



MY MELTS

Stacey Abela



Name of business: My Melts



1) Context

Country of the business: Malta

Industry/sector (architecture, art & culture, **crafts**, design & visual arts, media, advertising, multimedia, online gaming, entertainment, printing & publishing, translation & interpretation, music & performing arts, film & tv & radio)
Fragrance

Objective

- To provide homes with a unique, toxic free, environmentally friendly and cost-effective fragrance.
- To support local business in a sustainable manner

Services/Products

- Various Maltese Artisan products
- Health & Wellness Education
- Soy Wax Melts
- Burners
- Aromatherapy blends
- My Formula (Wooden cube fragrance holders)

Target customers

Both females and males between the ages of 13 – 65

Financing, types of funding

Stacey is completely self-funded. She went straight from being a stay home mother into her own business. She took the option of a bank overdraft. During the growth of her business she has had quite a bit of interest from other business people to invest but has declined. She felt as though their ideas would have compromised the quality of her products and did not want to take that risk.

Short description of case:

How the idea was born, motivation for setting up the business, time wrap for implementation of idea in life, external environment and influencing factors (e.g. external support programmes, crisis, changes in legislation, geographical location, demand, originality of idea etc.)

Ironically, Stacey’s deprivation from enjoying any type of fragrance or scent in her previous home due to an allergy her ex husband had, became the fuel of her desire to experience them once she had moved into her new home. It was then that she felt she could indulge in as many different and wonderful scents as she wanted. However, she had never liked the idea of using any sort of products which included synthetic concoctions in their ingredients due to two of her children being chronic asthmatics. That’s when, thanks to a friend, she discovered Melts and burners. Melts are aromatic pieces of wax that do not require an open flame or a wick. The burner is used to heat and melt the wax as an alternative to traditional candles. They come in a broad variety of scents, waxes, and sizes and are becoming the fastest-growing division in the home fragrance market. Soon, Stacey would discover the significant and beneficial link between fragrance and the brain through her daughters’ study of psychology which then also lead her to her 2nd business entity, My Remedy - handmade aromatherapy blends. Stacey had no prior experience in any of these industries. In fact, before she opened her business she was a hairdresser. In 2013 she strategically launched My Melts at the popular Maltese music festival Earth Garden. She sold 1500 euro worth of stock. 12 months later in April of 2014 she opened her shop in the town of Mosta. The business is successfully running and growing today.

Stacey explains that living on such a small island makes word of mouth a very important marketing tool. It is also quite common on the tiny island of Malta for people to copy business ideas and products etc, however Stacey does not feel threatened by this. She believes the competition usually lacks passion or rather, is just looking for an easy and quick way to make money, whereas she feels she is very much emotionally invested in her business which naturally boosts the quality of whatever she is selling.

‘I tested 150 different burners to find the right one because if the ceramic gets too hot, the melt won’t last as long. It’s important to me that when I sell a product I know that my customers are getting the best on the market for their money’.

2) Impacts

Challenges (concerns that emerged, various perspectives)

Shop sales fluctuate depending on the season. Spring tends to be popular for selling aromatherapy inhalers due to allergies etc. The summer months can become quiet for sales. August for example is particularly hard to make big sales. It picks up again in winter when it’s cold and people are spending more time indoors. Stacey explains it is important to take note of these fluctuating habits when you are selling a product so that you can ensure your marketing efforts don’t go to waste but rather, are targeted effectively.

Supply and sourcing have been another challenge. Her supply is limited to the U.K for the moment. Sourcing outside of Europe means much higher tax when it arrives, and she is forced to buy in huge amounts.

It can also be a challenge marketing the Melts when they are often confused by people who are unfamiliar with them, as soap. Sometimes this may even result in a customer dismissing the product upon first glance, as they mistaken it for soap. It’s a frustrating challenge that Stacey is determined to continue to overcome.

Finance is always a challenge when you run your own business and even more so now that Stacey’s business now

turns over enough to be included in the VAT scheme. She also explained that because she is not very tech savvy she has to pay someone to update the website for her which is one of her biggest expenses.

How clients are identified (*creative techniques used by the business' PR/marketing strategy*)

Stacey is however, extremely savvy when it comes to marketing and PR. Her passion for the product sees her continuously looking at new ways to let people know about it. Not only does she use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and a Google business account, but she also makes a considerable amount of effort to collaborate other local businesses within her own. She often organises a different 'Pop Up' store within her own store to showcase other local artists work or products. The Pop-Up shops draws in a bigger crowd to the store by generating that extra bit of excitement of something new each week whilst also helps to support other small businesses in the community. It's a fantastic cross-marketing concept. She also has a website www.mymelts.com.mt

Social impact (*if it is the case*)

In addition to her cross-marketing concept of using Pop-up shops which have a positive effect on the wider Maltese community, Stacey also spends a considerable amount of time raising money for charity through the sales of her 'Angels'. The concept of the angels was specifically made with the idea in mind to raise money for the Richmond Foundation, Malta. The foundation provides optimal community mental health services that promote mental wellbeing. Stacey has raised just under 4000euro, to date.



3) Solutions

Lessons learned

- Believe in yourself and don't give yourself limits
- Expect set backs and hard times. It's all part of the process.
- Don't give up and accept that sometimes it's just a matter of trial and error
- Don't underestimate the motivating strength a bad experience can equip you with. Use it to your advantage.

References



facebook.com/MyMelts/ facebook.com/MyRemedy1/



Instagram.com/my_melts_and_more/



<https://mymelts.com.mt/>

