom of a large algorithmic content funnel, in contrast to most social platforms before it, which prioritize follower-and-friend-style interactions.



You've come to the perfect place if you own a business and want to increase your customer base. TikTok is the ideal platform for attracting new clients and expanding your company because of its very active community of consumers, trend-setters, and word-of-mouth promoters. Every age has come here to join the fun, whether you're trying to reach Gen Z, Millennials, parents, or grandparents, and various subcultures congregate here to discuss their most recent discoveries.

Organic + Paid = Always Engaged

Businesses that wish to increase their TikTok presence should adopt an always-engaged strategy. It ensures that you remain active and connected to your community, which is continually identifying and embracing trends.

What does "always engaged" mean? It's what we refer to as a blend of organic postings and paid advertisements, complemented by collaborations with creators, which are exclusive to TikTok. A good way to boost your campaigns and maximize your marketing budget is to follow these three essential elements.

1. Test and learn with organic content

On TikTok, there are countless ways to communicate your narrative, and businesses are not restricted in how much organic material they may publish.

Try out several approaches to communicating your brand's narrative, and then use your TikTok Business Account to instantly get performance analytics.



You may learn what resonates well with audiences by using organic content analytics. After that, you may strategically use those insights to guide your paid advertising. Sponsored campaigns give organizations detailed metrics so they may boost their success and learn more about why.



2. The greatest storytellers are creators.

TikTok users trust the opinions of creators on the platform, who are natural storytellers and brand promoters. At the [TikTok Creator Marketplace](#), you may find the ideal creator for your budget or campaign, or you can use [Spark Ads](#) to turn the organic content of creators into sponsored advertising. Nevertheless, you can interact with the community directly through organic content and motivate them to publish their own films centered on a certain topic.

In a congested industry where word-of-mouth recommendations are crucial, Thai skincare firm [BM Collagen](#) achieved just that. The company unveiled a paid campaign centered on the concept of genuine and intimate video creative. The brand urged fans to record videos of themselves opening and utilizing BM Collagen's beauty supplements in order to achieve this story. Users had a sense of ownership over the brand as a result, and memorable experiences were produced that encouraged consumer referrals. After using these organic assets to great effect in their paid campaign, the brand saw a 200% boost in sales and 5 million impressions.




3. Expand your audience via paid advertising

Since TikTok has a global audience, your company has a huge potential market to get followers, admirers, and clients. Your campaign can reach even more new audiences by expanding the reach of your content through paid advertising.

4. Versatile tactics for your business's objectives

A [TikTok Business Account](#) is the basis for everything.



**Uncertain about
what to post?**

For inspiration, consider perusing the most popular content in the exclusive [Business Creative Hub](#).



To develop a strategy that benefits your company, keep adhering to these basic guidelines. Use a steady stream of organic material to test and learn, and continually adjust your strategy based on how it performs. From there, you may decide where to spend money on paid peaks in order to draw more visitors to your profile page, expand your fan base, drive more traffic to your website, and get more views. When there is a high demand for goods and services from clients, such as during holidays, back-to-school sales, and Valentine's Day, consider amplifying by paying and developing your brand by partnering with TikTok creators.

SHOWCASE YOUR BRAND ON INSTAGRAM



1. Make Branding a Focus of Your Content by Using a Brand Style Guide

Start with a style guide to produce content that Instagram users would identify right away. A great style guide compiles both the copy and the visual components that make up your brand.

Consider the following when you define copy standards:

- Brand voice and tone: How does your company come across to customers? Is it welcoming, instructive, snarky, or something else?
- Emoji usage: Do you ever use them, are they relevant to the tone of your brand? Which emojis do you normally use in your copy, if at all? Is anything off limits?
- Caption construction: Does your brand like lengthy captions that are jam-packed with informative details and engaging storytelling? Or do you write short captions?

To describe visual standards, consider the following:

- **Personality of your brand:** Is it direct and audacious, beneficial and educational, or something else?
- Colours that reflect your brand: Choose a unified color scheme whether you decide to incorporate elements from your brand or create a custom colour scheme just for social media.
- Aesthetic that captures your brand: Does your material appear charming for parents of young children, technical for B2B customers, or somewhere in between?
- Fonts that your brand uses: Which fonts best represent your brand's identity when used as post graphics or overlays in reels and stories?

By combining all of the aforementioned instructions into a single shareable document, you can get your team on the same page. Create reusable templates for your team's social media material if they utilize design tools to produce it.

For instance, Canva offers a brand kit that lets you save colours, fonts, and logos for use in future social media posts. You may make reusable posts, stories, and reel templates that reflect your brand style with the design app's free or paid editions.

2. Create an Instagram profile to increase brand recognition and interaction.

It's simple to start producing fantastic content without thinking about your brand's Instagram account. But creating a standout profile is the

first step in creating a recognisable brand on Instagram. It implies you should concentrate on two essential elements: presenting your company and emphasizing all the tools individuals may use to become clients or brand evangelists.



Write a succinct Instagram bio first that sums up your company. Optimize your bio for Instagram rather than copying and pasting it from other social media sites. Include parent brands, flagship items, and branded hashtags in this area to help your target market become familiar with your brand. You can refer to our step by step guide on "How to write your ARTIST bio" [HERE](#)



Especially if your profile lacks access to the platform's **multi-link** feature, pick your Instagram bio link wisely. Provide the URL to a landing page you created for Instagram users that is mobile-friendly and has links to your brand's other marketing campaigns, blog posts, featured content or discounts, and products and services.

You can set up your bio to show an Instagram shop if your company sells tangible goods. Customers can hit the See Shop icon to peruse the company's selection of pet supplies, as shown in the [@chewy](#) Instagram bio, then simply tap to purchase on the connected eCommerce site.

Showcase the content that best represents your brand or highlights your business's ongoing campaigns next. Instagram offers two options for doing this:

- To your Instagram **grid**, pin up to three Instagram feed posts or reels. These Instagram posts, which can include anything from a new product or a current deal to a stellar customer review or a new lead magnet, show up at the very top of your page.



- Emphasize stories in collections that are organized. These story highlights, which are displayed just before your feed, can aid clients in learning more about your goods and services, locating resources, or exploring user-generated material (UGC).



3. Create a Comprehensive Content Plan

You need a strong content strategy and a reliable publishing schedule to assist you to post frequently on Instagram in order to make your brand stand out. The aesthetic of your Instagram content can be simplified by using your brand's style guide.

So what subjects ought to be included in your content?

Concentrate on the ideas and subjects that are most beneficial to your potential clients and customers. For instance, you might make product demonstrations, analyze your finest blog entries, or respond to consumer inquiries. Your brand may become more memorable, gain followers' trust more quickly, and draw in a larger audience with high-value content.

You need to be aware of what your followers are engaging with and what the Instagram algorithm is prioritizing if you want to increase the visibility of your material. Make a point of monitoring Instagram analytics frequently (i.e. at least weekly) to see what is currently working for your brand because both of these numbers fluctuate over time.

An excellent place to begin is with your account insights overview.

Find any significant activity spikes?



Identify the days when engagement or reach on your account exceeded typical. Next, locate the content you posted on those days and decide what made them unique.

Did you divulge a big secret, test a new template, or make a significant announcement?

To learn more about what is influencing reach and engagement on Instagram, dig deeper into your insights. To view accounts reached or engaged, tap the Overview panel. Then scroll down to discover your account's top posts, stories, and reels as well as the content formats available.

Remember that generating **unique**, interesting material might assist you in expanding your audience beyond your current fan base. Instagram leverages factors including content engagement, account popularity, and user preferences as part of its unconnected distribution system to suggest posts in users' feeds.

Concentrate on gathering and utilizing input as your brand develops and more customers become paying clients. After responding to customer feedback, don't just file it away.

Share them with your Instagram followers and let your clients speak for themselves.

The data related to endorsements and reviews are quite amazing. Any study you look at will show that the vast majority of consumers read reviews before making a purchase and regard them in the same way that they would a personal recommendation.



Moreover, testimonials and reviews offer social proof, which might compel potential customers to "join the club" and make a purchase. Sharing this type of user-generated material can therefore be quite effective for increasing interest in your company and increasing conversion rates.



Ask for more client testimonials. Using review plugins created specifically for **eCommerce**, or sending direct messages to customers after they've made a purchase are two ways to automate the process. Ask them for their honest opinions and let them know how much their reviews will aid your company. Get consent to repost reviews and testimonials before publishing to your Instagram account.

A lot can be said about your brand through reviews, but UGC has the ability to both show and tell. UGC, after all, provides your target audience with an authentic customer's perspective on how your products appear, function, and are packaged.

UGC appears more genuine and less pushy because it is created by customers rather than members of your company, which can be even more effective for drawing in new clients. UGC, then, can be particularly helpful for disseminating social evidence and generating awareness about your company.

How can you promote UGC while making it simple to find? The simplest methods involve making a custom hashtag for followers and encouraging your audience to tag your account, as @chewy did below. Then, you may gather UGC by looking through your tagged posts and Instagram mentions.



Use the notification filtering feature on Instagram to quickly identify mentions and tags.

Keep in mind to routinely monitor and curate your tab for tagged posts, especially since this content is available to all users. Have you seen a tagged post that doesn't adhere to the principles or style of your company? To get rid of your brand from the tab, untag it.

You should always get customers' approval before reposting their content to your feed, just like you should with reviews. To thank them for their work and request permission to share it, contact them or leave a comment on one of their posts.

Don't want to re-post user-generated content to your feed? Using Instagram's built-in functionality, you can always share posts, reels, and stories to your brand's stories.



Using your Instagram post analytics is a simple method to monitor hashtag results and learn how people are finding your material. Scroll down and choose any published post to see the reach insights. You can view the number of users who discovered your content through hashtags, the Explore page, their home feed, and other channels here.



It's also beneficial to use Instagram's Subject function when publishing reels. You are allowed to add up to three themes to each reel throughout the publishing phase. You may assist the platform in distributing your content to the right viewers by providing context for your short-form videos.

About Instagram Hashtags, Reach, and Discovery

Building a brand on Instagram requires publishing the correct material at the appropriate moment. Your brand could reach a larger audience by incorporating pertinent hashtags into your content.

Concerned with hashtags?



Many marketers questioned the effectiveness of hashtags in the wake of Adam Mosseri's early 2022 admissions as the head of Instagram. Mosseri only reiterated that hashtags don't actually enhance reach, which is vital to keep in mind.

But, hashtags do increase the chances that viewers will see your content. It's more probable for your material to show up on the Explore page and in hashtag feeds if it performs well. So, Instagram may prioritize sending high-quality content to users who follow or interact with certain hashtags if you add the correct hashtags to it.

Does that imply that you should use as many arbitrary hashtags as you can in your content? **Absolutely not.**

The first step in developing a brand should always be producing content that your audience enjoys. But using pertinent brand hashtags might raise awareness while enhancing search engine visibility.

4.Co-branding with complementary businesses

Despite how beneficial UGC might be, there are a few drawbacks. If you're just starting out with brand-building, you could find it difficult to get enough material because your brand has no influence over it.

Partner with influencers or other brands that are specialized in your field or have audiences that overlap with yours in order to generate more targeted buzz for your company. You can collaborate to produce high-quality content that reflects your brand's current objectives and speaks to the influencers' audiences.

Analyzing your current audience is the first step in identifying influencers.

Do some of your followers often compliment your business or leave comments on anything you post?

Examine their audience size and content style to see whether a cooperation would be beneficial. To identify suitable brand partners, you may also use Instagram's hashtag search feature.

With the built-in collaboration features on Instagram, collaborate with your brand partners to tag photos. In order to cross-post content to both of your accounts and increase reach, use the Invite Collaborator option.

Influencers should tag your account in branded material using platforms designed for paid relationships.



You might also be able to locate and get in touch with creators via Instagram's partnership capabilities in the future (hopefully not too far off). To make influencer collaborations simpler, the platform has been experimenting with a creative partner directory, partnership-specific DM folders, a creator marketplace, and a creator media kit.

5. Boost Your Instagram Account Throughout Other Platforms

Use Instagram's built-in sharing options to connect with users on any other social media platforms you utilize to increase your reach even further



and draw in an audience outside of the app. You may make links or QR codes for almost any type of material with these tools, including articles, reels, story highlights, and your profile.

To provide customers in-store creative ideas for using your products, you may, for instance, give them the QR code for a well-liked reel. To increase your audience, you can distribute QR codes at live events. If you post only on Instagram, you may also distribute content straight to your brand's other social media sites, which is advantageous.

Tap the three dots to reveal the content menu and access links or QR codes for posts, reels, stories, and narrative highlights. To instantly share to another social channel or acquire a link, choose QR Code or tap the paper airplane.

Open your account settings and choose QR Code from the menu to get a QR code for your account.



The colours of all QR codes can be altered to better match the colour scheme of your brand.

By promoting the content on Facebook, you can increase reach while posting Instagram reels. Turn on the Suggest on Facebook option in the Reels publishing procedure to draw even more potential customers to your business.

There are several ways to establish a business on Instagram and expand an interested audience, from cross-promotions and influencer collaborations to optimized profiles and consumer content. In order to achieve important business and marketing objectives, you can utilize Instagram to create a brand that stands out and thrives.

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