



'Pretend you're broke!'

LEILA WILCOX, 26, is single and lives in Oxfordshire with her son. She is MD and co-founder of Halos 'n' Horns, which manufactures children's toiletries. She made her first million in 2005.

'My business is successful, because of constant customer research. Before the launch, I found out what mothers genuinely wanted from baby products (not what I thought they wanted). I remember one mum telling me not to make plain, odourless products, because kids want bath time to be colourful and fun.

Pretend you're skint if you want to build a successful company. I lived on

£100 a month for nearly a year while setting up the business and I managed pretty easily. Since everything has taken off, I've discovered that it's definitely true to say you spend what you earn.

Don't be afraid to ask for advice; there is lots out there. Aurora (network.auroravoice.com), Everywoman (everywoman.com) and Business Link (businesslink.gov.uk) are fantastic sources of information. It's also a good idea to have a mentor; whether they're in the same line of business or not, it really helps to have someone who you can bounce ideas off.

Visit halogb.co.uk

'The customer really is queen'

KIRSTEN DUDLEY, 32, lives with her husband and six children in the Wirral. She sells packaging on eBay to other sellers, and made her first million last August.

'Cut out the middleman. I saw a need in the eBay community for simple packaging to help sellers post their products easily. I soon realised that dealing direct with the factory would give us fantastic savings

and help us offer great deals to customers. It's important to treat your customers like royalty. They're the reason you're in business, so treat them the way you'd like to be treated. This is particularly true if you want to make money on eBay, because every customer can comment on your company through its feedback system. Also, make your



business a family affair: my children have made some lovely compliment slips that we put in with our orders. They used to demand ice cream for payment, but now I pay them 2p per slip!

Visit postalsuppliesdirect.com

'Don't take early success for granted'

SANDRA McCLUMPHA, 38, is single and lives in Stirling with her two children. She launched Fake Bake tanning products into the UK in 2002 and made her first million in the same year.

'Multitasking is essential. I was single, pregnant and had a one-year-old baby, when I saw an opportunity to launch Fake Bake in the UK. It wasn't easy, but having a brilliant family, who helped with childcare, was a bonus.

Never take success for granted. This is particularly true in the beauty industry; it never stands still and there's always a new product coming out that can make yours look outdated. Reinvest in your business to maximise growth. I was brought up to believe that a fool and his money are soon parted, so look after your profits, rather than rushing out to buy a sports car. When I made my first million I was too busy changing nappies and organising shipments to crack open the champagne! Visit fakebake.co.uk



'You can juggle kids and a successful career'

SARAH TREMELLEN, 41, lives in the Cotswolds with her husband and two children. She founded Bravissimo, the retailer for big-busted women, and made her first million in 1998.

'I started Bravissimo after having my first child and realising how hard it was for women with big breasts to shop for bras. I wanted to be a hands-on mum so, when I had my second child, I fitted work around them. They went to a childminder

three days a week, and I regularly worked into the night. Even though I was tired, it never felt like a sacrifice because I had such a passion for it.

Don't let a lack of business experience put you off. At first, I wasn't hugely knowledgeable about business, but I had faith that there was a market for my product.

Get everyone's opinion, but then do it your own way. It's vital to find out other people's thoughts about your ideas, but you need to make your own decisions. No-one will know your business as well as you. Visit bravissimo.com

