



STORIES OF MODERN BUSINESS

JUNE/JULY 2020

ISSUE 35

Courier

Fresh starts

Be a better leader in tough times

Reopen safely and profitably

New ideas and clever pivots

kopris

+ 2020
SUSTAINABILITY
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Pierre wears a Boxer Brief in Burgundy.

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LETTER



A wrinkle in time

There's nothing like a crisis to change the agenda. Think back to what your major concerns were just twelve weeks ago. While no doubt important and reasonable, they were likely conceived through a lens of prosperity, safety and security. What a difference a pandemic makes. Everything's been shaken up, turned inside out and generally screwed up by something so tiny you can't even see it.

In a very short period of time, the rug has been pulled out from under our lives. The sudden loss of people we love has been a tragedy, and the worry about basics like reliable income, food supplies and vacant and inept political leadership has been stressful. It's one of those messages the universe sends you from time to time: 'You might think you're in control with your Trello boards, your annual OKRs and your commitment to seizing the lead in today's SoulCycle session, but I got news for you. All change my friend, all change'.

In our podcast and weekly newsletter we've run daily coverage of the crisis, sharing the stories of as many of our audience as we've been able, and trying to unpack the shock, emotions and ways people are adapting and pivoting to survive. We also started to work on this issue by reminding ourselves of a few things we know to be true. Life will go on. This too shall pass. Our societies will adapt and thrive again. Like many a crisis before, we'll emerge stronger and more capable.

Our job at Courier has always been to be much more than just a source of entertainment. We're here to inspire and equip you with the tools and skills you need to forge your life on your own terms. What you hold in your hands is our response to Covid-19 – a playbook for taking back control and, no matter what degree of disruption or tragedy you've

experienced, ideas on what your next steps could look like. We've zeroed in on three key themes.

Leadership. Crises have the potential to bring out the very worst but also the very best in each of us. Those who can exercise good leadership, and then bring others along with them, will emerge as the heroes of our time. We've spent weeks speaking to experts and inspiring people from all walks of life to pull together a five-point guide on how to step up and forge a path of your own.

Sustainability. 'A crisis is a terrible thing to waste' the saying goes. While the jury's still out as to whether climate change played a role in the outbreak, there's no denying the societal shock of the pandemic is but a taste of what's to come if we don't get our shit together vis-a-vis the environment and sustainability. What many view a luxury right now in the face of massive job losses and bankruptcies we be seen as a given. As we rebuild, we have an incredible opportunity to reshape our society, our businesses and our lives in a way that stops harming the planet and better balances the forces of consumption and doing good.

Starting over. Whether your next chapter means rescuing or reformatting a business, finding a new career or starting a new venture, we've shared lessons and insights on how others are dealing with the challenge of reopening and moving towards a new normal.

Not for a minute do we have all the answers. But I hope what we've given you here might spark an idea or simply give hope that things will eventually right themselves and life will go on. It's a painful period, a wrinkle thrown our way – but as ever, our futures are in our hands if we're willing to step up and take the lead.

I wish you, your families and your loved ones the very best.

Until next issue,
Jeff

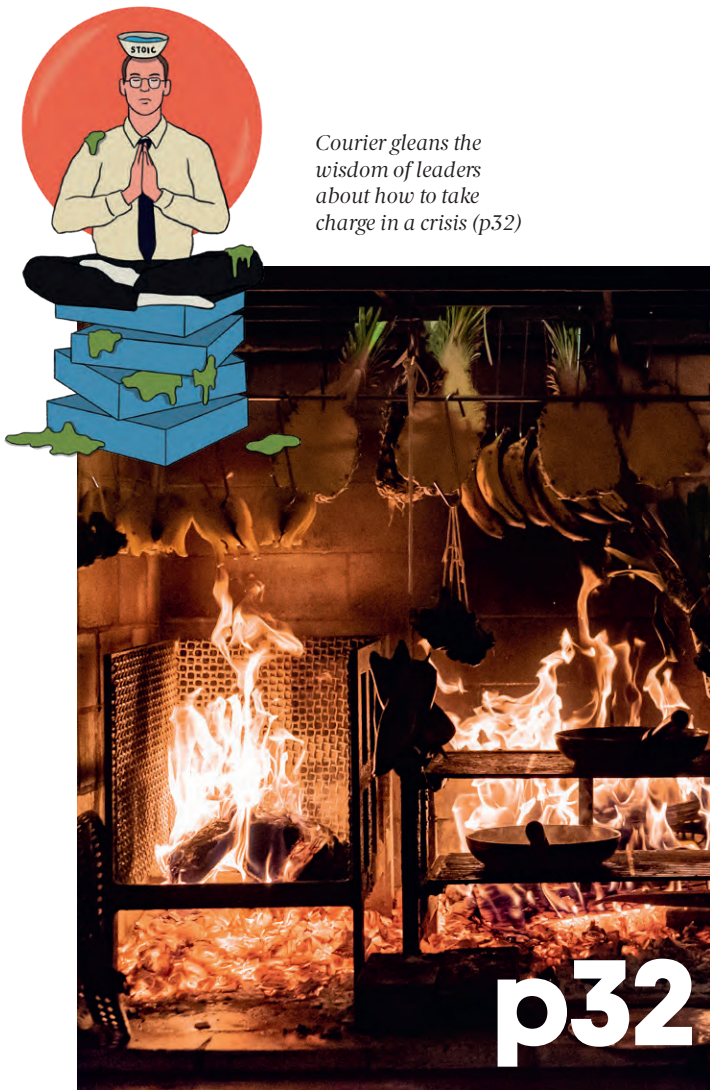
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June/July 2020

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Ifigeneia Filopoulou and
Vasilis Nzeremes at their
Athens plant shop Kopria.

Photography: Marco Arguello



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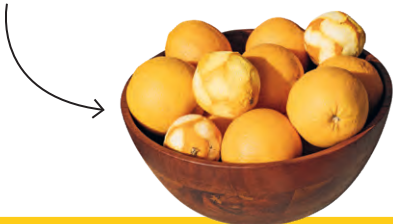
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+ CATALOG

70+ PRODUCTS FOR
YOUR WARDROBE,
HOME & BODY

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June/July 2020 is all about...

FRESH STARTS

DECISIONS
UNDER
STRESS

RUTHLESS
OBJECTIVITY

POSITIVE
EMOTIONS

WORKER
COOPERATIVES



SEED
-TO-
BAR

Boosting
your EQ

PERMANENT
PIVOTS

ANTARCTIC AIRDROPS

MANAGING
DOUBT



FUTURE
PROOFING



ECO OFFICES

GUUS
HIDDINK

Taking responsibility...

DIY RECOVERY ROUTINES

YEMENI COFFEE

THE ART OF
REOPENING

'GREEN
SWANS'

BECOMING
A STOIC

📷 | SNAPSHOTS

US-born restaurateur Camden Hauge runs a growing group of restaurants, wine bars and cafes in Shanghai – including Egg, Bitter, KIN, and **Bird** (pictured here). In April, she expanded the mini-empire further with the highball and konbini-focused shop Lucky Mart.



PHOTOGRAPHER: Robert Nilsson.

ØsterGRO is an urban farm and restaurant on a rooftop in Østerbro, Copenhagen. When lockdown came into effect, it had to completely shut down. For co-founders Kristian Skaarup and Livia Haaland, having savings to dip into was crucial for keeping the business afloat. 'Still, social-distancing is a huge problem, because gathering people together is what we do,' says Skaarup. 'But when this blows over, we know we'll still have our community to support us.'



PHOTOGRAPHER: Elizabeth Heltoft.



In 2014, Scott James began roasting specialty coffee from his garage in Ammanford, Wales. He went on to buy a derelict coalshed and transformed it into a coffee shop, cafe and roastery called **Coaltown**, which became one of the first B-Corp-certified coffee companies in the UK. Lockdown meant closing down the cafe, but the downtime has allowed Coaltown to re-focus on other areas of the business like website upgrades and personalised coffee subscriptions.

DO MORE.

Now

Coffee as software **Eating in**
Promotional products **People**
counting Productivity **Trends to**
watch Rapid hydration **Camels**
Sober support **Inbox zero** Electric
bikes **Psychedelic compounds**
Good packaging **Bread-tech** Move
to Austin **Heavy metal marketing**



NEW PRODUCTS

COFFEE AS SOFTWARE

Taika is a new adaptogenic coffee brand (@taika) launched in May by Michael Sharon, a veteran of Facebook's mobile product division, and Kalle Freese, co-founder of Sudden Coffee. We caught up with San Francisco-based Sharon to find out more.

Q How'd you get into good coffee?

A At Facebook I turned into one of those insufferable snobs who would come to your house and tell you how you're pouring coffee wrong. I managed to invest a tiny bit of money into Blue Bottle Coffee, which got me even more interested. And later I discovered compounds like L-theanine – taken with coffee it gives you a calm, clear focus.

Q What's Taika about?

A We're trying to upend the specialty coffee universe, which takes itself so seriously. I'm the biggest

fan of third wave coffee, but there was no way I'd contribute something new by building a third wave coffee shop. With Taika, we made a conscious decision to stay away from the brown, heritage, old timey tropes. We wanted to make something modern. Our route to market is very different to most CPG companies. My background is in software and I spent a lot of time working on A/B testing tools and beta testing. Until now, we've been running Taika like a private beta. Since we started, it's been available if you had our

phone number – you could just text us. I don't understand how anybody does it any other way, because we got so much feedback.

Q And you've put a phone number on the can, too...

A That was actually Kalle's phone number. When you text it, you have an experience with the brand. We have a bunch of funny responses and each one sets you off on a different track. We spend a lot of time bantering with people and at some point, maybe 20 texts later, it will be like, 'Okay, so how do I get the coffee?'. The co-packer we're working with is very different to most in the beverage industry, in that usually you'd need to produce a minimum of a huge amount of cases, but we're able to produce much smaller amounts and iterate pretty fast. We've iterated on everything – the copy, name and brand (we've had like three different brands).



FOOD TRENDS

EATING IN

With restaurant options in many countries still limited to takeaways, the at-home cooking sector is having a renaissance. Here are three niche areas that might benefit.

01. Meal kits have surged, but so have pre-prepped meal services such as Gobble (@gobbleinc), Freshly (@getfreshly) and the plant-based Allplants (@allplants), in which most of the hard work (chopping, slicing) has already been done. On the Courier Daily podcast, Allplants' cofounder Jonathan Petrides said he had to hire more chefs to keep up with demand.

02. Tailor-fit for this era are **recipe-centric food media platforms** such as Food52 (@food52) and Tastemade (@tastemade), as well as budding food stars on social channels, like TikTok, YouTube and Instagram Live.

03. According to Nielsen, 89% of Chinese consumers say they'll continue shopping for groceries and essentials online post-pandemic. Will everyone else follow suit?

BRAND WATCH

MERCHERY

WHAT IS IT?

'Promotional products made sustainable.' Most corporate swag is ugly, plastic and poor-quality junk that ends up at the bottom of your drawer or – worse – in a landfill. Merchery flips the script with sustainable candles, tote bags, cookies, hoodies, cacti and more – in essence, the sort of products that you'd actually want to buy.

WHO FOUNDED IT?

Brussels-based Benoit Fortpied and Simon Polet

WHEN DID IT LAUNCH?

February 2020

WHO TO FOLLOW?

@merchery.co



PRODUCTIVITY TOOL

GET CENTERED

Working from home has either turned you into a productivity ninja – or the opposite. That's why Centered (@centered_app) caught our eye. It's a new task management app that incorporates mindfulness techniques into your workflow. The goal is to 'empower you to stay focused' – it blocks off uninterrupted time in your calendar, monitors other app usage while you work and lets you celebrate task completions and small wins.

TASK MASTER

SOCIAL DISTANCING

ARE YOU DENSE?

US-based startup Density (@density.io) uses computer vision and 'depth data' to count people inside buildings – helpful for restaurants to pinpoint busy times or employers to better understand an office. Density's latest product is Safe – designed in response to Covid-19 with workplace reopenings in mind. The software allows users to set capacity limits for rooms, floors or buildings and get alerted to overcrowding. Customers or employees can read the data on digital displays and judge whether they're comfortable to enter. The tech is being deployed to companies worldwide.

REOPENING

LESSONS FROM PARIS

COVID TRENDS

Roxanne Varza is director of Station F – the world's biggest startup campus in Paris.

Q What lessons have you learned since the pandemic started?

A In a crisis, timing is everything. Reacting quickly and effectively is important – but especially because what we do also impacts a lot of the organisations that rely on our services. When reopening Station F, there was a lot of information the government was slow to communicate regarding the sanitary measures we'd need to put in place. But my team had actually worked on a plan based entirely on common sense prior to any government announcements, and we were able to validate things quickly after they were announced. This has also been an excellent opportunity to re-evaluate, well, everything. We can reconnect with members of our community and take time to get feedback.

Q Any other silver linings?

A It's reassuring to see that in times of crisis people naturally help each other. Seeing our community come together was inspiring and I ended

up writing a letter to the Station F community encouraging our members to behave like we're in crisis mode all the time. Obviously there are startups that have been positively impacted by the crisis and by confinement, but we've also seen a lot of companies impacted negatively leverage their existing resources and use their agility to pivot to new offers. Entrepreneurs don't wait for things to get better, they act and act quickly. *Here are some good examples:*

MedGo, a workforce management tool for hospitals and healthcare centres, was already used in 1,200 establishments in France prior to Covid-19, for the purpose of replacement staff scheduling. This made them a top-of-mind partner

for the ARS (France's regional health agencies) to create a call for volunteers, quickly mobilise support, and assign people according to hospital needs thanks to its existing automated matching system.

R-Pur, a startup from our HEC Program, which usually makes masks for riders, moved quickly to producing masks for doctors, nurses and hospital staff. They're now delivering masks to the public. **Backacia**, a B2B marketplace for reusable building materials (one of Station F's 'Future 40', our 40 most promising startups of the year), had to shut down all their construction sites during the lockdown. They're now looking to donate materials to participate in the construction of emergency shelters in public health institutions in the Paris region.



HYDRATION

DRINK UP

Your body needs fluids – especially before, during and after you work out – but chances are you're not getting nearly enough. Founded in 2018 by Jai Jung Kim and John Sherwin, New York-based Hydrant (@drinkhydrant) sells rapid hydration sachets – a powdered blend of sodium, zinc, potassium and magnesium (plus caffeine and l-theanine in their Hydrant+ version), which you add to water. In early May the company raised a Series A of \$5.7m.



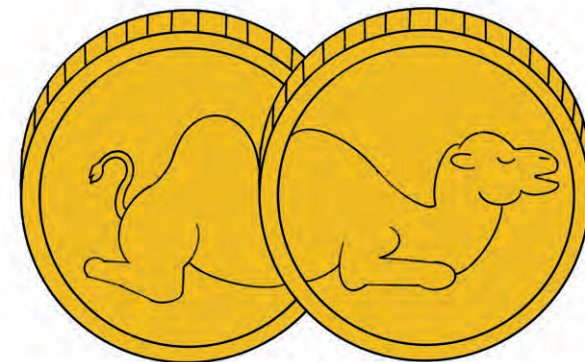
IN THE ZOO

GET OVER THE HUMP

The unicorn is dead. Long live the... camel? Even before Covid-19, failed IPOs and frothy startups raising eye-watering VC on questionable valuations were considered unsustainable. Now, as corporate resilience becomes key, the two-humped (and less-imaginary) animal is

being hailed as a better model to follow. Rather than shoot for a \$1bn valuation, successful startups should instead

be able to survive without additional cash for months and adapt to different (sometimes harsh) climates.



TRENDS

2020 TRENDS TO WATCH

MONEY

The 2020 edition of Wunderman Thompson Intelligence's 'The Future 100' report – a must-read review on emerging consumer behaviour – originally dropped in January. They've since updated it with 20 global trends that have accelerated in the wake of the crisis – as well as five new ones. Check out the full report at intelligence.wundermanthompson.com

01 Optimistic futures

People and brands are making a concerted effort to seek out positivity.

02 Taming tech's influence

Fighting fake news and misinformation has never been more crucial.

03 Protective tech, protective everything

People will continue to seek services that safeguard them from germs, viruses and pollutants.

04 New digital communities

There are opportunities for new online spaces to 'facilitate genuine human connection'.

05 Privacy era

With the arrival of contact tracing, is privacy being sacrificed in the global fight against Covid-19?

06 Legacy preservation

Will the return of nature in former tourism hotspots lead to a more conscious approach?

07 Disaster-proof destinations

Sales of bunkers and disaster-proof shelters are on the rise.

08 The new super-creatives

From music to visual arts, 'digital creativity is in hyperdrive' as more seek outlets under quarantine.

09 Unconventional brand actions

Some big companies are prioritising corporate social responsibility ahead of profit.

10 Future-proof ingredients

Sales of pantry staples are on the rise, from dried food and canned meat to frozen food.

11 Regenerative agriculture

As we reconsider our food supply, will consumers keep ordering direct from local, sustainable farms?

12 Skincare 2.0

Tech for 'hyper-personalised' skincare is being used to 'elevate sanitation'.

13 Anti-excess consumerism

Consumers are thinking twice before buying, considering their spend's impact on the planet.

14 The new superstore

A new 'hybrid business model' is merging gourmet restaurants, corner stores and farm shares.

15 Health concierges

Companies from Amazon to Alibaba are promoting the health-first credentials of their products.

16 Wellness architecture

Spaces are being reshaped, from 'one-way routing' to markets based on 16-square grids.

17 Digital spas

'Spas are opening virtual doors to connect with customers at home'.

18 Engineering companionship

In a time of isolation, tech brands will try and help you to build better relationships.

19 New payment gestures

Frictionless, contactless payments apps will reign supreme.

20 Gen Z finances

Teens and 20-somethings are entering the workforce during a recession.

+ 5 new trends to watch

- 01 The new language of advertising
- 02 The gaming multiverse
- 03 Novel dining formats
- 04 Renewed faith
- 05 Gamescape travel

ILLUSTRATION: Pavel Popov.

BRAND-WATCH

OMSOM

FOOD +
DRINK

WHAT IS IT?

A freshly launched direct-to-consumer food brand that sells Vietnamese, Filipino and Thai 'starters' – pantry staples that pack 'all the sauces, aromatics and seasonings that you need for a specific Asian dish' – crafted by well-known chefs.

WHO FOUNDED IT?

Sisters Kim and Vanessa Pham

WHEN DID IT LAUNCH?

May 2020.

WHO TO FOLLOW?

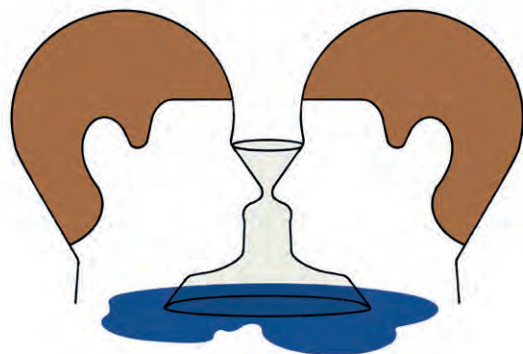
@omsom

Turn to p65 to read Kim Pham's column.



\$80m

→ The funding raised in April by London-based mental healthcare startup Compass Pathways, which focuses on the use of psilocybin – a psychedelic compound found in magic mushrooms – as a therapy for treatment-resistant depression. The company is currently running a large-scale psilocybin therapy clinical trial across nine countries, approved in 2018 by the FDA, which designated it a 'breakthrough therapy'.



ALCOHOL

SOBER SUPPORT

Launched last month with a \$7.5m seed round is Monument (@joinmonument), an online treatment service for those who want to change their relationship with alcohol. The company was inspired by founder Mike Russell's personal experience, which he recounted in a *Medium* post in January.

'Was I addicted to alcohol? I didn't know where I fit on the spectrum of people with alcohol use issues, or if I qualified at all. But I knew I wanted to stop drinking and needed help doing it,' he wrote. The service he launched is both an online community offering peer support, and a platform for getting connected to affordable treatment with a physician and therapist, as needed.

ILLUSTRATION: Pavel Popov. Image: Jordan Layton.

TRANSPORT

CLEAN UP YOUR ACT

TASK
MASTER

E-scooters promised a revolution in urban transport – a revolution we're still waiting for. But with lockdowns easing around the world and more people avoiding public transport, another opportunity has presented itself. First, though, the industry must clean up its act – literally, Reilly Brennan tells *Courier*. Brennan is a founding partner at Trucks VC, a San Francisco-based venture capital firm that funds entrepreneurs looking at the future of transportation.

'We've had a very low standard for what would be acceptable in terms of cleanliness,' he says. In the context of a global pandemic, users want to be extra safe. 'Shared scooter companies have been cleaning them more often. But as an end user, you want to know that you're the first person to use it after it's been cleaned. You don't want to know it's been cleaned within the last hour – that's just simply not good enough anymore. So there's a big opportunity for a new layer of verification in the cleaning industry.'



FUTURE PLANNING

'People will always need good, thoughtful furniture that lasts. But for us, knowing what the world will bring in two months is a lot more complicated than what the world will bring in five years.'

– Kyle Hoff, co-founder of DTC furniture brand Floyd

TRAVEL

RAIN CHECK

With travel stalled for the foreseeable future, how can hotels survive? New York-based Caitlin Zaino is founder of hotel concierge app Porter & Sail (@porterandsail). When the crisis hit, the company lost almost all of its revenue, Caitlin had to let go half of her staff, and the remaining team was focused on pivoting Porter & Sail's core business model from the app to 'hotel credits' – vouchers for discounted rooms to be redeemed for a future trip. Today, the credits product is booming – hotel signups and sales of the vouchers are both surging. The question now, Zaino says, is: 'Will consumers purchase at enough volume that this is a sustainable business? Will hotels want to continue to offer this when the landscape changes? And what does it all look like when the world opens up?'

INVESTMENT

3 RAISES IN A CRISIS

Blink | London
Remote working platform
Raised £8.2m
@joinBlink

Kitch | Lisbon
Delivery-first

virtual kitchens
Raised €1m
@eatkitch

Eventmaker | Paris
Online events
Raised €1.3m
@eventmaker.io

INVESTMENT

HEALTHCARE

Covid has had a massive impact on healthcare investments. One standout category is telehealth. According to CB Insights' *State of Healthcare Q1'20* Report, telehealth deals doubled from Q4'19, reaching a record high of 103 deals. Another bright spot was mental health startups, which raised a record \$576m in Q1'20. And several startups focused on employee mental health closed \$20m+ rounds.

EMAIL

INBOX ZERO:
A MYTH?TASK
MASTER

Popular myth has it that there are two types of people – those with 15,000 unread emails and those who are meticulous about cleansing their inbox every morning and night. The reality? There's no 'right' way to do email – it's all about what works for you. But it would help to check out a clever new site – inboxze.ro, made by Italian developers and designers Fabrizio Rinaldi and Francesco Di Lorenzo. It's a running compilation of tips, apps and workflows that show you how some of the most productive people manage their inbox, with helpful advice such as:

'If you can't delete an email without flinching or responding, you won't scale.'

— Naval Ravikant, co-founder of *AngelList*

'Turn off all email notifications. Phone, desktop, literally everywhere. You'll be fine.'

— Kitze, Founder of *React Academy*

WFH

DESKBOUND

Those with little experience of working from home realised fairly quickly during lockdown that their home office setups were severely lacking. Orders for desks from e-commerce furniture sites surged, leading to order backlogs and sellouts. Danish company *Stykka (@stykkalabs)*, which specialises in custom-printing office furniture, quickly created the 'StaytheF***Home Desk' (pictured) – an \$85 build-it-yourself workstation made from recycled cardboard. Other entrants to the WFH desk market included the Fem desk from *Made by Choice (@madebychoice)*, a compact but adjustable sit-or-stand desk created in collaboration with Helsinki-based interior architects *Fyra (@fyradesignagency)*.



MICROMOBILITY

ELECTRIC-
POWEREDCOVID
TRENDS

Cowboy is a Brussels-based electric bike company (@cowboy_hq) founded in 2017 by Adrien Roose, Karim Slaoui and Tanguy Goretti. We spoke with Roose to find out whether e-bikes might take off as people avoid public transportation.

Q Are more people actually riding e-bikes at the moment?

A Our bike is connected to the user through a mobile app – that's how we learn about our riders. And what we've seen over the last few weeks is quite interesting; the usage has actually doubled.

Q That's huge.

A Two months ago, we faced a really high amount of uncertainty because our product was built to address commuting from home to work. As people stayed home and started working remotely, we

wondered if they would use it at all. But instead of the peak usage being around rush hour in the morning and evening, it's now spread across the day. People are still moving, just not necessarily to work.

Q Are you promoting electric bikes as a way to avoid going on the subway or Tube?

A People are rethinking the way they move about, and there's certainly a fear around public transport. We're at a crossroads: people can decide to rush back to their old habits and use cars even more than

before, which was already at problematic levels, or we can embrace new and better solutions, like electric scooters and bikes.

Q But do you worry that, with remote working, usage will still be down overall?

A I tend not to have extreme views on the world! I think what's going on right now is very temporary. No one really knows when the lockdown measures or social distancing practices will be completely over. Will it be the summer? Will it be in six months? Will it be in a year? I'm not going to get into that debate. But I think at some point people are going to go back to work. Maybe not the same way they used to... but I don't think that offices will disappear.

Q How do you plan for the future during such uncertainty?

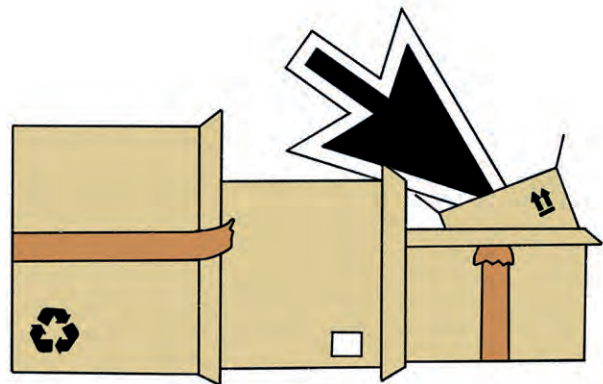
A You learn to plan better, and for multiple scenarios. It's not about Plan A or Plan B – it's about Plan A, Plan B, Plan C and Plan D. You have to be pretty radical about it.

Q What else have you learned?

A This is my first hardware startup involving heavy doses of manufacturing – and it's so much more complex than I had ever imagined. But that's what also makes it fun and interesting and exciting.

\$1BILION

With school shutdowns and students forced to learn at home instead of in the classroom, education tech startups have seen an uptick. One such company is San Francisco-based *Quizlet (@quizlet)*, which offers virtual flashcards and study guides, and recently raised \$30m at a \$1bn valuation.



PACKAGING

OUTSIDE THE BOX

COVID TRENDS

Stephan Ango is co-founder and chief product officer of Lumi, a marketplace that connects companies with sustainable packaging solutions. We asked him about his new side project Slash Packaging (@slashpackaging), launched on Earth Day.

'The idea is to have every brand or company have a page on their website at /packaging. So, if you're Nike, it would be nike.com/packaging. And on that page, you'd talk about your packaging philosophy: what you're doing to reduce the amount of packaging you use, what you're doing to help consumers know how to dispose of or reuse your packaging, where you want to go next, and what are the things that are still unsolved that you're planning to work on?'

There's a huge shift in consumers who want to buy from companies that are thinking about these things, but they're having a hard time finding this information. So, standardising around a URL sets up the expectation that if you're buying from a company you can go straight to that URL and find useful information there. But it's

also for companies to learn from each other, to open-source their knowledge about what they've been doing and what's worked.

Everyone should be sharing this knowledge and making it easily available. If you go to **slashpackaging.org**, you can search for any company in the world and it will show you their listing and what they currently have on their /packaging page – which, for the most part, is a 404 error. So we've made a helpful little tool: you can click on button and it will automatically pre-fill a tweet that says, 'Hey, [company], you should consider adding a /packaging page to your website'

I'm hoping that in a year from now, for Earth Day 2021, we'll have hundreds or thousands of companies in the directory.'

MARKETING

LIQUID DEATH

Liquid Death (@liquiddeath) – the extremely self-aware, heavy metal-influenced, DTC water brand sold in recyclable aluminium cans – launched a tongue-in-cheek marketing campaign based on online hate comments about the brand. They released the 10-track album, *Greatest Hates*, on Spotify and YouTube with songs such as 'Reconsider Your Life Choices', 'Dumbest Name Ever For Water', and 'Bad Marketing'.



BREAD

SOURDOUGH STARTUP

→ Given the sudden spike in home bread-making, the logical conclusion is the rise of 'bread-tech'. Christine Sunu, who works in community engagement at Twilio, has launched a DIY project she's jokingly called **Sourd.io** – a 'fitness tracker for your sourdough starter'. It's hardware that monitors your bread's height, humidity and rise and sends the data to a dashboard so you can track 'how it's growing and when it needs to be fed.'

CITIES

HEY AUSTIN

As work-from-whenever-you-are becomes the status quo, expect a migration of knowledge workers from dense cities with eye-watering rent to more financially-attractive urban areas. Austin, Texas, has already seen an influx of companies relocating to the area and record VC funding. The tech hub has a high quality of life, and a more affordable cost of living than the likes of New York or San Francisco.

ILLUSTRATION: Left: Pavel Popov. Right: Ruby Fresson.

Courier Weekly

Since 27th March, our Friday morning newsletter has shifted to sharing business stories, tools and tips for adapting, pivoting and surviving the crisis. Here are some highlights. Sign up today at couriermedia.co/signup

01 CREATIVE AD CAMPAIGNS

Are self-directed photoshoots here to stay? Needing imagery to launch products, plenty of brands have taken a scrappier, more DIY approach to shoots – using current creative restraints to their advantage. London-based Monc enlisted the creativity of its community by sending their new range of sunglasses to creatives – with the general brief of self-shooting themselves being creative under lockdown. Direction was minimal and founder Freddie Elborne says he's keen to 'continue community-driven campaigns in the future.' Brooklyn-based swimwear brand Andie turned to

volunteering employees with outdoor space. Art director Alda Leung let people choose three to four colours, deciding which suits worked for each individual's style and skin tone, then she sent an art direction deck outlining what she wanted. The images, taken on phones and digital cameras, are retouched and used on Andie's online channels. Meanwhile, New Orleans-based eyewear company Krewe began a series called #KREWEathome, sending glasses to creatives in quarantine to share a glimpse of their lives wearing Krewe specs.

02 LETTER FROM BERLIN

When the German government announced that small businesses could reopen, the initial response was positive. Business as usual – what's not to like? Yet as florists, bike shops and lots of other stores gradually started to reopen, a different picture emerged.



Berlin bakery Albatross quickly took matters into its own hands even before lockdown – including teaming up with other local food and drink businesses to create an online marketplace and delivery service, called Archival Berlin. 'But we won't feel comfortable opening up our cafe for people to sit before concerts, festivals and football matches start up again,' says Anders Alkaersig, one of the bakery's three founders. Aware that there isn't going to be a moment when everything 'suddenly goes back to normal', he adds, the bakery will press on with the delivery service. 'Our business model going forward will be adaptive. Realistically, we have to react to the changing times.'

03 DESIGNING THE NEW OFFICE



When we return to the office, what will it look like? Lots of founders are installing freestanding hand sanitisers and laying down floor markings to establish social distancing and traffic flow. And there's already been a spike in demand for acrylic desk dividers and sneeze guards, with reports of three-month waiting times in the US. Rosie

Chatwin, founder of Motive Productions in London, has created workspaces for the likes of Desmond & Dempsey and Papier – always, she says, with 'community and congregation in mind'. But now she, like many others, has a new set of challenges to overcome – to make the office of the future practical and safe yet also as aesthetically pleasing as past projects.

04 SUSTAINABLE FASHION'S FUTURE

Prior to the pandemic, sustainable fashion was talked about more than ever before. Fashion is the second most polluting sector after oil. But will the crisis undo all the momentum? There are some green shoots. Farfetch has unveiled its carbon-reducing delivery initiative, offsetting its global emissions for shipping and returns. And the early signs for small sustainable brands like &Daughter are good, too. Co-founder Buffy Reid wasn't sure if it was 'appropriate' to launch her new dress collection during the crisis. But as an independent brand – and with a small distribution

network and social distancing measures in place – she decided the only option was to go ahead.

'It feels weird to say, but we've had a strong six weeks of trading,' says Reid. 'They sold better than we had hoped pre-Covid.' She's had a record number of first-time customers – and they're placing 'slightly bigger orders than normal'. 'I think [it's] customers trying to support independents, and caring about what you're buying, and where from.'





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Briefings

'If you just sit at home and say, "Wow, the restaurant industry is so fucked," well then yeah, it will be. Because it won't get unfucked by sitting on your ass at home. You have to unfuck things yourself!' p36

Leadership in tough times

Leadership in times of crisis – sure, but how? Because what worked in good times probably won't work right now. Long-term strategy has been cast aside as the pandemic has disrupted every sector from fashion and travel to food and drink. Over the next 15 pages, we map out five principles to keep in mind through this period of uncertainty. From leaders who are ruthlessly objective and take absolute responsibility, to leaders who constantly motivate themselves, take effective action and carry their people with them, we hope these stories and insights help you come out stronger on the other side.



01. They are ruthlessly objective

POLAR EXPLORER

Ben Saunders

'I HAD TO PUT MY EGO ASIDE AND LOOK AT THE FACTS.'

What the polar explorer and endurance athlete Ben Saunders learned about himself when, during a major expedition in Antarctica, he had to ask for help.

'On New Year's Day 2014, I found myself in a precarious position. I was fairly warm in my tent, but there was a high wind blowing outside; the temperature was around -35C. My expedition partner Tarka L'Herpiniere and I had been journeying across the Antarctic Plateau for three months. We were weak after covering more than 1,600km on foot in 55 days. We'd spent the preceding week eating half rations to eke out our meagre supplies. The next food depot was 58km away – perhaps two days' travel – but we had only half a day's food left.

'One option was to call in a rescue, but that would have meant failure and

◀ He sets extremely high standards for himself but sometimes, says Saunders, you have to be aware of your own limitations.



'People might assume I'm a natural leader but I've frequently sought external advice when facing a difficult choice. In those moments I've matured as a leader.'

Below: Polar explorer Ben Saunders on his record-breaking Antarctic trek in 2013-14.

we'd been planning this expedition for a decade. So I thought about moving forward, but we couldn't cover that distance in those conditions. Certainly not in our states. We'd have died.

'I knew I had to find the solution, as much as I was tempted to ask Tarka. And I realised that the best solution was to have the aircraft standing by to rescue us drop off supplies instead. At more than \$100,000 it's surely the most expensive takeout that ever was, but it allowed us to continue. We crossed the finish line in February, thereby completing the first return journey to the South Pole on foot, from Ross Island. At 2,888km, it remains

the longest human-powered polar journey in history.

'My goal was to complete the trip unsupported and unassisted, in essence, dragging our supplies for nearly 70 back-to-back marathons. We were close to pulling it off, so it was hard for me to decide to call in supplies. I had to put my ego aside and look objectively at the facts. The main objective was to get home safely. As much as it felt like failure then, I'm as proud of my decision as I am of the expedition.

'People might assume I am a natural leader but I've frequently sought external advice when facing a difficult choice. In

those moments in our tent, high on the Antarctic Plateau, where the closest people to us were on the International Space Station, I matured as a leader. Until then, I was motivated by my own ambitions and this nebulous idea of perfectionism. But life doesn't work like that. Being in charge can be a profoundly solitary position, but at the end of the day, that's part of the role.' 🍷

Sometimes the most important, and the most challenging, part of being a leader is working out the best compromise in the face of factors beyond your control.



NEUROSCIENTIST
THE SCIENTIFIC ART OF
DECISION-MAKING

Moran Cerf

Making the right call, especially under stress, requires understanding the workings of the brain – and removing bias. Moran Cerf, neuroscientist and business professor at Kellogg School of Management, discusses how to improve the decision-making process.

DIY neuroscience

'For every brain, there exists the ideal conditions for making decisions. The parameters are external, eg. what time of day it is, whether you're tired, whether you're alone. The question is, how do you find out the optimum conditions for your brain – and then negotiate that with others in your team? Neuroscience allows you to learn it by looking at the profile of your brain; obviously, a privilege not everyone has access to. But there is a cruder way of making inferences: data in the diary. We can easily keep track of our decisions and analyse them.'

- 01 'Start a diary for the next week. Write down every decision you have to make, big or small, as you make them. Write down what the other options were and all the conditions you made your decision under; what you infer from the situation.'
- 02 'A week after making each choice, look at the entire list and rank them in terms of how good a decision you feel they've proven to be. Now you have a list of choices, conditions and outcomes.'
- 03 'Do basic analytics of that: "In those choices I was most happy with, I was X, Y and Z". This is inference in a way, but you still have some sense of situations. You'll cover a lot of decisions and a lot of circumstances – from one week you'll have enough data to get a sense of who you are.'

Managing doubt

'Relying on data reduces doubt but doubt is not necessarily bad. What research tells us is that we need to separate it from risk. A lot of decisions involve risk, you just want to take risky decisions with high certainty. We're biased to the effects of recency; we see what has happened recently and think it always happens – something humans often resort to.'

Removing bias

'Many of us have intuitions about who we are and why we do what we do – these may or may not be right. In the same vein, a lot of companies infer what worked before will work continuously; we have models of reality drawn from experience but we never test them again. The key is to experiment – try things for a few hours or days and see what works. Even in a big company, small-scale experimenting is the way to go. A sole thinker is naturally more prone to biases, but we are never on our own: we have friends, family, even customers. Ask, question and experiment with them.'

EXPERT
A STOIC'S GUIDE TO
CONTROLLING YOUR
EMOTIONS

Massimo Pigliucci

The philosophy of stoicism holds several tricks to apply to your mindset when objectivity is required, says Massimo Pigliucci, author of *How to Be a Stoic*.

01. DON'T FOCUS
ON OUTCOMES

'The first thing to keep in mind is the dichotomy of control – the notion that certain things are up to you and other things are not. It turns out (and I would recommend writing out a list), what's up to you is fairly limited. There are all sorts of things you can influence, but that's not the same as controlling them. Internalise your goals: move from a focus on outcomes to an emphasis on your intentions. Your intentions and the outcomes tend to be correlated – if you make an effort in the right direction, you're more likely to succeed. But part of that approach is to accept from the get-go that you might not, so any failure doesn't crush you psychologically.'

02. REDIRECT
EMOTIONS

'Suppressing emotions doesn't work physiologically. Instead, engage in constructive thinking with yourself – essentially, redirect your emotions. Modern psychologists call it the framing effect – when value judgments are not inherent in things or events themselves, but are human constructions. Keeping a distinct and objective description of what's happening and your value judgment of it is important. You cannot change a



pandemic but you can change the way you think about things. Catastrophising engages negative emotions: fear, panic, anxiety. Look at the same thing and say, "That's an interesting challenge, lets see how I do." Literally score yourself and keep notes – then look at your notes and see how you did. This engages your positive emotions: imagination, constructive thinking and ability to solve problems. It calms you down because it gives you agency.'

03. ACCEPT SACRIFICE

'Epictetus, a second-century Greek philosopher, said life is theatre, we all play certain roles and sometimes the roles we play may require self-sacrifice. His analogy involves imagining yourself as a foot that has to step into the mud in order for the entire body to cross the street. If you just think of yourself as a foot, this is unpleasant. But if you remind yourself that what you're doing is for a greater benefit and helping the whole organism, then it makes more sense. It might mean immediate and unpleasant sacrifice, but it's the right thing to do in the long term, for yourself and everybody else connected to that organism – in this case your colleagues or employees.'

ILLUSTRATION: Choi Haeryung.



The kitchen is the star at Nick Kokonas's Roister restaurant.

02. They take absolute responsibility

PROFILE

Nick Kokonas

'YOU HAVE TO UNFUCK THINGS YOURSELF.'

As an outsider to the restaurant industry, Nick Kokonas's approach to the business of restaurants is markedly innovative, and he's never been afraid to do things his own way. Nor is he about to stop.

Nick Kokonas and his business partner, the chef Grant Achatz, were looking forward to celebrating the 15th anniversary of Alinea on 4th May. Over the years, the Chicago-based restaurant has received 12 James Beard Awards and is one of 13 restaurants in the US to earn the coveted Michelin three-star rating.

There was good reason to celebrate, until almost overnight, there wasn't. Like the rest of the restaurant industry worldwide, Kokonas found himself fighting for his restaurant to stay alive. The other restaurants and bars in the Alinea Group – Next, Roister, and The Aviary – as well as Tock, the restaurant

reservations software company he set up in 2014, also faced a bleak future.

The industry has never seen a crisis on this scale before. But Kokonas, already on his sixth Zoom call of the day by the time *Courier* catches up with him, says in typically unfiltered fashion: 'If you just sit home and say, "Wow, the restaurant industry is so fucked", well then yeah, it will be. Because it won't get unfucked by sitting on your ass at home. You have to unfuck things yourself.'

A former derivatives trader accustomed to looking at big pools of data and recognising patterns, Kokonas was one of the first major restaurateurs in the US to recognise how destructive Covid-19's impact would be on the industry – which makes up an estimated 4% of the US GDP and employs almost 12 million people. Looking at the data from Tock, Kokonas saw how the restaurants signed up to the platform in Hong Kong went from being '95% full daily to 0%', and realised restaurants

back home were about to suffer a similar fate. 'I knew I needed a plan.'

A few days later, Kokonas gathered all the managers from his restaurants to instruct them on the big changes he was about to implement. Safety measures included mandatory temperature checks each morning and recorded hourly hand-washing sessions for every member of staff. While he was telling them 'there's a very high possibility our restaurants don't exist in six weeks, the president was tweeting, "Nothing is shut down, life and the economy go on";' says Kokonas. 'So there were a few smirks; a few people thought I'd lost my marbles.'

Time, of course, has proven that Kokonas wasn't losing his marbles but, rather, taking ownership of the problem. By the time the governor of Illinois announced that restaurants would be closed indefinitely from 15th March, the Alinea Group already had a plan in place. Every employee was furloughed immediately and given a \$1,000 stipend

► For Nick Kokonas, good leaders have to ignore the noise and think about what they can impact – even when it means upsetting some people.



walking out of the door. All of the ownership and upper management, Kokonas and Achatz included, gave up their salaries. 'It was like having a battle plan,' Kokonas reflects. 'We set up the website so our staff knew exactly how to apply for unemployment.'

Kokonas knew government funding alone wouldn't be enough to guarantee his staff would have jobs to return to, so he made an abrupt decision to pivot both of his businesses, transforming the restaurants into carry-out venues and

Deliveroo, GrubHub, and UberEats which charge 20-30% per order – charges a flat 3% commission.

Created in just six days, Tock to Go has users spanning countries from Germany to Australia, comprising both high-end restaurants like LA's two Michelin star n/aka and dive bars like Chicago's Nisei Lounge. 'We've added 465 restaurants in the last two weeks and we've got another 800 in some stage of onboarding right now,' says Kokonas. 'It's about helping out restaurants of

'It was like having a battle plan – we set up the website so our staff knew exactly how to apply for unemployment.'

Tock into 'Tock to Go', a takeout and delivery service platform. Three days later, Alinea hired back 60% of its 300 employees and was serving 500 meals a night through its takeaway service. The following week it was serving 1,250 meals a night and making back roughly 75% of its previous revenue.

Kokonas's outside-the-box thinking has regularly ruffled feathers. It was his pursuit of greater efficiency that led him to founding Tock. The platform, which Kokonas describes as 'Shopify for restaurants' and forces prospective diners to put down a deposit to secure a reservation to prevent them flaking, allows restaurants to sign up to provide meals for delivery or pickup within minutes. Waiving its usual monthly fees as a result of the pandemic, Tock To Go – in contrast to delivery apps like

every type.' He adds, 'In the past four weeks, we served 28,500 meals out of Alinea alone – that's more than we usually do in the course of a year.' He confirms that Tock To Go will remain a permanent part of the business. The dishes are less cerebral than Alinea's usual three-star fare, but you can get a portion of duck cassoulet, a goat's cheese side salad and banana cream tart for \$42.50 (rather than \$300 you'd usually spend to eat in-house).

Alinea experienced its highest ever sales in a single day over the Easter weekend – something Kokonas, never afraid of upsetting the status quo, proudly broadcast on Twitter. When some pointed out it was an insensitive thing to do when the industry is facing such a challenging time, Kokonas said they were 'missing the point'. 'I'm trying

ACADEMIC

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

Carmen Bonilla-Horta

'Taking responsibility ultimately comes down to thinking about how you can better lead your team. Ground yourself in your new reality, through data and research, before moving to action.'

'Too often I see leaders who are desperate to act, so they make mistakes. Don't jump the gun – it's crucial to not take on more than your capacity allows. Along with the importance of your own replenishment, taking away other people's responsibilities has awful consequences.'

'It's important to remind people: "I am here, here are the resources I can provide to support you, and I need you to operate at 100% of your capacity."

'Leaders should regularly provide guidance on company strategy but also on how processes are modifying. One of the biggest responsibilities is to be culture moulding and direction setting throughout – that creates an environment with less need for instruction. People know what to do and values become embedded.'

'Lastly, be present and fully face the situation right now. The wrong step would be to think that things will return to how they were.'

– Carmen Bonilla-Horta is assistant professor of professional practice at Rutgers Business School.

ILLUSTRATION: Anje Jager.

to set an example that what you think can't be done, can be done,' he says. 'We're obviously not getting anywhere near those numbers now, but are we still getting enough to employ 60% of our employees? Yes. Is it enough to feed people and make them happy? Yes again.'

Unsurprisingly, Kokonas has strong views about the US government's historic bail-outs of small businesses. The \$349bn paycheck protection program (PPP) ended up in the hands of too many big businesses. For example, Shake Shack received \$10m and, while it opted to hand the loan back itself, the question begs why such companies could apply for loans in the first place.

'Is it wrong that a publicly traded company with \$40m in the bank got it and your local pizza place didn't? Absolutely,'" says Kokonas. 'But the government doesn't work right on a good day. Why should we expect this was going to be brilliantly planned when it was come up with in five days? Ultimately, it's up to the individuals to take it and do with it as well as you can.'

The mishandling of the situation led acclaimed chefs such as David Chang to state that the hospitality industry may never recover. Kokonas, however, is

'I'm trying to set an example that what you think can't be done, can be done.'

more interested in trying to cut through all the noise to find solutions. 'We've been through some shit before,' he says, having endured 9/11 as a trader and the 2008 global financial crisis with Alinea. 'We'll get through this.'

Closures will happen but what about those that do come out the other side? Kokonas says, 'I guarantee there's a 25-year-old chef out there who hasn't had the opportunity to build her own place because she couldn't afford the lease rates six months ago. Eight months from now there's going to be some mothballed restaurant, left over from some guy who didn't run it right to begin with, and she's going to go in there and get it at half-price. And you know what? That is going to be a great fucking restaurant. That's what happens out of times like this.' 🍷

Taking ownership requires confidence – a trait people often wish they had themselves. Often you have to accept negative emotions exist, stop blaming others and focus on taking action.

HISTORIAN
**WHEN LINCOLN
HELD FIRM**

Nancy Koehn

In the chaos and uncertainty of a crisis, it's critical for leaders to keep moving themselves, their people and their organizations toward the larger mission. This is very hard and depends on the leader being able to access his or her courage muscles when the stakes are high. Consider, then, a pivotal moment in the American Civil War.

By late August 1864, the conflict had been raging for more than three years, and Union and Confederate armies appeared to be locked in a terrible stalemate – with no end to the crisis in sight. In the North, millions of Americans wanted the bloodshed over, and public opinion turned against President Abraham Lincoln's mission to win the war on terms that would permanently abolish slavery in the United States. Politicians, journalists and others urged the president to instead accept a negotiated peace with the Confederacy – one that would end the hostilities while allowing slavery in the southern states. Lincoln was wracked with worry.

He knew he could not relinquish universal emancipation as a condition of ending the war. He could not send black soldiers who had bravely fought for the Union back to their masters. 'I should be damned in time and in eternity for so doing,' he explained to two government officials. 'The world shall know that I will keep my faith to friends and enemies, come what will.'

But as the military deadlock continued, the pressure on the president to seek settlement terms increased, and the commander-in-chief began to waver. Perhaps, he told himself as he paced the White House hallway late at night, he should enter into peace talks with Southern leaders.

On August 19 he drafted a potentially momentous letter to a Democratic politician and newspaper editor, suggesting



he'd be open to peace talks with the Confederate President Jefferson Davis that did not involve the end of slavery. Having written these words, Lincoln paused. He did not send the letter; instead, he stored it in his desk while he thought about what to do.

Two days later, when the African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass visited Lincoln at the White House, the president read the letter aloud to him. The black activist strongly urged Lincoln to keep what he'd written to himself, telling him it would be interpreted 'as a complete surrender of your anti-slavery policy, and do you serious damage.' Lincoln took the advice. and returned the letter to his files.

The president decided emancipation would remain an essential condition of any negotiations. For a few days he had considered backing away from his mission. But, in the end – at the moment it really mattered – he did not. He moved slowly, he sought input from others, and he accessed his commitment to the larger purpose. He held the line.

There is plenty to be learned from Lincoln's example. Staying true to the larger mission, even in the face of tremendous pressure and difficulty, is critical. When this commitment is threatened, leaders must take the time to think through their priorities, find the support they need to use their resilience and courage, and then make their next move – through the storm – toward their animating missions.

– Nancy Koehn is a historian at Harvard Business School and author of *Forged in Crisis: The Power of Courageous Leadership in Turbulent Times*.

ILLUSTRATION: Choi Haeryung.



03. They're able to constantly motivate themselves

PROFILE

Mokhtar Alkhanshali

'YOU HAVE TO BE ENDLESSLY OPTIMISTIC – EVEN WHEN THERE IS NO LOGICAL WAY TO SUCCEED.'

A young man from an immigrant family in California decided, without any money, to go on a quest to import coffee from war-torn Yemen.

At the start of the year, Mokhtar Alkhanshali already knew his business would be facing hard times ahead. His coffee company Port of Mokha, founded in 2016 and serving what has been described as 'the best coffee in the world', was finalising construction on a fulfilment centre in Kuwait. Alkhanshali hoped it would help re-establish Mokha, a port city on the Red Sea coast of Yemen, as the epicentre of the global coffee trade: just like it was for 150 years, starting way back in the 16th century.

In February, Alkhanshali was preparing to visit the new site, where he would be joined by Port of Mokha's

COO Karim Abouelkheir. Neither of them made it to their destination. Abouelkheir, who had been visiting family in Egypt, was already in the air when Kuwait's government shut its borders to prevent the spread of Covid-19. On arrival he was quarantined for 12 hours then deported to the US. Alkhanshali's plane never left New York.

Port of Mokha may be named after the legendary Yemeni coffee port, but it is actually based in San Francisco. The pandemic left the company particularly divided, cutting off the network of coffee producers in the Middle East from the roasters and consumer markets they sell to worldwide. But Alkhanshali was used to taking upheaval in his stride.

'My company has thrown me a series of difficult events. Every couple of years, something awful happens. I often say that Yemen was in some ways sheltered from Covid-19 because it has basically been quarantined for the past five years,' he says, referring to the civil war there.

In interviews, Alkhanshali likes to downplay the setbacks he somehow manages to overcome. 'We do face difficulties, and there are systems that might be against you, but it doesn't mean you can just give up,' he said once. 'Maybe you don't have to cross an ocean on a boat like me, but it's universal.' Indeed, Alkhanshali believes that you have to experience hard times to be able to appreciate the good times. Still, the ability to constantly motivate himself is a leadership principle he has put into practice probably more than he would have liked to over the years.

Since founding Port of Mokha, Alkhanshali has been kidnapped, shot at and nearly shipwrecked, as well as being in close proximity to two bombings. Running half of your business in a war-torn country is, Alkhanshali says in typically down-to-earth fashion, 'pretty dangerous'. Some of the obstacles he faces back in the US seem almost trivial. What motivates Alkhanshali, who is in

► While his supply chain is in an active war zone, somehow Mokhtar Alkhanshali keeps on going.



‘They thought I was a smuggler – nobody believed that this kid would leave America to go and sell coffee in Yemen during a war.’

his late 20s, to persevere through all the hard times? Port of Mokha is much more than just a job, comes his reply. Nor was he destined for the life of a coffee salesman anyway.

In 2013, his parents sent him to live with family in Yemen, their native country, after worries he was hanging around with the wrong crowd at home in the Tenderloin, a rough part of San Francisco. ‘The first time I had a gun pulled on me wasn’t in Yemen but in America,’ says Alkhanshali. ‘It had a big impact on me.’ But during his two year ‘bootcamp’, living and working on coffee farms in his family’s Yemeni village, Alkhanshali developed a love of coffee and witnessed the hardships that the locals had to put up with. Experiencing that firsthand is partly what motivates him to keep coming back from setbacks.

By helping small-scale producers to elevate their offering, Alkhanshali has pioneered a social impact model business ‘where farmers who worked on quality could be paid more for their produce. After helping them develop their product, we are completely hands off. For me that was the goal: to improve the quality of farmers, creating value for them until they are able to become self-sufficient so that they don’t need our help.’ Some of his farmers are now earning six-times more than they used to. Other, more advanced ones are now even selling direct to roasters without Port of Mokha’s help at all.

But since the pandemic swept around the world, the International Coffee Organization has issued warnings about how badly coffee consumption has plummeted. ‘Some reports say 75% of coffee companies are going to file for bankruptcy,’ says Alkhanshali. ‘Companies that I thought were pretty stable are barely surviving. There is a threat that only Costa and Starbucks are going to survive this.’

The key reason Covid-19 is troubling Alkhanshali isn’t just the doom surrounding the global coffee trade, but the obligation he feels to his producers – his biggest motivation for overcoming the many setbacks his company has already overcome in its short existence. ‘I have promised these farmers something,

I told them that if they produced higher quality coffee, I would sell it for them. When you give people hope, especially in countries like Yemen, it is a very heavy burden to bear.’

Port of Mokha’s coffee sells for as much as \$16 a cup – arguably worth it when you consider it earned the highest score ever awarded in the 25-year history of the prestigious grading programme by Coffee Review. James Freeman, the founder of Blue Bottle Coffee, has even described it as ‘tasting like angels singing’.

A lot has also gone wrong for Alkhanshali, despite his many successes. Dave Eggers found his never-say-die attitude so compelling he wrote a book about him called *The Monk of Mokha*, which went on to become a New York Times bestseller. Eggers describes Alkhanshali’s voyage to Yemen, learning about the coffee of his homeland, as well the story of his escape from Yemen after the outbreak of war in 2015.

On living amid conflict, Alkhanshali says: ‘Even after seeing the bombs dropping, it was very difficult to wake up into the reality of a war. To feel the earth shake, smelling death and smoke, hearing the screams of women and children, and not to know if you will even live to see the

morning...’ Still, Alkhanshali was determined to leave Yemen to attend the Specialty Coffee Association of America’s annual conference in Seattle to showcase his coffee. Despite the country’s airports having been bombed, he undertook a perilous journey to get back to the US in time for the tasting – which would lead to him being shot at, kidnapped, nearly blown up by suicide bombers, drowned, and arrested when he finally reached Djibouti. ‘They thought I was a smuggler,’ he says. ‘Nobody believed that this kid would leave America to go and sell coffee in Yemen during a war.’

‘When you go through difficult times you don’t realise how tough it was until you look at it retrospectively,’ he says. ‘When you are in a difficult situation there are just two options: first, you just give up. Second, you are endlessly optimistic, you keep finding new solutions even if there is no logical way to succeed. And I think that takes having a tough mind.’ 🐣

Always look to learn from your setbacks rather than dwelling on them. Then very quickly seek small wins and make sure you place everything in the context of your long-term goals.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Choi Haeryung, Anje Jager.

FOUNDER

RISKING EVERYTHING FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Nour Mouakke

Even with the odds stacked against you, the ability to reboot everyday and motivate yourself to keep going can, it turns out, get you pretty far. Take Nour Mouakke, who went from immigrant to refugee to founder.

‘My story might make you wake up in the morning and think today is not such a bad day after all,’ Nour Mouakke, founder of the cloud-based platform for meetings and events management, Wizme, is fond of saying. Born and raised in Aleppo, Syria, in 1993, Mouakke moved to the UK when he was 26 to study at university. He went on to get a job in marketing at InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), which sponsored him as a highly skilled immigrant, meaning he could stay in the UK beyond his two-year work permit – probably a good thing, as civil war had just broken out back home in Syria.

Leaving your homeland to set up in another country is a big risk, but Mouakke was about to take another, even bigger step into the unknown. Spotting that many hotels had old-fashioned and slow booking systems in place, Mouakke came up with his idea of a marketplace for corporates to automate booking small meetings. He called it Wizme.

But to found the company he had to quit his job – and along with it, ties to the company that had



initially sponsored him. So Mouakke gave up his visa and applied for refugee status – by definition, giving up the right to travel back home and see his family, another huge personal sacrifice. At this time Aleppo was one of the worst hit cities. Wizme’s success, then, was also tied his family’s wellbeing, Mouakke says.

The next few years didn’t go well. Mouakke bootstrapped the company, lost all of his money and found himself without a home and having to sleep on friends’ sofas. The company looked dead until, in 2017, he was invited to present in front of over 100 business owners at an annual agency consortium event in France, where he earned £130,000 in investment – enough, finally, to grow the company and make it successful. ‘Words like positivity, hope, resilience and determination are how I approach life,’ says Mouakke. ‘With the right attitude, you can achieve anything.’

EXPERT INSIGHT

STRENGTHENING YOUR RESILIENCE

Dr Lucy Hone

Some key psychological hacks for keeping a positive, motivated mindset during adversity.

‘I’m always surprised by how little psychological insight leaders have when navigating what’s going on in their heads. The textbook line from disaster management is that it’s a marathon, not a sprint. You need to understand you have to pace yourself: any type of longer-term adversity is physically exhausting and emotionally draining. The way to motivate yourself is to have a good recovery routine – otherwise you’ll just burn out. Any athlete will tell you that; it’s exactly the same for leaders. Mental fitness requires the same as physical fitness: training and recovery, to ensure you’re paying back into your psychological piggy bank.’

Amplify positive emotions

‘Positive emotions have to be taken seriously; people often don’t. It’s easy to drown in negative emotions – we’re hard-wired to do that. They stick to us like velcro while positive emotions bounce off. But they’re

incredibly powerful during tough times. You have to tap into those things that make you feel good; that distract your ruminating mind.’

Build a bank of distractions

‘The foundation of resilience is mental agility: being able to pivot and flex. You have to have flexible ways to let off steam. If you can’t do your workout because you’ve hurt your ankle, what do you do then? Mental fitness is just the same – there are going to be new barriers, and you have to work out ways around them. It’s different for different people; at the moment I’m reading my Kindle in the middle of the night when I’m catastrophising, intentionally choosing books to read that make me feel like my problems are small.’

Keep in touch with the why

‘The other important thing is tapping into your why. Just knowing why you’re doing this – even the minuscule tasks, the things you don’t like – and working out how they fit into the big picture of what your mission is.’

– Dr Lucy Hone is a resilience researcher, author of the book *Resilient Grieving* and director at the New Zealand Institute of Wellbeing and Resilience.



04. They're able to take effective action

PROFILE

Tessa Brown

'AFTER THE FIRES.'

Australia's raging bushfires left winemaker and grape grower Tessa Brown with a completely destroyed vineyard. Here's what she did next.

'Growing up on a cane farm and losing harvests to cyclones had me mentally accustomed to loss,' says winemaker and grape grower Tessa Brown of Vignerons Schmolzer & Brown. 'So I'm just putting one foot in front of the other and getting on with things. I'm having a bit of fun, trying things differently and looking at the opportunities that arise from all this.'

In Australia, the summer of 2019 through 2020 is colloquially known as 'the black summer'. More than 19 million hectares of land were burnt, with devastating impact on human and animal lives, and destruction of flora, trees, plant life and farming crops. The fires largely occurred in December and January: peak time for Australia's grape harvest for wine production. Producers in New South

Wales, and in the northern wine-growing areas of Victoria, have almost uniformly been impacted by the blanketing of bushfire smoke that results in 'smoke taint' – a defect that causes an acrid flavour profile that can emerge during fermentation or remains latent in wine. It renders wines smoky and, for many, undrinkable.

The smoke taint at Vignerons Schmolzer & Brown was 'incredibly high,' says Brown. 'The disappointment was immediate, but then a survival mode kicked in. We've taken positive steps to move forward and work with our community to figure things out.'

Brown and her partner, Jeremy Schmolzer, bought their property, Thorley, in December 2012. The amphitheatre-shaped farm is fringed by native bush in a verdant pocket of Beechworth, Victoria, a prestige wine-growing region around four hours' north of Melbourne. The duo almost immediately undertook the painstaking

► When her vineyard was ruined, Tessa Brown quickly made decisions.



task of planting vines on their site, with first grapes harvested in 2015.

'[2020] was to be our first significant harvest from our property,' says Brown. 'We'd built up a respectable volume of grapes, and this season was shaping up to be near perfect for quality, too.'

After the fire, says Brown, 'I went into a bit of a cave.' But she realised she needed to act fast and become more agile. 'So we began talking at length to others in

Left: Vignerons Schmolzer & Brown.
Right: Fire fighting; tending to the vines.

the same situation, assessing damage, then spoke to friends in other regions where smoke hadn't hung around. It was a time to quickly work out the alternative measures.'

Brown says she worked hard on bookkeeping and looking at cash flow, before starting to seek alternative sources for fruit. 'There was no reason to abandon ambition,' she says. In her community, she broadcast some of her successes and became a sounding post for many not only locally, but nationally, through conversations online.

Grapes were offered from other regions, and winemakers provided advice on how to handle fruit from their vineyards. 'Initially, there was trepidation in touching fruit from regions unknown to the winemaking process,' Brown explains. 'A readjustment in mindset, and a personal questioning of what would I have done differently with the resources. In discussion with other winemakers, I tried to reframe the difficulties we were facing as something to enjoy intellectually and an opportunity to try different things.'

Brown oscillates between the heartbreak of loss and the optimism found through her outreach of advice to others. 'Take each day at a time,' she says. 'If you want to fall in a heap that's fine. But get up the next day and go forward with your thinking. Look to other avenues but narrow things down. Communicate as widely as possible – solutions sometimes appear. Have a go.'

Most importantly, Brown offers a takeaway missive, and focuses on her messaging that future planning and hindsight work in hand-in-hand. 'I have always been told, and learned through farming, that preserving goodwill in the community, local and further afield, is a good measure,' she says. 'You can lean on it when you need it, and keep some in reserve for others when they might be having a shit time.'

After acting quickly and making big decisions, often there's still a lot of work to be done. Moving forwards, watch things and tweak accordingly.

'I have always been told that preserving goodwill in the community is a good measure. You can lean on it when you need it, and keep some in reserve for others.'



ILLUSTRATION: Anje Jager. IMAGE: Alamy.

Q&A

**‘THEORY IS ONE THING,
REALITY IS ANOTHER’**

Zeus + Dione

Fashion brand Zeus + Dione launched in 2011 with the motto ‘Made in Greece’ – and then the recession hit, hard, with lots of factories in the country closing down. Co-founder Dimitra Kolotoura talks about how it made her think outside of the box, act fast and try to see alternative worst-case scenarios.

Q Greece’s financial crisis happened just after Zeus + Dione launched. What was that like?

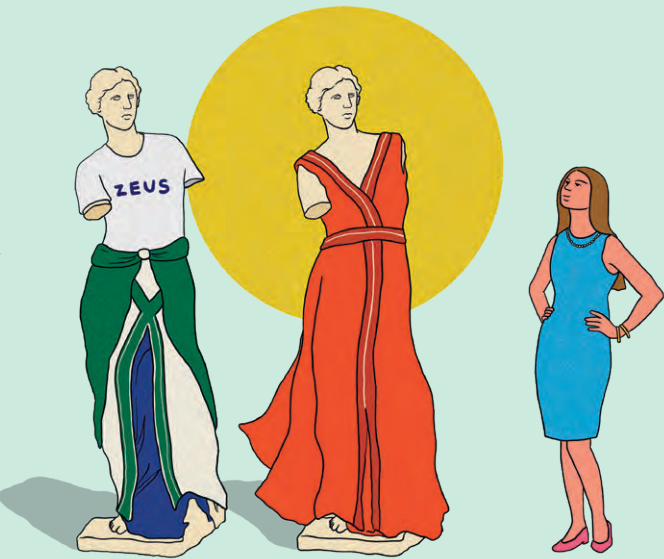
A ‘We were very prepared with our business plan – but, of course, theory is one thing, reality is another. It was tough. We had to travel all over the country to find out who was still manufacturing, so we could make a product that showcased that. Meanwhile, all over the media, we were reading about how our country was suffering. So we had to adapt and increase our spend on marketing and PR to ensure we were heard.’

Q Today, 90% of your products are sold outside of Greece. Why was export so important?

A ‘With all the restrictions in place, Greek consumers were very much under strain; that’s why we wanted to make our presence abroad known. We also realised that our story was very appealing to retailers, and telling it gave us the opportunity to sell from LA to New York to Hong Kong. At the same time, the news was showing Athens burning. The buyers would look at the garment and ask: “Is this really happening in Greece?”’

Q Of course, Greece’s economy got worse before it got better. How did you cope with that?

A ‘We made small batches and formed partnerships with the people making the raw materials, the fabrics, doing our embroideries. We had to build a lot of trust so they’d believe in our vision [of creating a global brand]. Once they could see it was working – especially in terms of selling abroad – the more they wanted to be involved.’



Q What did you learn about yourself during this difficult time?

A ‘You have to be flexible. Both Mareva [Grabowski, the brand’s co-founder] and myself are business people. We used to have successful companies before and part of that business sense is knowing how to adapt and navigate according to the economy, and to always be ready to accommodate its needs. We still constantly re-evaluate our business plan. If a collection isn’t working as expected we’ll take decisions to rebalance the outcome. At one point, retailers said they wanted to see items at a lower price point. So we did a line with cotton and linen, but still hand embroidered and given the same treatment as our silk garments. We didn’t lose our vision – but found a result that was equally beautiful and approachable. You have to listen and adapt, without losing time. This is a situation that no one could have expected. I hate to say it, but whoever isn’t prepared or ready to take measures – well, they’ll be out of the game sooner.’

EXPERT INSIGHT

STAYING GROUNDED

George Kohlrieser

‘In crisis situations, leaders need to pivot or turn quickly as the situation demands. To be creative, to take risks, to be able to explore, you have to have a sense of psychological safety.

‘That’s what’s known as being a secure base leader: someone able to build a trusting environment during a time of difficulty and able to handle the emotions of

themselves and of others. It’s crucial to build your own secure base – to remain calm, grounded and looking for creative things you can do. In times of uncertainty, the risk is that the brain shuts down and becomes defensive.

‘There’s no question there is threat – the leader has to prevent themselves becoming a hostage to the psychological concept of feeling powerless. Then, it’s essential to communicate the changes so everyone

understands why and where adjustments are being made so execution of changes can be clearly done and aligned.

‘Finally, the leader has to be alert and seek feedback to be able to change again. Most organisations must move with more speed than ever before. The two characteristics leaders need most right now are flexibility and a curiosity to learn.’

– George Kohlrieser is a professor of leadership and organisational behaviour at IMD Business School and author of *Hostage at the Table*.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Choi Haeryung, Anje Jager. IMAGE: Ellie Honein.



05. They take their people with them

EXPERT

Amy Gallo

‘COMMUNICATING YOUR WAY THROUGH THE CRISIS’
Amy Gallo, author of *The HBR Guide to Dealing with Conflict*, details how tapping into your emotional intelligence can help guide your team through times of trouble and uncertainty.

‘Right now leaders need to make decisions – often about trade-offs and issues they’ve never faced before – and they need to make them fast. So, how can you be both a decisive and inclusive leader during this crisis? And how can you lead people who are scared, anxious, and overwhelmed – especially when you may be feeling the same? While naturally there’s no playbook for the current situation, at a leadership level it can be approached like any other crisis, and relying on your emotional intelligence skills, empathy, and self-compassion in particular can help you communicate with your team.

‘Ask yourself: what would I want to hear from a leader right now? What messages and tone would be reassuring? If you have tough news to convey – whether it’s that you’re pressing pause on a project or you won’t be able to give bonuses – think about it from the perspective of those receiving it.

‘Your people are likely worried about their futures and will want reassurance. Give it to them, but don’t be tempted to sugarcoat difficult news. If you paint a rosy picture that turns out to be a lie, you’ll lose the team’s trust and risk appearing disconnected from reality. At the same time, don’t be too negative either. Be honest about what you’re up against but also emphasise that you believe the team can get through this (assuming, of course, that you do). Focus on the capabilities the team has, whether that’s resilience, deep domain knowledge, an uncanny ability to connect with customers, or something else altogether.

▼ Good leaders have to make tough, sometimes unpopular decisions, says Amy Gallo. But they must also show respect.



FOUNDER BUILDING COMRADERY

William Adoasi

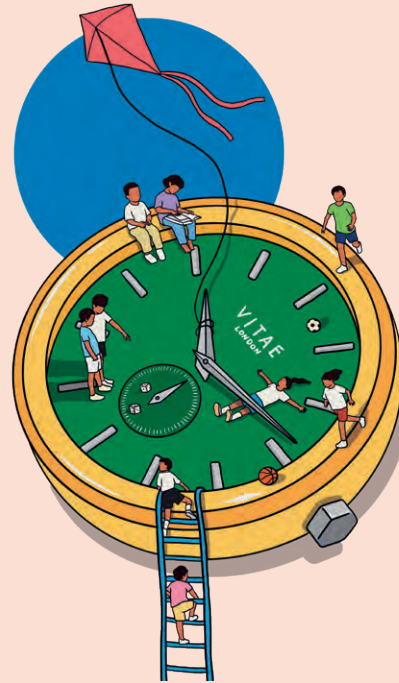
‘Them being loyal to me is actually them being loyal to themselves.’

William Adoasi grew up in south London. Aged 19, he dropped out of university to establish Starlight Sports Academy. Tapping into UK government funding for after-school sports, he recruited football coaches – mainly off Gumtree – and pitched their services to schools around London. His business turned over £160,000 in three years, which wasn’t bad for someone in their late teens.

But after a few years, the government decided to pull the funding and Adoasi’s business model was broken. It wasn’t until years later he would earn a place on Backstage Capital’s accelerator programme to found his next company, Vitae London, an e-commerce watch company that funds education in Africa.

‘I mostly attribute my leadership skills to growing up in a big family. My mum is one of 25 children, while I have six brothers and sisters myself and have got cousins for days. I’ve always had to look after young family members and be a leader in that sense. And running Starlight, I was constantly pitching to headmasters, getting the kids excited, marshalling and hiring coaches, generally dealing with a lot of personalities.’

‘Many people, when leading others, shout about what they want done, what their vision is. But I don’t think that works very well,



especially when times are tough. Leadership is about putting other people’s visions in front of them.

‘I’ve always been specific in recruiting people where I believe our ultimate visions align. I invest in staff and give them the opportunities they need to be the best versions of themselves – upskilling them, giving them exposure to the best professionals and best equipment. So them being loyal to me is actually them being loyal to themselves, and we both end up winning.’

‘I try to be as compassionate as possible when making tough decisions. I look into people’s personal lives and see if they have any issues that might affect their work, so that I can be best prepared to serve them as a leader in all facets. I try to see things through their perspective. Sometimes, to the detriment of the business, you end up putting your employees first, but knowing that in the long term it will benefit the company.’

ILLUSTRATION: Choi Haeryung.

Strike that balance while being as transparent as possible. It’s OK to admit when you don’t know the answer to a tough question. Be clear about your decision-making process – how people can have input and how you’ll use that feedback to inform your choices. Research shows that people are willing to accept negative outcomes as long as they believe there was a fair process for making those decisions.

‘Make sure you’re taking care of yourself too. Eat well, get exercise and lots of sleep, and perhaps most importantly, choose self-compassion. Beating yourself up when you can’t deliver everything that your team needs

‘Your people are likely worried about their futures and will want reassurance. Give it to them, but don’t be tempted to sugarcoat difficult news. If you paint a rosy picture that turns out to be a lie, you’ll lose the team’s trust.’

is not going to help you or your team move forward. Think about how a friend or trusted colleague would counsel you during these tough moments. They’d likely tell you that you’re doing the best you can under extremely challenging circumstances – which is true. It’s worth reminding yourself that being a leader doesn’t mean you don’t deserve compassion too. You do.’

Delivering hard news isn’t easy – especially in tough times. But when doing so, try to think about it from the perspective of those receiving it.

EXPERT EMPATHY IN FOOTBALL

Simon Kuper

In the cut-throat world of football, empathy typically doesn’t get managers very far. But, says the sports writer and Financial Times columnist Simon Kuper, the inclusive leadership of football manager Guus Hiddink – in which he ensures everyone feels nurtured and needed – is at the root of his success.

Guus Hiddink grabs your shoulders by way of greeting. But then, growing up with five brothers gave him a gift for the chummy ‘right matey’ gesture. The former manager of Chelsea, Russia, South Korea, Real Madrid and many other football teams is a solid, jowly, soothing presence.

Hiddink managed through empathy; he let the people around him flatter their own egos.

Starting out at PSV Eindhoven in the 1980s, the young coach with a Groucho Marx moustache had less status than some of his players. But he didn’t mind. He smoked cigarettes with his stars, swapping jokes and listening to their ideas as if they were brothers. In 1988 the provincial Dutch club won the European Cup.

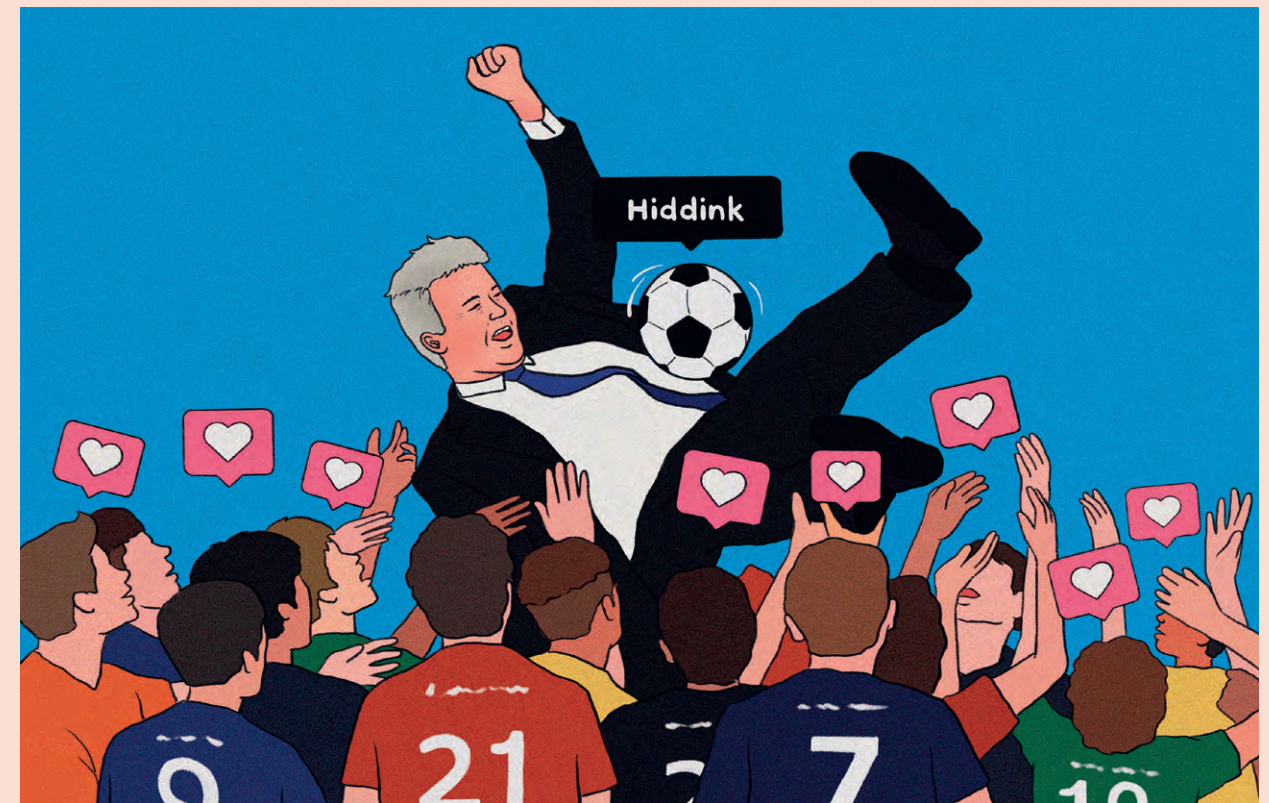
‘Manager Guus Hiddink understood just when footballers needed motivation and when (more often) they needed to be relaxed.’

That summer he persuaded the Brazilian striker Romario to join PSV. Hiddink knew that Romario was difficult. The best players often are, because they can afford to be. If Romario prioritised sleeping (his hobby) over attending compulsory team lunches, Hiddink let him. The

flipside was that Romario had to perform when it counted.

Hiddink understood just when footballers needed motivation, and when (more often) they needed to be relaxed. Russian footballers played with fear of failure because their coaches berated them for mistakes. When Hiddink became coach of Russia, he encouraged his players to make mistakes. All he asked was that they have fun.

After Russia reached the semi-finals of Euro 2008 playing joyous, ebullient football, their star, Andrei Arshavin, muttered something about ‘a wise Dutch coach’, and cried. And almost all Hiddink’s former players speak about him with respect – some even with love.



We're back!

But it's hardly business as usual. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced a number of businesses around the world to adapt or pivot the way in which they operate significantly – and many are now either reopening again or starting completely from scratch. Ahead are lessons learned, opportunities and insights from the frontline of cities emerging from lockdown – from Copenhagen and Shanghai to Athens and Berlin.



PHOTOGRAPHER: Elizabeth Heltoft.

Left and below:
Lille Bakery in
Copenhagen has
stayed open during
the crisis.



Atelier + Lille

As coronavirus fears swelled in Copenhagen a few months ago, chef Frederik Bille Brahe noticed that fewer and fewer guests were visiting his Copenhagen café, Atelier September. 'Slowly, the city began to die out. We had less customers and staff members with families were scared to come into work,' he says. So, when the Danish government announced that food establishments would have to close on 14th March except for takeaway, Brahe sent home his employees and shut down his café.

'We eventually found a way to stay open without actually being open,' Brahe says. In early April he turned the café into a grocery store for one day a week. Every Friday, customers could collect a bag filled with vegetables, juices and natural wines from local suppliers, as well as Atelier's signature granola. 'It's the least we could do to help our producers,' Brahe adds.

Denmark was one of the first countries to ban public gatherings and close schools, restaurants and bars in a lockdown that quickly helped slow the spread of the coronavirus. In turn, this led to it being one of the first European countries to open again. And now, as lockdown measures ease, Atelier September has pivoted again.

Food establishments were given the greenlight to open to customers for dining on 18th May with reduced numbers, but Brahe isn't in a rush to host guests indoors. Instead, the café will reopen as a deli and farm shop, where customers can pick up seasonal salads, baked goods, and local eggs to go. 'It's a new world now,'



Above: Lille Bakery created a delivery service during the lockdown.
Right: Atelier September also adapted to serve customers safely.

Brahe says. ‘Customers may not want to sit in an intimate setting and will prefer to be outdoors where the risk of spreading the virus is lower.’

On social media he has also talked about how lockdown has given him the ‘time to think with a clarity I don’t have when I’m operating.’ On reopening one of his other food and drink ventures – Apollo Bar, which is tucked into the courtyard at the Royal Danish Academy of Art – he posted: ‘[Lockdown] has given me courage to say goodbye to some things and work out what is really amazing and why. The restaurant world has changed now.’ He has stopped serving meat and is setting up an outside bar.

Other cafés in Copenhagen are similarly reluctant to host guests indoors. The owners of Lille Bakery, Zara Boreas and Mia Boland, say that they’re not expecting to open their café for seating inside this summer: ‘It’s too risky to have

people indoors, but we hope to seat customers outside on our deck.’

Lille Bakery stayed open during the crisis through ‘sheer will and enthusiasm,’ say the owners. As lockdown came into effect they looked at their options and opened an online grocery store while starting up a bike delivery service run by friends and neighbours. They also adjusted the indoor café space to allow customers to queue for takeaway. ‘The most challenging part of this was trying to serve people as fast as possible,’ says Zara. ‘As customers had to keep a two metre distance in line, the queue was sometimes so long that it overwhelmed us.’

Zara and Mia plan to keep the grocery store running while eventually phasing out their delivery model. Lille was founded in 2018 on the premise of bringing people together under one roof, and customers have remarked over the years on how they love hanging out at the



bakery. ‘That’s why delivering [to people’s homes] doesn’t make all that much sense right now,’ Zara says.

Businesses in Copenhagen are aware that adjustments will have to be made as they go. Mia and Zara have committed themselves to staying nimble and are grateful in the meantime for all the support they’ve garnered from their community. ‘We’ll have to see what the next few weeks hold,’ Mia says. ‘There are so many knowledge gaps about this disease, I think we will build several “new normals” until a vaccine is made.’

For Brahe, turning his café into a deli will help the business ‘stay relevant’ and connected to the local community. Copenhagen’s restaurants have, in recent years, been a destination for tourists, but if travel restrictions continue, food establishments will need to shift their focus from global to local. ‘Stepping into a new market is really exciting for me,’ Brahe says. ‘Our goal is to be the best deli in Copenhagen.’ 🍷



Above: Atelier September created a grocery store during the lockdown.
Below: The café made adjustments to the ‘new normal’ so customers could still make purchases, and now operates as a deli and farm shop.



TRENDS
CONSUMER SHIFTS
Worldwide

The Covid-19 crisis has changed how consumers spend money. As businesses reopen, it’s worth paying attention to some of the notable shifts.

According to McKinsey, overall spending intent is down in two-thirds of the countries surveyed – only in groceries, household supplies, personal care and home entertainment are consumers expecting to maintain or increase their usual spend. Between 40-60% of consumers say they’re planning to now adopt digital and low-touch solutions like grocery delivery and online fitness. Indeed, data from Nielsen reveals that 51% of global consumers are willing to try virtual reality and augmented reality to access products or services. Meanwhile, there has been a shift to buying local: a study by the UK’s Centre for Economics and Business Research showed 60% of consumers intend to shop more locally once lockdown is over, with 58% willing to pay more on products made in Britain.

Global sales of video game products were at \$1.6bn in March – the highest since 2008. In the UK, kettlebells saw the biggest increase in sales for exercise equipment (up 419%). **In the USA, activewear has been more resilient (down 25% YOY) than fast fashion (down 85% YOY).** Sales of multivitamins and supplements are up 40%. **Oat milk sales increased by 350% over an 8-week period globally.** Inline and rollerskating sales are up 878%. **Sales of yeast increased 175% in France – the highest increase of any product.** USA home improvement retailers are up 20%; home furnishing retailers are down 30%. **Cereal sales in the USA are up 43%.** USA educational software sales are up 223%.

INSIGHT
PERMANENT PIVOTS
Worldwide

The ongoing health crisis has forced many business around the world to pivot their strategies in order to survive and answer clients’ needs – take restaurants-turned-grocery shops and hotels retrofitting rooms into remote offices. But are these short-term solutions or do they reflect a sustained shift in the way we will consume and do business?

The food and drink sector is among the hardest hit, with bars and restaurants unlikely to open at full occupancy until the late summer in many countries. Aaron Caddel was running Mr Holmes Bakehouse, a successful bakery business

Trump can’t just flip on a switch and say: “Back to restaurants like you used to”. E-commerce will be bigger, for sure, but consumers are getting fatigued by a value proposition that’s just: “Hey! Keep us in business – buy something.” It’s a bit tone deaf because we’re all in a hard time.’

Whether baking at home or using public transport, all our new behaviour is grounded in risk. We’ve become more cautious. Face masks are the most vivid embodiment of this and will likely become everyday accessories even in ‘peace-time’, much like in China or Japan. London-based fashion designer Florence Bridge – whose label is one of the many to capitalise on this new consumer behaviour – thinks this is particularly true if designers can give the face mask style and individuality. ‘I think they look really cool – especially when you’re wearing a matching dress or shirt,’ she says. ‘I would love to make masks a part of my collections. Until there’s a vaccine, I think there will be demand for them.’



in California, and supplying over 60 coffee shops in LA and San Francisco alone before the coronavirus brought things to a standstill in mid-February. Like many in the hospitality sector, he started selling lockdown kits. He never expected his home-baking kits to supplant his previous wholesale profits. ‘I had zero faith in a retail strategy that could go back to the way things were any time soon,’ he says. ‘It was a question of meeting people’s needs in quarantine and what life looks like after. One: self-sufficiency – we had never seen food shortages in California. Two: people have time on their hands and want to get savvy in the kitchen.’ Caddel is unequivocal, however, that a successful pivot doesn’t mean longevity if it’s just out for profit. ‘What’s going to outlast this is food innovation and improving people’s quality of life. Donald

However, although we can project some trait changes and speculate what business models might come out on top in this new world we are currently living in, the bigger picture is more murky. ‘Right now it’s too early to tell because most people are operating on a survival mentality. The wild card here is the sense of safety that’s been threatened,’ says Rahaf Harfoush, a Paris-based strategist who teaches innovation and disruptive business models at Sciences Po’s masters of finance and economics programme in Paris. ‘One of the biggest lessons of the pandemic is the need for diversification in terms of revenue streams,’ she continues. ‘Everyone realised that those who only had one revenue stream that was dependent on real-life interactions took a hard hit. I anticipate a mindset where people hedge their bets by having more diversified jobs and projects.’



Hauge's five venues quickly made adjustments during the crisis.

Lucky Mart

'During Chinese New Year [in January] I started hearing what was happening in Wuhan,' says Camden Hauge, the American restaurateur known for her growing food and drink empire in Shanghai. By early February Hauge's four locations – Egg, Bitter, Bird and KIN – were closed for dine-in service, and by 1st March they reopened. Just one catch: they were split between Jing'an and Xuhui, with each having its own reopening guidelines. 'For the next 15 days we had a series of restrictions in Xuhui, just at Bitter and Bird, bizarrely,' she says. 'Each street has its own little hierarchy of control.' Hauge's team were also required to take their guests' temperatures and phone numbers, and submit staff temperatures via QR code. And then, mid-pandemic, came a fifth spot: Lucky Mart. 'In January I had a conversation with a bartender friend about [opening] a highball bar,' she says. 'And so from us talking seriously about the concept to opening was a six-week process.'

To read our full interview with Camden Hauge, head to [couriermedia.co](https://www.couriermedia.co).

The American restaurateur Camden Hauge opened her fifth Shanghai venue Lucky Mart in March this year.



PHOTOGRAPHER: Robert Nilsson.



'I like to go with the naiveté approach – make mistakes first and beg for forgiveness later.'



ADVICE

OPENING A STORE

Shanghai

Lucky Mart was a relatively small investment and Camden Hauge was prepared to write it off as a loss if it didn't end up working. 'I like to go with the naiveté approach – make mistakes first and beg for forgiveness later,' she laughs. She reckons the location will work based on lessons she's learned during the crisis.

01. BRAND HYPE

'Be brand-centric so that you always have something to talk about with people. You need a way to connect with customers that's beyond just your food and drink offerings.'

02. GET MERCH

'Make sure you're delivery-friendly and also sell merchandise beyond F&B. You need to sell things far outside just your brick and mortar space. So for Lucky Mart, we built up the brand and created things like t-shirts and hats. Our highball drinks can also go in takeaway cups, plus we sell konbini, which is basically Japanese convenience store food. It's all super delivery-friendly. You

don't need to be on site, in the shop, for us to sell you things.'

03. KEEP IT SMALL

'Be very space-efficient. Lucky Mart was such a small investment in terms of the space itself – it's 35 square meters, so really tiny. Our capex is low and we have few staff.'

04. GOOD PEOPLE

'Since Lucky opened I'm stretched too thin. My managers are phenomenal – I couldn't do it without them. I thought about this a lot during Covid-19. As your people get more talented, how do you continue to make that affordable in small, independent places? I want to keep talent, but then they reach a certain point where you can't really challenge them or pay them more. And so over the past couple of months I thought about creating a hospitality group as an umbrella company. I'm going to launch it soon – I'm calling it "Happy Place Hospitality". It's kind of a nerdy name, but it comes from the Danny Meyer enlightened hospitality philosophy of a happy team, happy customers and happy space. There's definitely an emotional stakeholder element of being a customer of a restaurant.'

COMMENT

LESSONS FROM SARS

Hong Kong

Following the 2003 SARS outbreak in Hong Kong, tourist numbers fell off a cliff – but then bounced back in a huge way. Courier's Michael Downes explains whether this offers a silver lining for Hong Kong today – or is wishful thinking.

While Hong Kong tourism did recover quite quickly and grew alongside most other developed economies until the global financial crisis hit, it was driven mostly by mainland tourists.

I've been living in Hong Kong since 2010 and in those days it was a struggle to find a decent coffee, restaurant and bakery, so I don't think the creative scene necessarily took off immediately post-SARS. Starbucks ruled supreme.

While the creative scene has since blossomed, it has more to do with the global entrepreneurial tailwinds post-financial crisis. Also, the US dollar weakened significantly (the Hong Kong dollar is pegged to the US dollar), so all of a sudden Hong Kong was a relatively cheap place to set up shop with little bureaucratic red tape and low tax. The

'While Hong Kong tourism did recover quite quickly, it was driven mostly by mainland tourists.'

economy was charging along with the support of mainland money pouring in.

From a rent perspective, property certainly fell significantly in 2003, which helped some creatives to establish a foothold, but it has been rising very steadily since. It's been the most expensive property market in the world for many years now, further exacerbated by the strengthening US dollar.

More recently, many bars and restaurants have gone under, following the protests and Covid. Landlords are very stubborn when it comes to rent reductions here – many would rather leave a place empty than lose face and reduce rent (culturally, it's not the thing to do). A few years ago, Elgin Street and Wyndham Street were buzzing seven nights a week – and now they're empty with, I reckon, up to 50% of places boarded up or on their last legs.



Kopria

In the Exarchia neighbourhood of Athens is Kopria, a beautiful plant shop founded in September 2018 by friends Vasilis Nzeremes and Ifigeneia Filopoulou. Ifigeneia explains how they have dealt with the shutdown.

'When Vasilis and I opened Kopria there were no other plant shops in Athens, only big nurseries. We tried to create a very careful selection of plants that you couldn't find elsewhere – there was a huge gap in the market for something like that. It was our passion.

When the virus came to Greece, we closed the shop days before the government required us to as we felt it wouldn't be safe for our customers. The store is so small – 45 square meters. The right thing to do was to stay home, be patient and see what happens.

We were just about to open our online shop, but it wasn't quite ready yet. So we weren't able to sell anything. Luckily, we'd chosen a neighbourhood with low rent, and when we saw what was happening we didn't put money into buying new stock. During quarantine we have kept our plants in the store and watered them every few days. Thankfully they kept growing and nothing died.

We have a very loyal community that was waiting for us to reopen. Normally we're not open on Mondays but the government said shops could open again from Monday 4th May, so we decided to do that. Without posting anything on Instagram, people turned up at the shop – we were so happy.

We're now trying to build our online store, as during autumn we fear there might be another lockdown so we want to be ready. At the moment we can only have eight people in the store at one time. A lot of our friends used to come in on Saturdays and hang out, but they can't do that [right now]. 🍂

Ifigeneia Filopoulou (left) and Vasilis Nzeremes of Kopria.



PHOTOGRAPHER: Marco Arguella.



‘We tried to create a very careful selection of plants that you couldn’t find elsewhere – there was a huge gap in the market for something like that. It was our passion.’

Above and right: The owners of Kopria now only allow up to eight people in the store at a time.



STRATEGY

OPERATING IN WUHAN

Annoushka

Annoushka Ducas is an entrepreneur, jewellery designer and founder of Annoushka. She talks about the retail shift in China.

‘Many of our Chinese customers find us through our stores in Harrods and Liberty in London, but when they return home, I think they’re surprised and delighted to find us in the IFC, Mandarin Oriental Hotel and now in Jewelria stores across mainland China. We launched with Jewelria in September 2019 and the two stores in Wuhan quickly proved to be the best performing. To the rest of the world, it was an unknown city, but on the Chinese map it had a huge growth rate and a wealthy millennial workforce.

When Covid hit our concessions in China were very quickly closed and we reopened in March. Things are starting to feel more hopeful – some normality is resuming and sales are starting to trickle through again.

The situation in Hong Kong, where we have two shops, has been less clear-cut. The stores have been left open, often at the request of the landlords, but on reduced hours. The government was also slow in reacting. Retailer groups on WhatsApp were proliferating and there was a palpable sense of anger among independent retailers, many of whom were facing bankruptcy. There was even a retailer strike in one of the malls with shops refusing to open in protest.

My work has always championed the talismanic qualities of jewellery and over the past two months we’ve brought that to the fore, sharing the magic of nature, symbolism and stones. Our Chinese customers have responded to this. Top purchases have been personalised pieces such as initial pendants and ‘feel good’ purchases such as zodiac pendants. We’ve also seen an increase in nature-inspired pieces such as bees and butterflies – both have powerful talismanic messages.

We look to the East and not the West in our business strategy – we see the strongest growth prospects there. While working from home, I’ve had the space to focus on our China business and collections. I truly believe it’s this market that will lead us out of this mess.

DESIGN

HOSPITALITY VIEW

Fettle

Tom Parker and Andy Goodwin of interior architecture and design firm Fettle on the future of the hospitality industry.

‘We envision two stages to the hospitality industry’s response. In the short term – as hotels and restaurants reopen and prior to a Covid-19 vaccine – social distancing will obviously be very important. All of our clients who are looking to reopen are asking for help amending the layout of their spaces to meet recommendations.

In the longer term there will be a less spatially or physically regulated approach, but one which will have an impact on how hospitality companies layout their spaces and brand themselves with a view to being more



open, clean and honest. We envisage restaurants and hotels will need to show clientele the cleanliness of not just their supply chain but also food and beverage storage and preparation.

With hotels, we’ll begin to see an amalgamation of normal operations with ways of providing services that have worked well in recent months – such as hotels offering gym classes which can also be undertaken remotely in a guest’s room. Of our clients which are still busy during this period, we’ve also found that hotels offering in-room food preparation capabilities have had a higher occupancy in general than those which do not.

It’s also been incredible to see hotels and restaurants offering free meals and hotel rooms for healthcare workers. It will be interesting to see whether this kind of community engagement will continue.’

EXPERT INSIGHT

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF REOPENING A RESTAURANT

White Rabbit Fund

Chris Miller, founder of restaurant investment and advisory company White Rabbit Fund, outlines the financial priorities for reopening venues.

On revenue streams:

‘I don’t see restaurant revenue returning to [previous] levels until well into next year so it’s about creating additional revenue streams; you’ve got to have a delivery offering now. These things won’t be the most profitable but it’s about keeping staff employed and retaining a relationship with the customer.’

On paying rent:

‘You have to be open about what your trading looks like with landlords. They don’t want an empty property, and few people will be opening a restaurant in the next few years. Can you find a sensible plan where you can both make a little money? Or you both don’t lose as much money? It might become a turnover percentage until you hit a certain threshold and then a base rent kicks in.’

On the supply chain:

‘Pressure will come when there’s significant inflation on the cost of ingredients. A lot of suppliers will go out of business due to the coronavirus, which might mean supply disruption and that does lead to an increase in prices. Restaurants might consider things like cover charges – essentially a couple of pounds for the real estate to get your fresh food done.’

On menu prices:

‘I don’t think putting prices up is the right thing to do, but neither are promotions or giveaways. Restaurants have been in fundamental trouble because there’s been zero income. For me at the moment, the aim is not to make money anymore. It’s “can I break even?” And “can I keep as many members of staff on my payroll?” So when things do come back to what they might have been, we have a really great business ready to grow again.’



Do you read me?!

For Mark Kiessling, co-owner of popular Berlin bookshop and magazine store Do you read me?!, the crisis has been an experiment in beefing up their e-commerce offering.

‘Our store isn’t big, but we have lots of magazines, books and people – normally. We closed on 16th March to avoid putting our staff or customers in danger, and we reopened after a month. Now only three people can enter at the same time and everyone has to wear a face mask. Some people don’t believe in this or think they won’t get ill, so you have to talk with customers if they’re not wearing one. People are learning that this is a new kind of normal, so behaviours are becoming more like routines.

We still had pick-up orders when we shut, so if somebody ordered a book online or called us, we handed it out at the store. We also communicated more than ever via Instagram, which helped to bring in business. We managed around 10-15% of our normal sales during this time.

Our online sales are doing better because we’ve pushed it quite a lot, but it’s much more work. All the shipping, finding the right price, packaging, things getting lost, people not being at home and dealing with shipping companies. We had lots of trouble and going forward we need to change how we set up our e-commerce.

It’s just not comparable to buying in the store. Even if you’re open for only 3-5 hours a day, we’ll have more turnover than what we have online. I believe magazines and books are best bought when you hold them in your hands, when you feel the paper, weight and printing quality. Sitting in a store and talking to people – it’s just more of a direct relationship than sitting in front of a computer.’

Right: Do you read me?! reopened in April. *Below:* The store is located in Mitte, Berlin.



INSIGHT

OPENING DURING A PANDEMIC

USA and Canada

01. CALL YOUR MOTHER

WASHINGTON DC

A Jewish deli in Washington DC opened its second location in April. Here’s what they learnt.

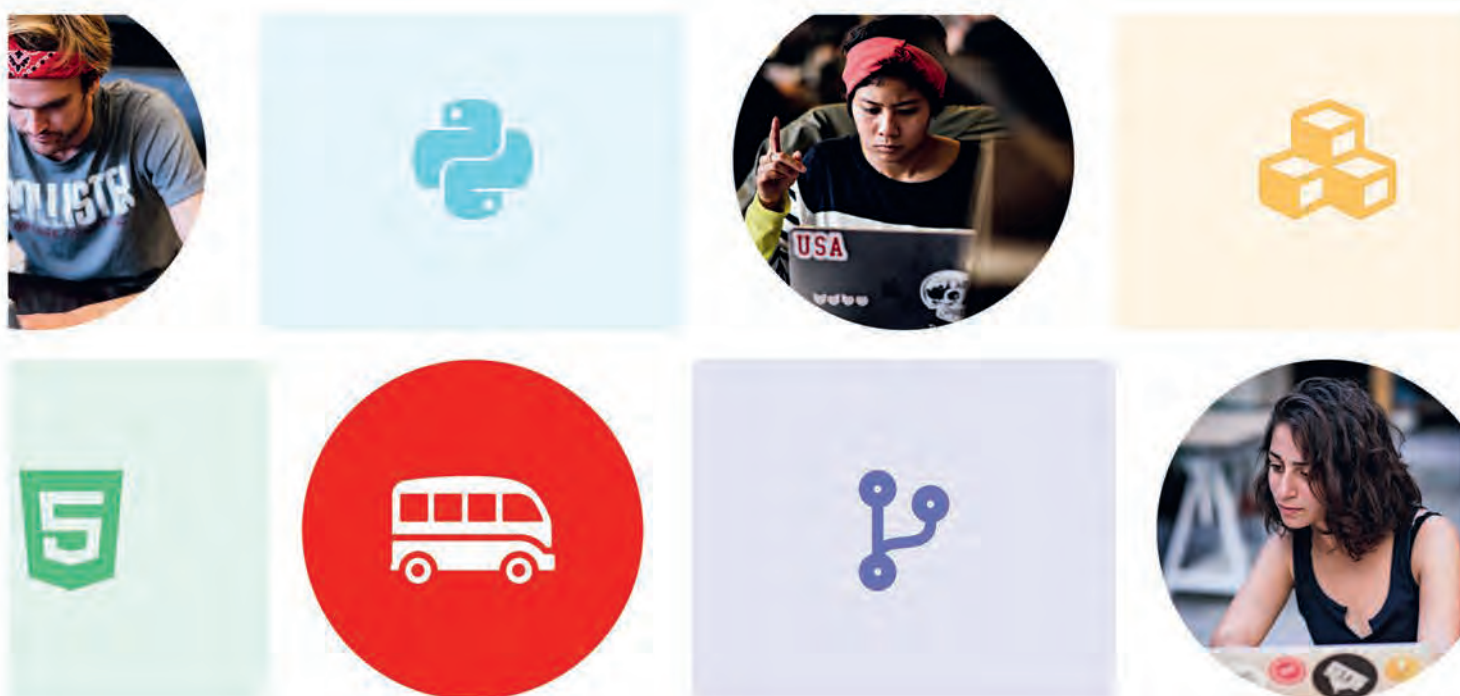
► ‘We decided to open to help pay our staff and bring a bit of joy to the area. It’s been nothing but positive feedback from our staff and the wider community.’
 ► ‘You don’t want tons of people there; you want it to feel safe. Everything just takes more time.’
 ► ‘We’ve learnt to take risks and to do anything to protect our team. We’ve practiced that since the beginning – it’s not just a job, we’re a family. It takes a village to start a restaurant and it’s going to take a village to get through this together as well.’

02. TALA
TORONTO

A Filipino restaurant opened in Toronto in April. The owner’s daughter Sasha Ortega outlines how it happened.

► ‘We delayed opening for a month. We had to make sure we had a thoughtful process on food prep, packaging and delivery; that we were stocked up on disinfectant, hand sanitisers and face masks. We even built an acrylic guard on our door as a makeshift pick-up customer window.’
 ► ‘Our specialty is kamayan, which means “using hands”. Food is normally laid out on banana leaves and served to a large group of people with no cutlery – it crossed off all the worst aspects of this [spreading the coronavirus]. There’s a pizza shop in front of our location and it was a light bulb situation. Why couldn’t we use a pizza box for take-out? It’s been an absolute hit.’

IMAGES: Schmatt, David Titlow.



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— *Mark Emil Hermansen*, p64
- 2. **Launch now if you can** — *Kim Pham*, p65
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'The Soul of an Entrepreneur' by *David Sax* — *Book extract*, p67

'Future-Proof Your Business' by *Tom Cheesewright* — *Book extract*, p73

Comment



'A trend I've picked up on recently, which has been amplified by the current crisis and coming from the majority of our private chat group's most successful members, is a sense of what I'm calling "chill professionalism". **p71**



Do you have the right stuff?

For the past three months, small businesses from Detroit to Delhi have been transforming into Swiss Army-type multitaskers, battle-hardening their operations and pivoting their offerings to prevent total collapse. It's been one of the most transformative moments in generations – and yet the impact of Covid-19 has only just begun.

The downturn we're hurtling into was caused by what economists call an *exogenous shock*. Whereas analysts might spot endogenous events – highly leveraged situations such as instability in the subprime mortgage market – Covid came from outside the system, and shattered it.

Think of the economy as a huge, intricate structure of Legos. Each of those tiny, interlocking blocks represents a corner shop, a fintech startup, a restaurant or a dry cleaner. The crisis has taken a sledgehammer to the structure, breaking it into a billion little pieces that hurt like sharp rocks when you tread on them in your socks. A few of the pieces will get lost under the couch, others eaten by the dog. Indeed, a recent survey of small businesses reveals that one in three expect to stay shut forever once this is all finally over. This is a tragedy. But, as ever, there are opportunities.

When the structure is reassembled, and this is happening right now, few pieces will go back to where they were before. Instead, a new structure will emerge. A restaurant that switched to a neighbourhood market model during lockdown may now abandon dine-in service altogether and become a full-time grocery store, selling locally-sourced bread, cheese, veg and wine. A fashion brand that pivoted its factory to making hand sanitiser might decide to forever continue that product line as, these days, good hygiene may be more profitable than haute couture.

What all this pivoting and diversifying will look like a year or two from now is anybody's guess. It's also not clear what sort of recessionary 'dip' is heading our way. However, one thing is for certain – we won't be going back to the old way of doing things. For those lucky enough to still be around, now is the time to experiment, experiment and experiment some more. Absorb the new abnormal. 🌱

1

MARK EMIL
HERMANSEN
COPENHAGEN



Congrats! You're on your own now

We founded Empirical Spirits in 2017 to use alcohol as a vessel for experimentation and sharing experiences, rather than creating drinks that fit neatly into defined categories. So we always say we're a flavour company more than a distillery. We don't look to run it like a typical manufacturing plant, either – in fact, we often look to the tech world for lessons in how we test markets and products.

We also learnt from the tech world how to grow a company while staying agile. And over the past few months staying agile, maybe more than anything else, has been one of our biggest strengths. As one of my mentors said to me shortly after the pandemic hit: 'Congratulations,



Over the past few months staying agile, maybe more than anything else, has been one of our biggest strengths.



Mark. You're finally in a position where no one else can offer you any advice.' He was right. No one of my generation has experienced a global pandemic before. But you have to be agile while staying true to your brand. Across the world, alcohol delivery is at record levels and new brands are launching in this space. There's a lot of

ILLUSTRATION: Ryo Kaneyasu

paid-for advertising on social media being carried out, but it's not something we've ever done before. A good enough product should always drive people to your brand. Why change now?

Elsewhere, distribution has slowed down. Usually our drinks get delivered to the UK within two days; now it's five or six. But we've learnt to only look after the things inside our area of control, and double down on those. For example, for our recent collaboration with Cosme, the contemporary Mexican restaurant in New York City, we decided to batch a large portion of it at their spot – not just so that we didn't have to ship stuff out there (let alone deal with compliance), but because the collaboration also became about sharing their vision of hospitality. This is something we typically never would have done or allowed, but now you have to be more willing to watch what's happening and respond quickly in turn, and the collaboration was actually so much more fun, real and valuable to everyone because of that.

On the other hand, Deliveroo came to us with an offer to deliver free samples of our drinks with food orders. We politely said no because we like to control the experience, and having our drinks with a potentially shitty meal isn't ideal. We instead partner with brands much more aligned with our values.

The journey we are on with online ordering is here to stay. People want to host more in their homes and plan their consumption around that. High-end restaurants – typically dependent on international clientele – are paying more attention to their local community. My hope is that in the long term these new trends in food and drink prove to be quite exciting.

● *Mark Emil Hermansen is co-founder of Empirical Spirits.*

2

KIM PHAM
NEW YORK



Why we felt we had to launch now

My sister and I both quit our jobs to build Omsom, the company of our dreams. The name originates in the Vietnamese word for 'rowdy', and was used by our parents to chastise us whenever we were being too loud growing up (which was a lot!). We planned to launch in March, but then the pandemic hit.

Some of our investors said our startup – selling pre-packaged blends of sauces, seasonings and aromatics to cook Asian dishes at home – should wait. Pull back and go again next year, they told us. But with so many stuck at home indefinitely, we realised that Omsom is actually more



Some said our startup should wait. Pull back and go again next year, they told us. Instead, we decided to push ahead even faster.



relevant than ever, so we decided to push forwards even faster.

Launching during a pandemic requires some changes and compromises. All our marketing has taken on a scrappier, more DIY approach. Fun fact: I did all of our recipe content shooting in my Brooklyn flat. The visuals came out a bit grittier, but

also more realistic – which feels more reflective of the times (as opposed to perfectly manicured content). And on the supply chain side, my co-founder and sister Vanessa had run into delays. Over 90% of our ingredients are imported from Asia because you cannot find them at scale in the US (a specific sort of Thai chilli pepper, say, or Filipino calamansi purée). Vanessa also somehow managed a production run 100% remotely, which involved (a lot of) FaceTime and samples being sent out overnight to ensure they met our standards.

Launching an Asian food brand at this time has been challenging, but we believe it is a pivotal time for the Asian American community. This audience has largely been ignored by mainstream food brands, yet we are the fastest growing segment of the US population with the fastest growing buying power. Now, maybe more than ever, we're stepping into our voices and influencing American media, culture and diets.

Vanessa and I grew up south of Boston in a predominantly white town. As the daughters of refugees and Vietnamese-Americans, we internalised a lot of shame associated with our food. Only recently has a light been shown on this deep-rooted issue for many first- and second-gen folks, with prominent voices like Chrissy Teigen and David Chang sharing their stories and demanding change. Still, there hasn't been much progress in mainstream grocery store representation. This 'ethnic' aisle still confounds me – who gets to choose what is considered 'ethnic'? Why are some cuisines and communities allowed to transcend this aisle? Why do many POC cuisines remain othered?

All we can do is focus everyday on crafting Omsom with purpose, despite the many challenges on our path forwards. It's not about everything being perfect – it's about thoughtfully building for a community that shouldn't have to wait any longer to be recognised, honoured and celebrated.

3

RAVNEET GILL
LONDON



Helping restaurant workers survive

In the food and drink industry, we have all heard restaurant owners complaining that they can't find staff who are 'willing to graft', 'just stay put' and that this new generation of cooks is 'somehow different'. And in many ways, they are right.

Recently, chefs have become aware of their rights and they've collectively flipped the lid on a stale system. In the UK, the massive growth in food businesses year on year, without the adequate regeneration of workers to fill the gap, means the workforce has gained the power of choice and movement between roles.

On top of this, growth in social media presence and media coverage for celebrity chefs has sparked record numbers heading off to cookery school for a career change. And for many of them, it's no longer about putting the time in but, rather, how they can start their own business, create their own brand or get a spot on TV – and there's nothing wrong with this. The street food sector has also allowed for young, passionate chefs to start ventures of their own, bypassing the need to gain years of experience in the field

The food industry was booming – and then, as we all know too well, Covid-19 came along. What happens to all of the ambitious chefs who haven't worked long hours in someone else's kitchen, when they aren't tied down to a restaurant that will look after them through all of this? Will the crisis deter these mostly freelance chefs from wanting to open a place of their own, or will certain businesses close down, making it easier for new ventures to blossom further down the line?

At Countertalk, a platform that connects chefs and advocates supportive

and healthy work environments in the industry, we've received a lot of emails from staff who had been prematurely let go, and without any news of support. Many of these chefs have only very recently (or never officially) declared themselves as self-employed and have no furlough to fall back on. Instead they are scrambling to find work or applying for universal credit.

And we cannot forget or pretend to forget the staff who, for whatever reason, are paid cash in hand; the cleaners, those without permits, ad hoc staff and the habitually underpaid and often unaccounted for 'agency' kitchen porters.



Will the crisis deter these mostly freelance chefs from wanting to open a place of their own, or will certain businesses close down, making it easier for new ventures to blossom further down the line?



What's more, service charges, tips and tronc payments – commonly used to top up hospitality salaries – are not included as part of the UK government's grant schemes. And they can typically make up to 25% of a hospitality worker's salary.

So what now? Some chefs are pivoting quickly into dark kitchen concepts that I'm sure we will be reading about very soon. Others are setting up a delivery range from their restaurants and in doing so giving work to chefs who were 'binned off without furlough', as chef Jackson Boxer puts it. The acclaimed east London Thai restaurant Singburi is operating as a

takeaway and keeping customers happy with blackboard specials. Angela Hartnett has announced a more than fairly priced takeaway and pick up service from Murano, with just her doing the cooking. And we have seen some chefs turn their skills to helping charitable organisations, like Sophie Godwin and the Caiger & Co bunch, who set up a side project to create healthy snacks for NHS workers.

On the flip side it's evident that some of those hospitality workers have, understandably, had their mental health compromised by having to sign on and being left in the lurch by their employer. With this in mind, Beyond Brigade has

set up a support line offering free mental health and wellbeing counselling.

With an uncertain time-frame on restaurant restrictions, perhaps freelance workers will seek the security of a full time job. Whilst the furlough scheme and grants seem to be holding businesses up for now, who knows how many will reopen. Let's hope that the restaurants closing will at the very least create space for new businesses, new restaurants and new ideas, all dreamt up during lockdown.

● *Ravneet Gill is the founder of Countertalk and author of The Pastry Chef's Guide.*

ILLUSTRATION: Ryo Kaneyasu

BOOK EXTRACT

Keeping it in the family

In his new book, The Soul of an Entrepreneur, David Sax breaks down Silicon Valley startup myths – including the one that says family life prevents successful entrepreneurship. For the Zuccardis in the Andean foothills of Argentina, for example, the entire family is crucial to the success of their farms, vineyards and winery – 93-year-old grandmas included.

In the Silicon Valley startup myth, family is a nonentity. Startups are a one-generation phenomenon, the process of individuals or partners creating businesses, while the family is just something the entrepreneur has at home. Often, family is portrayed as an accessory or an impediment to entrepreneurship. Or, the family is there to play the perfect supporting cast to the entrepreneur's success. Beyond that, the family plays no real role in this myth.

Since Silicon Valley's model places an exit from a business as its immediate goal, this casts the story of entrepreneurship as one with a beginning, middle and defined end, which occurs in one generation or less. Against this, multigenerational entrepreneurship is a quaint anachronism, while a family business entrepreneur is a paradoxical term – an idea completely ill-suited to our dynamic modern economy. What could be more risk-averse, slow moving and even anti-entrepreneurial than a business that is run by a dynastic procession of genetic descendants, as if entrepreneurship could be transferred somehow by bloodlines?

The reality, however, is that entrepreneurship is firmly rooted in families. According to the Family Firm Institute, a think tank, approximately two-thirds of the businesses around the world are owned and operated by families. In America, family firms constitute over half of the businesses in the country and half of those listed on stock markets. These range from blue-chip multinationals to the proverbial mom-and-pops. Family entrepreneurship may be common throughout the world, but it is so markedly different from the standard tale of the individual founder creating something new, that we often fail to recognise it beyond the first generation or appreciate why it matters. Which is a shame. Because when we ignore the experiences of family entrepreneurs, we sweep aside some of the most important questions around entrepreneurship and the two elements of our lives—work and family – that are inseparable.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

'It's difficult to see our kids sometimes as human beings,' said Wendy Sage-Hayward, a family business advisor and professor in Vancouver, who has worked with a number of clients in the

wine business. 'Even when children become adults, we see them as our kids. But also there's so much emotional ownership over a business that they founded that it is difficult to let go and share it.'

For Michael McGrann, who runs a family business consulting firm in Philadelphia called the Telos Group, many entrepreneurs keep the business separate from their family entirely or compartmentalise it, with limited transparency about the overall state of the business. 'If I don't engage my family, I can shut the door to my office and go home,' McGrann said, explaining how an entrepreneur often believes that by building a wall around their business, they are protecting their family from it. In the long term, however, this dooms the business and the family because everyone is in the dark.

Lauri Union, who runs Babson College's Institute for Family Entrepreneurship – and who previously turned around her grandfather's corrugated metal business in North Carolina – said this ultimately led to a loss of entrepreneurial capacity in a family. 'The younger generation's ability to dream and create is kind of eclipsed by the older generation's desire to retain control.'

Few family businesses succeed into the second generation and fewer still into the third and beyond. The family, the individual and the business overlap in ways that can be unhealthy, with personal emotions about preferential treatment, sibling rivalry and love playing out within the economic realities of a business. Often, the founder's children have no interest following in their parents' footsteps, opting for careers in other professions or starting their own businesses.

For all the difficulties, however, the potential advantages of multi-generational entrepreneurship are numerous too: it can mean lasting economic security and an anchor of a family identity. It can open up choices to new generations that might never have materialised otherwise.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The wine business is one where family entrepreneurship not only persists, but remains firmly tied to the industry. Pick up a bottle of wine from anywhere in the world, and you will often find a product produced by a business that has remained within the same family for two, four or a dozen generations. More than its tasting notes or a castle in Burgundy, the family name behind a winery remains the very essence of its brand.

One morning, I drove an hour and a half south of Mendoza city to the Uco Valley, a region of vineyards in the Andean foothills in Argentina, to meet two members of the Zuccardi family, who are the standard-bearers of family entrepreneurship in the region. Each generation of Zuccardis has built upon the legacy of the previous, culminating in their latest (and grandest)

winery, Piedra Infinita, that opened in 2017, where I met José Alberto Zuccardi and his son Sebastián for a steak-and-wine lunch.

The Familia Zuccardi business began in the 1960s, when José Alberto's father, Alberto 'Tito', came to Mendoza to install irrigation systems for farms and vineyards, bought some land and began growing his own grapes to demonstrate his technology. José Alberto joined his father's business in the mid-1970s and focused on winemaking. He is credited, along with other big family winery owners like Nicolás Catena, with bringing Argentinian Malbec to the world market. Now in his 70s, José Alberto was proud to talk about how three generations of the Zuccardi family all worked together. He oversaw much of the company's business operations, while his three children had carved out entrepreneurial niches within the family business; Miguel had created a sophisticated olive oil brand, Julia developed the tourism program at Familia Zuccardi's two wineries, and Sebastián, who was in his late 30s, had taken their winemaking to a whole other level. Even José Alberto's mother, Emma, who was 93 at the time, still came to the winery every day to work.

A short man with grey hair, a slight scruff of beard and a wide smile, José Alberto told me that the difference between individual entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship spread across generations was a question of time. 'Five to 10 years is short in this business,' he said. 'We can commit to develop things as a company that a corporation simply couldn't do.'

José Alberto was pouring me a glass of 2017 Concreto Malbec, a wine made from grapes that had been harvested two years before on vines planted more than a decade before that, in a vineyard that had been cultivated for decades, as part of the evolution of a company that was half a century old (yet still considered a new entrant in the global wine business). Winemaking was the opposite of Silicon Valley's rapid iteration and pivots between products and business models and exits. It was like a vine, slowly growing stronger each year, ultimately deepening the roots of the business and the family's entrepreneurial spirit.

That commitment required a steadfast independence, which the family regarded as a core value. A winery owned by a corporation was beholden to its shareholders and to delivering an annual or quarterly return on their investment, which shortened the time frame for any project. Just the day before a large international investment group paid Familia Zuccardi a visit, with an offer to purchase a controlling stake, likely worth tens of millions of dollars (or more). In an economically uncertain country like Argentina, this was no small thing, but Sebastián had refused to even hear their offer, let alone consider it.

'We don't want investors or outside help,' Sebastián told me, through lips cracked by Mendoza's punishing sun and stained purple by wine. 'The only thing that matters is freedom.' Why? 'Because the decisions taken in the family business are not just economic, they are philosophical,' he said. 'Short-term decisions aren't good for the long term. Our decisions are long-term decisions. Because I'm not the owner of anything. I'm taking care of the legacy of the family. I received something and I take care of



Our decisions are long-term decisions. Because I'm not the owner of anything. I'm taking care of the legacy of the family. I received something and I take care of it for the next generation.



it for the next generation.'

Didn't an adherence to legacy create companies that were stagnant and resistant to change? Quite the opposite, José Alberto Zuccardi said. Change was their family's primary goal. Each generation had to provide space for the next one to renew the business in their own way. If that renewal failed to occur, the business withered and eventually died. 'My role in my kids' projects is to be a facilitator and an advisor, but really it's to bring those projects to life.' José Alberto's parents let him do it by selling their wines globally, and he had done it with his children, most notably with Sebastián's highly ambitious efforts here in the Uco Valley, which had transformed how Familia Zuccardi wines were made.

Sebastián credited José Alberto with offering opportunities at the winery for him and his siblings, but he never forced them to work for him. Sebastián didn't formally start working with his father until he was in high school, and he wanted to do a project on sparkling wine, which the family didn't produce at the time. 'So I asked my dad if I could try it, and he said, "Okay, from the vines to the market, you grow it and you sell it,"' Sebastián recalled. 'So my start in the business was as an entrepreneur, setting up a separate division at 19 years old with three friends to make and sell this sparkling wine. My parents helped me sell it, opening up their contacts and providing the resources, but this gave me my proper identity within the business from the start.' A few years later, Sebastián was in charge of buying grapes from outside growers and became obsessed with vineyards in the Uco Valley, which are at a much higher elevation than vineyards the family owned farther north. 'I told my father, "The future is in Uco, we need to buy here," and he told me to start doing my research.' Sebastián experimented with different grapes, mapping elevations and cataloging the specific makeup of soils, down to the square metre.

What came out of it was Piedra Infinita, a multimillion-dollar winery that completely upended the way the family made wine. Sebastián reversed conventional wisdom, planting new varieties of grapes. Individual vines received different levels of water and different harvest times, depending on their soil composition or exposure to the elements, which he tracked with advanced

technology. He certified a big part of the vineyard as organic and fermented the grapes in porous concrete tanks, without artificial yeasts, so the essence of the grape shone through. These wines were interesting, challenging, funky, strange and expensive, especially in Argentina. In just over a decade, Familia Zuccardi went from selling a handful of wines to offering more than 40 different products, and in 2018, Sebastián was named the South American winemaker of the year by the wine magazine Decanter.

'The next generation are more open,' said Claudio Müller, a professor of business strategy and family firms just over the border from Mendoza at the University of Chile, who documented how Chilean family-owned wineries were more likely to adopt environmentally sustainable practices in their vineyards than non-family competitors. Müller believed that this was a product of the cumulative spirit of entrepreneurship they cultivated.

Vikram Bhalla, who runs the Boston Consulting Group's family business practice out of his office in India, has shown that in developing economies, like India and Argentina, family businesses are often more aggressive than others, taking on more debt and pursuing more acquisitions to achieve more growth – demonstrating an appetite for risk that grows with each generation.

'Our tradition is doing new things,' said Sebastián Zuccardi. 'The tradition in our family is to be entrepreneurs.' Right now he was working on recovering lost vineyards in the province of San Juan and making a vermouth from scratch. His siblings, his father, even his grandmother, all harboured similar side projects and businesses they were working on. Entrepreneurship, more than anything, was the Zuccardi family's legacy. Not their business, its assets or the taste of their wines, but the value of being an entrepreneur in its own right. 'In our family, it's not a value to be comfortable. It is to be uncomfortable,' said José Alberto Zuccardi. 'That's not good. That's not bad. It is what it is.' 🌱



*This is an edited extract from **The Soul of an Entrepreneur: Work and Life Beyond the Startup Myth** by David Sax (PublicAffairs; £20).*

ILLUSTRATION: Ryo Kaneyasu

4

JUAN DIEGO
GERSCOVICH
LOS ANGELES



Retail and the new normal – yes please

Does anyone miss shopping at the mall? Me neither. More generally, though, lockdown has got me thinking about how brick and mortar stores fit into the future of retail.

Since the pandemic first struck, nearly everything about traditional retail around the world has been turned upside-down. Sales of clothing have dropped by more than half – and it's expected to get worse before it gets better. I don't know how the big chains will survive. Their business models require mass consumption every day; no breaks in the cycle allowed. And even before the pandemic, lots of them were losing money anyway.



A huge door has opened for us that we didn't pay enough attention to before – digital.



As the co-founder of an independent sustainable clothing brand, Industry Of All Nations, I would have told you just a few months ago that our three physical stores were critical to the success of the company moving forward. We had a five-year plan to open stores all over the world – a plan that was central to our strategy. Now, we're not so sure.

A huge door has opened for us that we didn't pay enough attention to before – digital. It sounds simple, but when you

are obsessed with putting smiles on customers' faces, it's amazing how much brick and mortar pulls you in. And yet now, with all stores closed, people are willing to support smaller brands like ours. Despite a bumpy start, our sales are up by over 100%.

Which has made us think: does it make sense to open physical stores anymore? Usually, it requires setting on hugely expensive streets (one of ours, for example, is on Los Angeles' Abbot Kinney Boulevard). To scale up our business the pre-pandemic way, and sell at the kind of volume we wanted to back then, would have involved opening stores in London, Paris, Berlin and other major European cities – to follow the brand retail playbook. And that costs a lot of money.

What we have discovered is a light at the end of the tunnel – that it might make more sense to shift closer towards a fulfilment centre model, or what some people are calling 'dark stores'. This is when you use a store not necessarily as a standalone shop, and nothing more, but as a space from which you can fulfill delivery and pick-up orders, too. Instead of shipping everything from the US, where we are based, we might start opening fulfilment centres in European cities to shorten delivery times and provide a faster and more convenient shopping experience.

An Industry Of All Nations store in the centre of Paris? Maybe. But perhaps it would make more sense opening on the outskirts of Paris, where customers are welcome to drop in, but upstairs might be our distribution centre and warehouse, delivering orders to England and Spain, too.

Either way, I don't want things to return to how they were. We are experiencing a new kind of reality; one where we are driving around less, rushing less, buying less but better, and moving away from the cycle of fast consumption. Hopefully the retail model that used to squeeze out more sustainable, independent brands is coming to an end. I want to continue waking up in a new world.

5

TIJANA TAMBURIC
LONDON

Please help!

On her podcast How's Work, the psychotherapist Esther Perel talks about if you were raised for autonomy or loyalty. Are you a do-it-all-yourself kind of person, or a rely-on-others kind of person?

I'm definitely the former. I run a female creative agency and collective, and sometimes I find myself consciously or unconsciously taking work away from my co-founder, mostly against her will, and making it my problem.

When the WHO first declared the pandemic (which seems like ages ago now, right?), I was on set with a client and freaked out. I felt an overwhelming amount of pressure and responsibility to get it all right, to be ahead of the curve and ahead of client expectation, to keep it all together, to pivot and galvanise.



Asking for help for an autonomous person like me isn't easy. It feels like a failure.



I felt the pressure to somehow keep going, to finish our existing projects and bring in new ones. I had to keep afloat, to be an example of stability and sanity for others on our team.

I was scared to tell our client that what we had planned to film would no longer be possible. I ran our finance numbers and I ran them again. I put on a brave face and I switched into the mode I always do: autonomy. But soon

it was too much and I finally said the words: I need help.

This doesn't sound like a big deal, but it was monumental to me. The client was happy to switch tacks and we began working on a project filmed entirely in isolation, via video submissions from dozens of women who were all excited to get on board. My co-founder took over the running of our Zoom calls and a team member took the initiative to ramp up our newsletter. As I watched our sisterhood come together, I was reminded about the word I don't focus on much when talking about my collective – and, ironically, that would be 'collective'.

Now was our opportunity to re-focus on this word. We don't need to have all the answers as directors or founders or managers – we need to be better listeners to our customers and communities. And then, together, find ways to go virtual.

Tech Open Air – an interdisciplinary festival I've both attended and spoken at in Berlin – isn't happening this summer. But they quickly shifted to creating digital conferences and hosted some of the best conversations I've attended during this time. I've seen gal-dem magazine create a membership scheme to keep their writers employed and their offering digital. Even things I didn't think could go digital have done so successfully. From Zoom styling sessions and YouTube haircut tutorials to virtual 'hair wash day' that saw hundreds of women deep-condition their hair together.

Asking for help for an autonomous person like me isn't easy. It feels like a failure, a last resort – but perhaps a silver lining of this experience was learning that all of life's blessings are on the other side of that phrase. What I, and so many others, are being greeted with is incredible. It reminded me I need to get out of my own head – problems can seem much bigger there – and workshop thoughts with others. More often than not, people are willing to shift things to make things happen for you, to jump on board, to show support. You just have to ask for help.

• *Tijana Tamburic is the co-founder of Female Narratives, a creative agency and female collective that connects brands with creative women.*

6

MARTY BELL
SCOTTISH
HIGHLANDS

The rise of 'chill professionals'

Almost two years ago, I founded Jacuzzi Club, but without any bubbles, jetted whirlpools or hot tubs in sight. It is, in fact, a private chat room for people building exciting new brands and products in tech, fashion, food and media, with founders and creators from TikTok, Death to Stock and Product Hunt among many others.

As such, I have an interesting view into the daily lives and working practises of hundreds of interesting people. A trend I've picked up on recently, which has been amplified by the current crisis and coming from the majority of our group's most successful members, is a sense of what I'm calling 'chill professionalism'. The people that display it mostly start projects as hobbies and then slowly turn them into exciting businesses – a somewhat different approach to starting a business to make money, and which naturally leads to a more relaxed entrepreneurial journey.

The chill professionals are experimental. They like hanging out with friends and tinkering on projects rather than anything that feels too much like hard work. But still, this approach is churning out some of the biggest, most exciting companies in our community. For example, one member in their 20s, Andy McCune, just had his app Unfold, an online toolkit for storytellers, acquired by Squarespace.

These founders know that starting a business is like embarking on a never ending problem-solving mission; they are fully aware that there will never not be problems. But they choose to tackle everything head on, but with a light-hearted approach, rather than getting emotionally hung up when things don't

always go to plan. By viewing starting a business more like starting a project that you're currently testing removes a lot of the pressure of having to succeed, both mentally and socially.

Look into the chat room today, someone's laughing at a situation they've found themselves in with hundreds of units of stock having arrived in the wrong colours (and others are laughing with them while pitching in novel solutions to help); someone else is celebrating having had a baby boy and having sold their 10-year-old bicycle company in the same week; while another founder has just raised £1m in funding.

These messages are posted in our 'highs and lows' Slack channel, which sees a lot of posts on both ends of that spectrum. No egos, no drama, just internet friends tinkering around with huge ideas and at the same time sharing Spotify playlists and stupid tweets.

Although it has been an incredibly challenging time for most businesses over the past few months, it has become clear that people are more likely to support you if you aren't continuously broadcasting how much you're smashing it. When founders believe they have to 'fake it until they make it', it stops them from forming genuinely helpful relationships with their entrepreneurial peers.

After all, being a great business operator is mastering the art of having shit permanently thrown at you and turning that into a positive outcome. Sure, this is a mad and rubbish time for many founders, but I don't think it's a coincidence that some of the most relaxed members of our community are turning out to be some of the best operators too. A 'chill professional' approach to starting things should stand you in good stead for weathering the bad times while staying grounded through the good ones.

• *As well as Jacuzzi Club, Marty Bell is the founder of the online radio station Poolside FM, sunglasses brand Tens, and Nude, a finance app that helps you buy your first home.*

7

FLEUR EMERY
LONDON

'We aim to pay you.' What?

An Instagram ad keeps appearing on my timeline, shouting at me every time I open the app: 'The economy is crashing unless you are selling hand sanitiser.'

The doom-pedlar behind this fantastically odious caption is Jeff Walker, author of *Launch: An Internet Millionaire's Secret Formula to Sell Almost Anything Online, Build a Business You Love, and Live the Life*. If this post is an example of how he generated sales to accrue enormous personal wealth – then yeah, not for me.

Fear-based marketing seems a particularly ghoulish route right now, when the UK is in the hole so badly that even adversarial party politics is cancelled. Businesses don't need to be reminded to be scared – they are all scared. The focus needs to be on supporting founders to keep their head in a good place, so they can salvage what they can and not make things worse for themselves. This may sound trite, but it's a real problem with panicking founders racing to the bottom with their knee-jerk discounting, or even pivoting without making proper viability assessments.

Lucky me that I can observe this from a position of security as I no longer sell stuff, have investors, manufacturing agreements or stock. My business these days is selling my time and my opinions. Despite being home alone with a four-year-old, the pressure on me, with my mortgage-free house and garden, are obviously non-comparable; of course I can think straight.

Some of the most impressive examples of courage-under-fire I've

been coming across are from the freelance community, who have been badly hit not just through loss of sales but also through non-payment of outstanding invoices. Many of the ones I have been speaking to make a living selling goods or services to small businesses, and already had poor payment terms of 60 days or more. This meant that when the news started getting a bit *Black Mirror*, they kept on supplying their customers, with a growing sense of dread that they might never get paid – either the outstanding debt or for the goods or services they were delivering in the days leading up to lockdown.

The culture of businesses acting like everything is fine right up until the wheels come off is one that runs deep, and some of these suppliers were calling their customers to check that everything was ok and were reassured. And, sure, everything was ok, until it wasn't: due dates on invoices came and went, and it also became apparent that all the usual legal, systemic backup available to freelancers to help them collect outstanding debts – such as lawyer's services and small-claims courts – weren't available anymore. A couple of suppliers in this position forwarded me emails they had received from customers of small businesses, sent on group mailouts, saying, 'We cannot pay you. If the government offers meaningful support, we aim to pay you'. Pretty astonishing, right?

Here comes the good bit, though, and the bit that I really like. (Finally!) Some of these freelancers changed the ending by keeping in mind one simple but important fact: they recalled (or were reminded by me) that small businesses, however polished or intimidating, are made up of people; and where there is a person, there is hope.

So, when they received the ridiculous 'we aim to pay you' email, they didn't just seethe with impotent rage – they picked up the phone. They called and smiled and

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Businesses don't need to be reminded to be scared – they are all scared. The focus needs to be on supporting founders to keep their head in a good place so they can salvage what they can and not make things worse for themselves.

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asked questions and empathised. Then they called back and smiled again and asked the same questions in lots of different and polite ways to anyone they could get through to. They asked, 'If not now, when?' They asked, 'If not all of it, how about you pay some of it?' Sometimes they had to repeat the process. And, you know what? It worked.

Of the freelancers I know who took this approach, most got at least partial payment and four got full payment, including one who was owed nearly £10k and had staff to pay who were supporting young families. I love that even though scary letters to suppliers make it seem that processes have overtaken people, it's not usually true. In my experience at this level, there is nearly always space for human intervention, for exceptions or accommodations to be made.

Some businesses are going a big step further beyond just making human judgements about payment terms and these are the news stories I really like. My favourite is crowdfunding platform Kickstarter, who have radically relaxed the rules on what you can fund on their platform right now with its new programme Lights On. They are inviting cultural spaces, creative organisations and creative businesses to sell pretty much anything on there and enjoy the reach that the platform affords them.

It's pretty hard to know what new social behaviours will stick around after Covid-19 eventually goes away. When we're finally allowed to go outside again properly. When we can eat sushi and listen to amplified music and snog in alleys, I hope we remember all this stuff and continue to enable and support the businesses that put people first during this mind-bending time.

● *Fleur Emery is a startup expert and podcaster.*

BOOK EXTRACT

Into the future

Living through such uncertain times means it's now more important than ever to prepare for the weeks and months ahead rather than focussing on the day to day, however daunting that may feel, says Tom Cheesewright in his new book 'Future-Proof Your Business'. And to do that, you should build your business in the same way you would view an athlete.

We are all operating in an age of high-frequency change. Overlaid on existing large, multi-decade trends are many small, fast waves of change enabled by a globalised market and the friction-lowering effect of technology. These high- frequency waves carry rapid shifts in everything from consumer products to popular culture, from corporate systems to customer attitudes, and they can be extremely disruptive.

Businesses around the world are finding that the pace of this change is accelerating: more obstacles are appearing and creating an increasingly complex landscape in which to manage a successful business, both now and in the future. So, how do you survive?

The phenomenon of high-frequency change has forced organisations big and small to think differently about how they do business. The challenges they face in preparing for the uncertainty of tomorrow comes down to three core characteristics; characteristics that are very similar to those we see in the world's best athletes.

Top sports stars build the agility and strength they require for their discipline. They are limber and supple, and able to show resilience in the face of what is sometimes punishing competition. You will similarly need to build a culture of agility within your own organisation; to reshape your business for an age where adaptability to tomorrow's challenge is a better predictor of success than being perfectly optimised to today's conditions.

Successful athletes have both a profound sense of their immediate environment and great strategic awareness. They can read the game before anyone else and translate that understanding into winning action. Think about the racing driver with an almost sixth sense about the positions of their competitors behind them. Or think about the marathon runner knowing exactly when to make their break.

Winning athletes process information quickly and make the right decisions. They absorb the rich information from their senses and map out the possibilities that their foresight presents. Then they take action – fast. These three characteristics – agility, awareness and action – are visible in the most future-proof businesses. And I call such businesses Athletic Organisations.

The structure of your business must become fit, like an athlete, and sufficiently agile to face the challenges ahead. Business leaders around the world know that the future is more uncertain now than ever. They know that their business models may have a shorter shelf life than they would have had 10 or 20 years ago. So, they are changing the structure of their businesses to make them more agile.

Just like the athlete learning to read the game, you must also develop necessary awareness and foresight. You need to be certain what is likely to happen in the immediate future, the near future, and beyond. This is something that most companies do very poorly.

Including foresight tools and processes as part of your day-to-day management activity will give your organisation an immediate advantage. It does not have to be time-consuming and it does not have to be expensive. But it does have to be consistent. Forward planning is not something that can be thought about every five or 10 years any more. It is an activity that must be conducted at least twice a year so that it gives your company the clearest picture of tomorrow.

Foresight is only valuable if the visions of the future that you see are translated into action today. As organisations grow, they tend to centralise power, build bureaucracy and slow the flow of information. In the words of analyst Howard Dresner, the man who coined the term 'business intelligence', future-ready organisations must be 'hyper-decisive'.

So think about how you can accelerate decision-making in your organisation, making it much more responsive to immediate signals from customers and the market, and to the strategic responses you develop to future visions.

‘TWO-SPEED THINKING’

How long does it take your organisation to make decisions? From the simplest leave approval or signing off on expenses, to strategic decisions about entering a new market or investing in a new product, I regularly hear complaints from people working across various client organisations that things just happen too slowly.

Slow decision-making presents two distinct threats. There is a clear competitive threat, in that you can be outpaced by competitors – particularly the nimbler new entrants who have wrong-footed many major names in recent years. And there is the risk to your customer relationship – speed of service is one of the highest priorities for retail customers and this priority is shared with customers in a business-to-business environment. We want everything right now!

But you can future-proof your business by accelerating decision-making, through pushing power to the edge of the organisation and empowering those people at the edge to help make you more responsive. You can also improve the supply of good information to leaders like you to support more rapid strategic decisions. Building a culture of rapid response is vital to surviving in the long term, and the key to this is good decision-making at all levels.



Being future-proof means not standing still. Not assuming that what makes for a successful business today will continue to ensure a successful business tomorrow. It never stops... Agility and change is the business of management now.



LOOK AT THE DATA

How about your strategic decision-making? How fast, and how confidently, do you make big decisions? How much time is spent on the decision itself and how much on gathering the evidence and arguments to support it? How much are those decisions based on hard data and how much on intuition and gut feeling?

The ideal situation is for decisions to be based on both empirical evidence and human judgement. Hard data will rarely give you the entire picture. A willingness to make calls based on experience and instincts is unlikely to stop being part of a leader's make-up any time soon. But we do work in a world where better data is increasingly available. Instinct may be the ultimate decider, but there is no argument for making decisions without the data if they are available.

A proportion of the data required to drive the decision will come from inside the organisation, from your finance systems, marketing data and operational systems such as stock control. A proportion will come from outside, whether that is market research, analyst reports, partners and suppliers or external consultants. These data will usually be passed through multiple hands before they reach the ultimate decision-maker, resulting in two problems common in far too many of the organisations.

First, the collation and presentation of the data takes a long time. It is an enormous manual effort, usually laid on members of the finance or marketing teams. The data are in the company systems but often held in disparate places and in a variety of formats. There are also varying levels of confidence in the data.

Second, the data are often shaped into a narrative that supports the beliefs or interests of the people looking to drive the decision. Sometimes this is for the avoidance of negative outcomes for the person preparing or approving the data (once described to me as CYA, or cover your ass, interventions). If the data show underperformance of a unit, its head might look to insert mitigating factors or even soften the numbers by tweaking the period they cover or including additional revenue streams.

This may sound rather fraudulent on the face of it, but the person concerned may be absolutely convinced that this is how they present a fair picture of the situation. Sometimes the data

are 'shaped' to present a clearer case for a particular plan. Again, this may not be deliberate fraud but rather the person presenting the most compelling story for a plan in which they wholeheartedly believe.

The result of these two factors combined is that the decisions themselves are often delayed and predicated on less-than-transparent evidence.

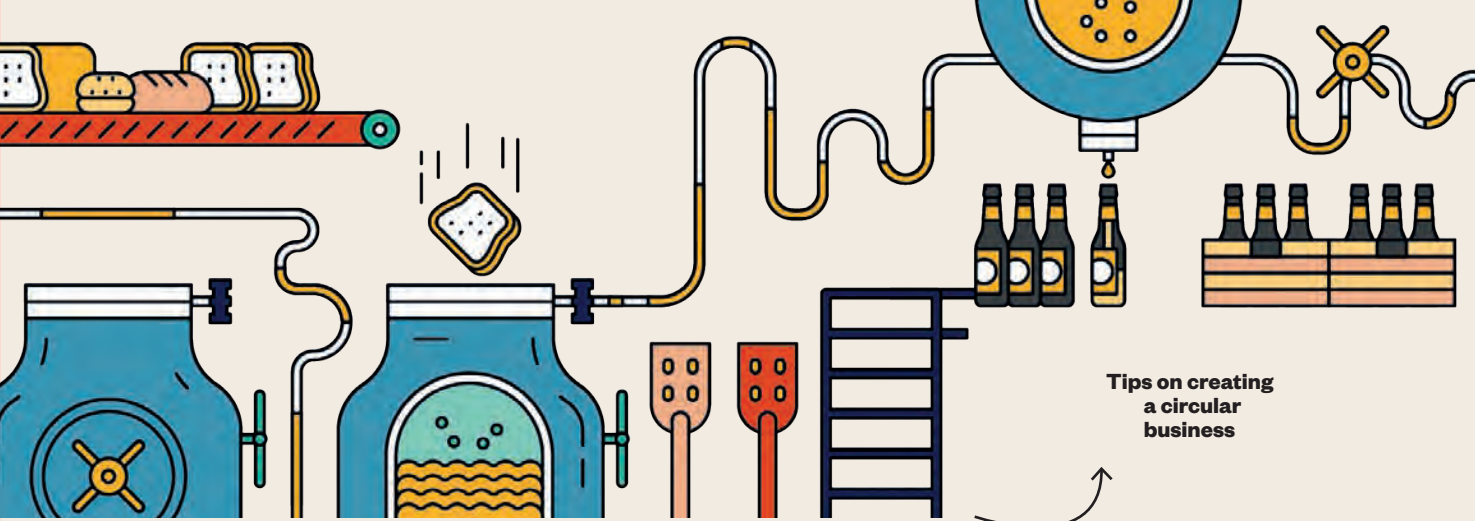
ATHLETIC ORGANISATIONS

Being future-proof means not standing still. Not assuming that what makes for a successful business today will continue to ensure a successful business tomorrow. It never stops. This is why there is so much focus on delegation and creating the time for strategic thought and action. Because agility and change is the business of management now. Optimisation is the role of people close to the action. Leaders must lead change.

It comes back to the analogy of the athlete. The greatest sportspeople are not necessarily the ones with the most technical skill or talent but the ones with the vision. The footballer who always looks up to spot that critical pass. The runner who knows their opponent and times their break perfectly. In an age of high-frequency change, leaders who build future-proof businesses will be the ones who keep their heads up and focused on tomorrow. 🏆



*This is an edited extract from
Future-Proof Your Business
by Tom Cheesewright
(Penguin Business; £8.99).*



**Tips on creating
a circular
business**

Start a regenerative business

Set ethical ground rules

Incorporate social goals into strategy

Apply a long term approach to product development

Bring in eco-friendly office hacks

Find out what investors want

Manage the entire supply chain

Grow slow



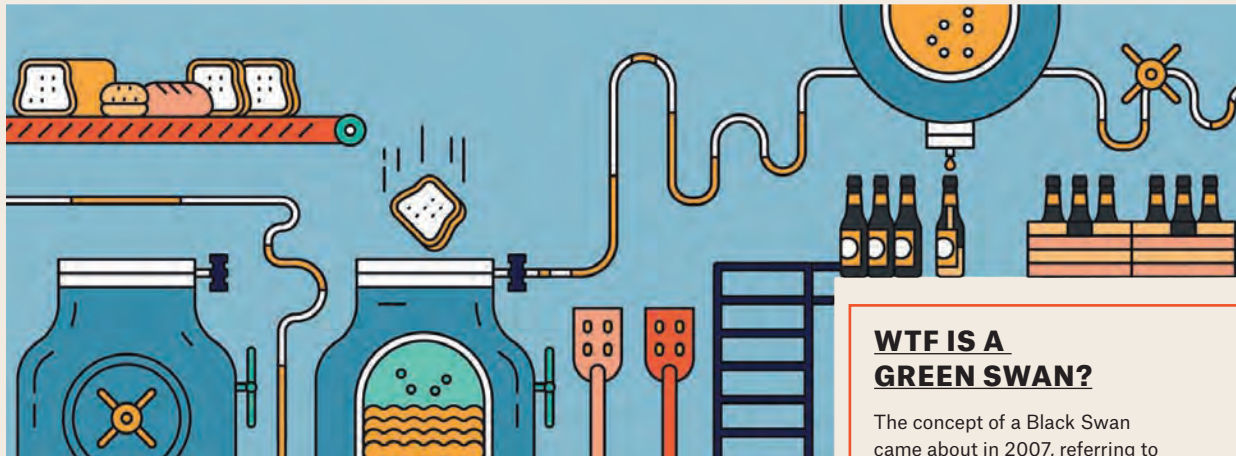
**Workshop:
Sustainability
special**

Covid-19 is a jolting reminder of the planet's interconnectedness and fragility; if there was ever a time to retool and refocus with sustainability and social responsibility at the forefront, this is surely it. This guide features expert tips and case studies to inspire positive change, no matter how small, in a business' operations.

BUSINESS MODELS

HOW TO... BUILD A REGENERATIVE BUSINESS WITH JOHN ELKINGTON

The 'godfather of sustainability' – and the man who coined the concept of the Triple Bottom Line – sets out the guiding principles he believes every business now needs to follow.



Whether launching something new or adapting an existing business, it needs to be regenerative – that's according to author, entrepreneur and pioneer in sustainability John Elkington. 'This is more than a fad. Regenerative businesses represent a huge opportunity for ambitious startups to lead the way in the recovery from the pandemic,' he says. His new book, *Green Swans: The Coming Boom in Regenerative Capitalism*, takes an optimistic, affirmative view on what's next.

But where to start? 'Rather than following a straight "how to be regenerative" list, set up your business according to a set of principles,' he says. That won't be easy, but small businesses have agility on their side. 'Regenerative businesses can become Green Swans. They'll have greater resilience than companies using current business models,' he adds. Here he and Louise Roper, CEO of Volans, a company which preps businesses for implementing change, outline three guiding principles to follow.

Critique your value

'How can your business model - the way you supply your product or service - be inextricably linked to contributing to the health and wellbeing of the whole? That is if you stop supplying your product or service, the world - people, the biosphere as a whole - will be worse off.

This is different from saying, "I provide a life-saving drug, ergo my business is regenerative" – it's about both what you are providing and how you are providing it. Your business model, or models, must be designed to create value and restore natural and

social balance. And, if they are to help drive regenerative (aka Green Swan) outcomes, then they must be designed with an eye toward their potential for exponential scaling and replication. If you can meet this requirement, the business is likely to be both responsible and resilient in whatever the future throws at you. It can be difficult to know what your impact is going to be. A great resource to get started is the B Lab Impact Assessment.'

Go circular

'Every business has a flow of money, materials and information flowing

WTF IS A GREEN SWAN?

The concept of a Black Swan came about in 2007, referring to surprise major events that have a huge, generally negative impact on economies. **A Green Swan is a mutation, referring to a profound market shift, catalysed by a Black Swan challenge**, brought about by changing paradigms, mindsets, policies, business models and technologies. **A Green Swan delivers exponential growth in the form of economic, social and environmental wealth creation.**

through it. They key is to look at these and aim to create a circular business. Focus on how to design out waste from your production process and packaging, as well as considering what your customer does with your product in use and when finished.

A great example of a circular business is London-based Toast Ale, who use bread that would otherwise have gone to waste from delis and bakeries in the brewing process. Toast Ale has taken on the broader mission to end food waste – by actively sharing the recipe for their pale ale both to home brewers and other startups across the world, they are encouraging this model to

ILLUSTRATION: Ana Cuna.

be copied rather than working for their own world domination.

What happens to your product during and after use? Can you (or someone else) take back the packaging – or even the entire product – and refurbish it to ensure no materials go to waste?

Look for collaborators within the value chain

'A lot of the questions mentioned will necessitate collaboration throughout your value chain – be it suppliers of materials, partners in production, packaging, distribution, sales or local councils that can recycle your packaging. Often it involves getting in touch with either the local community, competitors or people in a different business altogether who work in the same physical


location or with the same material as you. Or even your own customers. Who can you collaborate with to ensure that your business, at every point, is doing the most it can to restore environmental and social balance in that place?

That is much easier said than done – it will mean encouraging your team to not just collaborate with the partners you found during set up, but to continue to look at new ways of working. It means you need them to have time and a wish to go exploring, not just have their head down. As a startup, what can you do to achieve the building of a culture that encourages curiosity, experimentation and collaboration inside the company as well as out? ➔

LEARN MORE

 **ON THE COURIER WEBSITE** is a case study with Toast Ale on the effects of becoming a B Corp, along with a forensic breakdown of how it's done.

 **THE IMPACT PODCAST** have several 30-minute shows on various aspects of social enterprise. Look out for #158 on applying a social impact ecosystem mindset.

 **CAROL SANFORD** is another of the world's leading authorities on regenerative businesses. Free downloads of chapters from her books are viewable at carolsanford.com.

STRATEGY

HOW TO... INCORPORATE SOCIAL GOALS INTO FUTURE PLANNING

Ana Andjelic is a strategy executive and doctor of sociology specialising in modern luxury brands. She also runs a weekly newsletter, *The Sociology of Business*. Here she talks about the ways brands can infuse social ambitions into strategy.



01. SET IT OUT IN THE PLAN

'When drafting the two-year strategy for your brand, define both social and economic goals. Whether that's "support a community in need" or "work with the suppliers who adhere to guidelines of sustainability", define the KPIs for these with the same rigour you define for the economic goals. When considering brand communication, think not only in terms of the share of voice and product-quality perception, but also in terms of social-good perception. Your brand communication strategy should incorporate these goals, and your engagement plan should have clear and concise actions that support it. Make sure that everything you put forward is believable and own-able by your brand – otherwise, consumers will see through it.'

'Make sure that everything you put forward is believable and own-able by your brand.'

02. RETHINK COLLABS

'While we may be well past the time when a fashion collab can excite anyone, a new breed of collaborations are springing up. They go beyond short-term commercial and PR buzz towards something with a greater social impact – and no less buzz. For example, dairy company Chobani partnered with coffee seller Trade to support a community of independent coffee roasters. The effort is spurred by a common belief that food (and coffee) can be a positive force.'

03. BEHAVIOURAL CONTAGION

'It's worth asking: how can we activate our brand community to do something good in society? How do we set the example of positive influence that trickles down to my customers' communities? In the past, cigarette smoking rose and fell thanks to it; today, some areas, like food and sustainability, are subject to it. The natural human instinct to imitate and conform should be used for good. Once the pandemic is over, brands can do social-good by encouraging behavioural mimicry (and not just in terms of Instagram aesthetic). Any brand with a customer base can mobilise peer pressure.' ➔

STRATEGY

FIVE THINGS YOU LEARN WHEN... YOU OPEN MEXICO’S FIRST ZERO-WASTE SUPERMARKET

Jade Villagomez left her job at Procter & Gamble in Paris after attending a talk on zero waste. In 2017 she opened Mexico City’s first zero-waste supermarket. Here’s what she’s learned.



01. TURN ACQUAINTANCES INTO MENTORS

‘I went travelling around the world after I finished at P&G. I went to Barcelona, London and Berlin and spoke to people who owned zero-waste stores. At that time I wasn’t speaking about building a store because I hadn’t imagined opening one; I just wanted to know more about the movement. It meant I already had the contacts – I wrote to them and was like, “Hey, remember me?”. Some people ignored me but some people answered. They said it would be difficult and a lot of work, but you have to be patient.’

02. THE BENEFITS OF BOOTSTRAPPING

‘I’m happy I didn’t take on investment at the start. It’s meant I don’t have that stress of showing them the numbers – I’m an engineer, I had no knowledge about business. I had a really small budget so I reduced my spending and did everything myself and with friends who were very supportive. It took me one year and two months to recover my initial investment. It was scary because as I was growing I was reinvesting and I thought, “Oh my god, this is all my money”. But it worked out.’

03. PRACTISE THE ART OF THE SOFT SELL

‘I had no idea whether they [the local community] would be receptive to the idea. It had been hard to explain to my family, too. But as soon as it opened it was well received by the community. A lot of people didn’t know the movement – you have to teach them and show them, without being aggressive. Every time I receive a new customer I tell them how we operate and explain the practicalities of it – now more than 50% of the customers bring their own containers and that’s great.’

‘I’m happy I didn’t take on investment at the start. It’s meant I don’t have that stress of showing them the numbers.’

04. GROW SLOW AND STEADY WITH SUPPLIERS

‘I had to start small and then grow, starting with a few products of high-quality. I started with less than 100 products and now we have more than 600. Sometimes things aren’t easily fixable; at the beginning my suppliers were bringing their products in a sack – when I tried to give it back to them they said, “No, you can throw it away.” It was frustrating, but you need to be patient. They’re now refilling my sacks and changing their practices with other customers too. They’re growing with me. But patience is key – it will be more than a day; it took me more like 6-8 months.’

05. GO OUT AND PUT IT IN FRONT OF PEOPLE

‘There are two ways word has spread. One is going to events and hitting the streets. We sell in bulk at markets which is quite weird, and we talk about the movement. We tell people, “We have a store, you can buy in bulk,” and they recognise and understand the concept. People also started talking about us on social media – a girl who had visited the store early on set up a Facebook group a year later, all about zero-waste, and she started talking about us. Of course, there’s a lot of greenwashing from other stores here – people will know when you don’t do it right.’

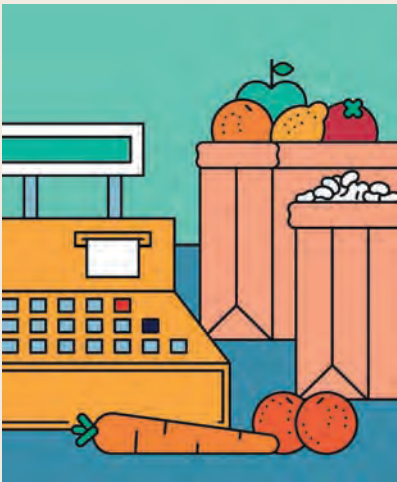


ILLUSTRATION: Ana Cuna.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

APPLYING A... LONG-TERM, SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT



Anders Ankarlid set up DTC business A Good Company (@agoodcom) with a clear intention: to offer a sustainable way of buying beautifully designed, environmentally friendly everyday products online. No matter how long it takes to perfect the product.

Launched in Stockholm in 2019, A Good Company’s product range includes phone cases, notebooks and toothbrushes which are shipped to more than 50 countries. Completely transparent in its design process, the brand climate compensates shipments and is carbon negative. Employees work completely remotely from locations all over the world, and given their high sustainability standards products can take over a year to develop. So how does that work in practical terms?

Finding the right backers

In order for A Good Company (AGC) to grow the right way, Anders Ankarlid needed the right backers from day one. That meant investors he already had a relationship with, who he knew shared his view on the planet. ‘Most investors are short term, looking to get their ROI. That’s not for us,’ says Ankarlid. ‘We’re not into the business of blitz-scaling through the roof with marketing; profit is not the bottom line. When we launch a new product, it’s unlikely to be perfect. If we had short-term owners, they wouldn’t appreciate our...geekery. Time is not fully compliant with profit.’

Building from the outside in

‘It’s so important if you’re running a DTC brand that shipping works,’ says Ankarlid. For AGC, before thinking about products, its packaging was the priority. Noting the recycling and material issues with many supposedly ‘eco-friendly’ packaging alternatives, it developed its own tapeless Stone Paper packaging, available in three sizes which other businesses can also buy. It took over three solid months of testing – with ‘plenty of failures’ along the way.

Time-intensive research

For Ankarlid, taking a long-term – and extremely rigorous – approach to product development is non-optional. ‘I don’t see any space for brands taking shortcuts anymore. They won’t be there in a few years.’ That means budgeting more cash for the development stage

– something he admits is difficult and an inexact science. Citing one recent example involving melted-down Kalashnikovs that involved ‘a ridiculous amount’ spent on development, they decided to test for one more week despite receiving good prototypes. A temperature issue in the mould meant they would have wasted 100kg of metal. ‘It can never be fixed by simply adding three months to a Gantt schedule. A curveball will come.’

...But hedging their bets

Given the time and financial costs of a product failing, the company focuses on spreading the risk. ‘We develop a lot of products at the same time,’ says Ankarlid. If we’re developing 10 products, we can learn at the same time between these products: share suppliers, share knowledge about raw materials. If something fails it’s not the end of the world as maybe we have nine other [lives].’

Collaborating with factories

Creating a mutually beneficial relationship with manufacturers is also something Ankarlid has been keen to build out. Their factories are often involved in product development, which has meant lower MOQs (minimum order quantities) and cost savings. ‘We work transparently with a factory – we break it down into pieces rather than just get the unit price. It’s not just about cutting costs, it’s about

understanding their operations and seeing where we can help too.’ AGC recently analysed the expenditure of its Turkish factory and realised they could link the factory with a cheaper shipping company.

Creating a lean machine

Naturally, a low burn-rate is key. ‘We don’t fly. We don’t have a fancy office. We’re always looking at what can we take away in terms of IT and be more efficient,’ says Ankarlid. That means even the smallest details are worth analysing: replacing Zoom with Google Meets, or calls with WhatsApp. The motivation, which everything seems directed towards is ‘to be more risk-taking in product development’.



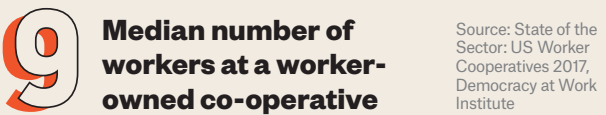
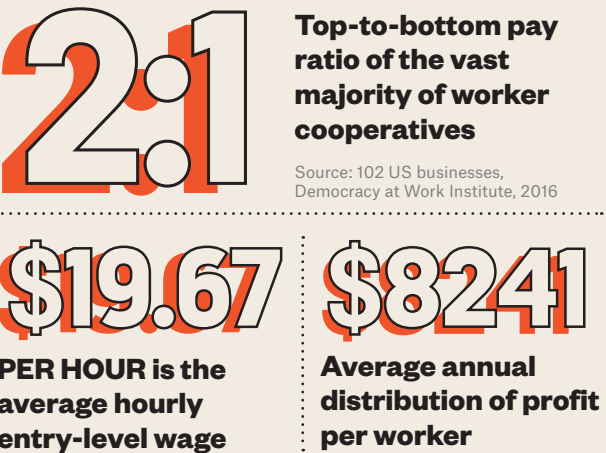
BUSINESS MODELS

IS THIS A... MODEL FOR SUCCESS? WORKER CO-OPERATIVES

From craft breweries to taxi companies, a growing number of businesses are becoming worker-owned co-ops. Research shows higher productivity and motivation, lower staff turnover and greater resilience in times of economic downturn. So, what’s the catch?

Worker co-operatives have existed for centuries but remain underrepresented – the Federation of Worker Co-operatives estimates there to be 800 of them in the US. That number’s on the rise though – partly down to startups embracing the model and, increasingly, businesses transitioning as retiring owners look to leave their creation in trusted hands.

There’s no single way to create a co-operative and that, combined with a lack of accessible intel on how it’s done, gives a clue into its relatively low uptake. Businesses looking to transition need an experienced facilitator to determine whether they’re suitable – that’s before the challenges of raising capital and deciding upon structure and governance. But while a shared ownership structure doesn’t seem a way to make a quick buck (investors don’t dig them), their benefits transcend big profits.



EXPERT OPINION

Professor Joseph Blasi is director of the Rutgers Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing and co-author of *The Citizen’s Share: Reducing Inequality in the 21st Century*. He outlines the key strengths and weaknesses of the model.

STRENGTHS

Individual motivation, company performance. ‘Workers are more committed, engaged, innovative, loyal to the company and willing to help others improve their behaviour. Employee ownership and a supportive corporate culture leads to better productivity and lower turnover.’

Earning \$\$\$. ‘In an era of flat real wages, 100% employee ownership offers a way to gain significant wealth. In the ESOP [see below] sector, workers have a separate diversified retirement plan in addition to the ESOP – that makes it a stable model.’

WEAKNESSES

Not a quick fix. ‘Since most majority owned firms are a result of transitions, if the corporate culture is poisoned or if the company has not had a previous history of stable and successful growth, employee ownership won’t rescue a bad situation.’

You still need managers. ‘Despite the common view that the workers are managing themselves, you need a strong executive management willing to be more collaborative and participatory.’

Hard to find optimum level. ‘Each company has to find the appropriate level of worker empowerment. You have to get that right. Research shows employees are most empowered at job and department level – not being on the board of directors.’

THE TWO OTHER MAIN MODELS OF EMPLOYEE-OWNED CO-OPERATIVE:

01. Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) – an employee benefit plan that gives workers ownership of stocks or shares in the company. Dominant in the US.

02. Employee Trusts – an indirect form of employee ownership in which a trust holds a controlling stake in a company on behalf of all its employees. Dominant in the UK.

CASE STUDY THE STOCK PHOTO AGENCY

Frustrated at the state of the stock photo and video industry, the founders of Stocksy United decided to reinvent the roll and launch a multi-class co-operative.



The starting point for Canadian company Stocksy is from a familiar narrative. Members of the founding team had sold their business iStock to Getty in 2007, which was subsequently bought by a VC firm. Targets shifted and the founders lost sight of their mission.

The stock agency market became saturated – royalty rates (typically between 15% and 45%) and photo quality were decreasing. Photographers felt exploited. Seeing a gap in the market to

around 1,100 contributing members (carefully picked from over 20,000 applications) and 30 employees. It operates as a multi-class co-op with three tiers – board of directors, employees and contributors – all of whom have a say.

‘We’re not here to take down the big guys, we want to provide our contributors a place where they can create their best possible work without worrying we’re going to cut the royalty rates behind them,’ says Ross. As such, images are priced

LEARN MORE

DEMOCRATICMANAGEMENT.ORG has an in-person and online course educating co-operative managers and worker-owners on how to effectively run a co-op.

The **DEMOCRACY AT WORK INSTITUTE** and **PROJECT EQUITY** websites both share detailed case studies of companies who became co-ops, along with other resources.

The online UN university, **OUR WORLD**, features a step-by-step article on how to convert a business into a worker owned co-operative.

Even finding a lawyer who knew what a multi-class co-op was and could help them draw up their initial bylaws proved difficult. The real hurdles arose, however, once they started selling and running the business, which continues evolving today.

‘Being decisive and competitive in the market while also being responsive to our members – sometimes those things can be at odds with each other,’ explains Ross. With so many stakeholders, the decision-making process can be slow. Members are

‘Being decisive and competitive in the market while also being responsive to our members – sometimes those things can be at odds with each other.’

create an agency offering a superior product through better business practice, a group of six, including iStock founders Bruce Livingstone and Brianna Wettlaufer, founded Stocksy in 2013 as the world’s first co-operative stock agency.

‘We wanted to grow in real-world sales and not to be beholden to external stakeholders more interested in numbers than treating its contributors fairly,’ explains co-founder Dan Ross. The British Colombia-based company now has

between CA\$10 and CA\$100. The artists are paid a high percentage of the royalties: 50% on standard licenses and 75% on extended licenses. And, if Stocksy is left with a surplus at the end of the year, it’s shared out between members depending on how much they contributed. Between 2013 and 2019, Stocksy paid out over CA\$24.7m to its members.

Getting to this point wasn’t easy. Knowledge of what a co-op is and how to set one up was pretty limited back in 2012.

sent emails on small changes but substantial decisions are voted for, with a minimum of 10% of members having to agree to proposals before it is advanced to the board.

Financially, it has been a success. It was launched with a CA\$1m loan in 2012, paid back within three years. It continues to turn a profit but more importantly, it has stuck to its mission – creating a better model for its contributors, and a better product for clients. 🍷

PHOTOGRAPHER: Marc Tran.

WORKPLACES

INSIDE THE... ECOSIA OFFICE

With the office environment undergoing big changes, this seems a suitable time to reassess the workspace and consider tweaks – no matter how small – that can make a positive environmental difference. Ecosia, the carbon-negative search engine that has planted over 90 million trees and donated more than 80% of its profits to reforestation, can safely say sustainability is its bag. The team invited Courier inside their new office in a former factory in Berlin’s Kreuzberg district to shine a light on the sustainable systems and hacks they’ve put in place.



ENERGY WASTE

The majority of the office power points have small gadgets installed which are set to turn off at night to eliminate energy waste.

ENERGY

Ecosia uses a green energy provider, Naturstrom, and produce its own solar electricity.

HEATING HACKS

Thermostats are installed on all heaters so that heating turns off at nights and weekends; windows are double-glazed with heat-reflecting foil behind the heaters to maximise efficiency.

BUYING IN BULK

The company buys all produce – including coffee, chocolate, nuts and snacks – organically and in bulk to reduce packaging.



VEGGIES

There’s a small roof terrace where the company grows vegetables in the summer – for compost the team use containers of Biochar that quickly compost food waste.

DESIGN SPEC

A biophilic design has been created through the use of lots of plants and natural paint colours, while all desks have a view of a window.

BIKE PERKS

Employees can have their bikes checked and basic issues fixed on a regular ‘Bike Repair Day’ in order to encourage them to ride to work.

MATERIAL CHOICES

Natural materials are used here, such as sisal, seagrass, hessian, wood and linen. Cork, bamboo, linen, cotton and FSC certified wood are preferred for new furniture.

FURNITURE

Plenty of the furniture is from the previous office but has been sanded back, oiled, painted, upholstered or repurposed entirely.

SUPPLIER APPRAISAL

The company has a ‘black list’ and a ‘green list’ of producers they purchase from – each month they look at their orders to see how they can improve.

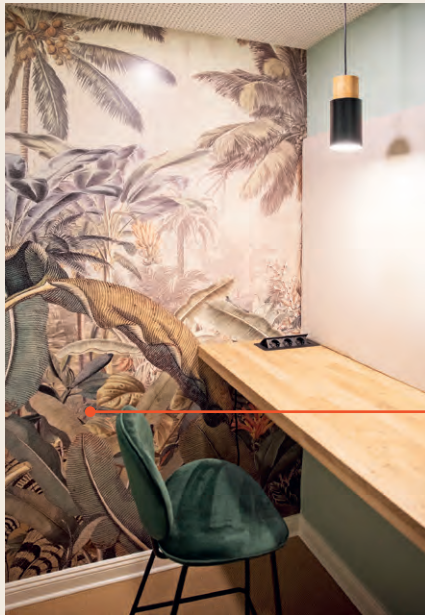


THE LIGHTS

All of the office and dining room lights are secondhand, GDR-era factory lights. Eco-friendly, dimmable LED light globes are also used throughout.

THE CHAIRS

Most of the chairs are secondhand;- many came from their old office, and prior to that were sourced from flea markets or gifted.



THE WALLS

Kalklitir and Kreidezeit natural lime paints and eco-friendly wallpapers are used in the soundproofed booths that function as meeting or focus rooms.



THE DESKS

Employees work from handmade height-adjustable desks, built from scavenged tree trunks and 240-year-old oak trees, sustainably sourced from the Lübecker Stadtforst – a local forest that operates on permaculture principles.

THE FLOOR

A concrete floor was laid and sealed with a semi-gloss finish. This polished concrete – together with the white walls – reflects light, therefore reducing the need for artificial lighting during the day.

THE TABLES

The dining table is made from 50-year-old reclaimed floorboards. A high meeting table was made from up-cycled scaffolding planks, while scrap wood sourced free from ‘Ebay Kleinanzeigen’ was used to create the bistro tables.



THE ENERGY

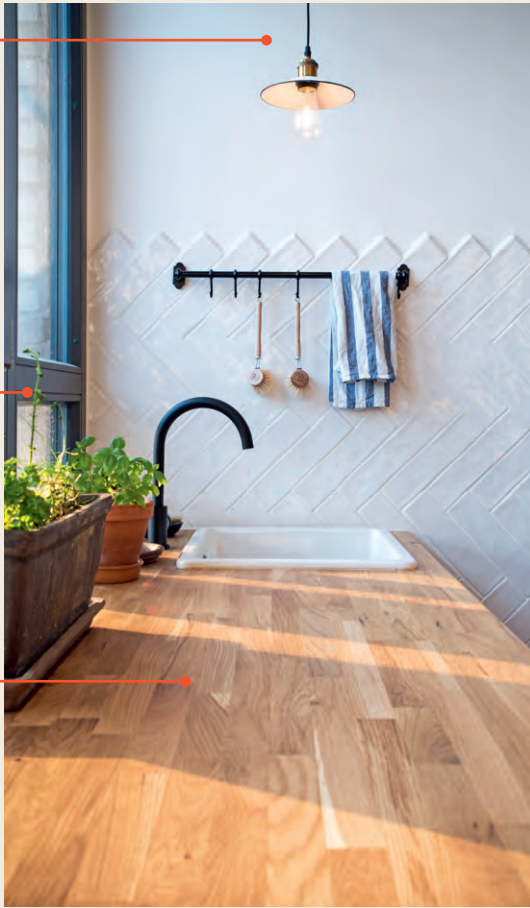
The company uses a green energy provider, Naturstrom, and is powered by 100% renewable energy. Subsidies are available for employees who also use Naturstrom.

THE AIR

All windows can be fully opened so natural air can circulate, while the company has a large selection of purifying plants

THE OFFCUTS

All of the oak offcuts from the kitchen countertops are used: the whiteboard frames, poster frames, wooden shelves, ledges and ergonomic monitor stands were all made from leftover oak pieces.



THE LAYOUT

The layout is designed to feel airy and open but retain the sense of zones and offer privacy. Divider walls come with overlight windows, there are soundproof telephone booths, different sized meeting rooms, a hidden mezzanine loft bed and a large, separated kitchen/dining/social space.

THE BATHROOM

Products used include eco-soap in glass pumps, Einhorn tampons (another Berlin B-Corp) and recycled toilet paper. Cotton hand towels are used while a non-electric ‘po-dusche’ bidet is installed in one toilet. 🌱



EXPERT ADVICE

Alexis Bainger is Ecosia’s ‘happiness officer’ and founder of Baingerous Spaces, the interior design firm that designed the new office. ‘We try to do everything in our office and personal lives to make conscious decisions,’ says Bainger. Here she highlights ways that founders can apply more sustainable practices in their offices.

Bank green
‘Ecosia uses a “green” bank [the ethical German bank GLS] which invests money in sustainable German entrepreneurs, rather than investing in fossil fuels as most banks do.’ The company has published an insightful blog post on this subject.

Reduce energy consumption
‘Use LED light globes, paint in light colours, install wifi light globes which can be controlled separately, or install sensors so lights turn off when nobody is in the room. Install thermostats on heaters so they turn off at nights and weekends. There are many smart solutions that can be controlled by apps.’

Use secondhand tech
‘There are numerous companies that repair and resell tech equipment. We always look on afbshop.de and refurb.de before buying new products. Likewise for books.’

Check your suppliers
‘Along with trying to print only when necessary (and reusing scrap paper), order recycled printing paper, Post-It Notes, pens and toilet paper. Get pens and markers which can be refilled.’

Eliminate packaging
‘Buy in bulk containers or from companies that deliver packaging-free. At Ecosia we have a small team that meets monthly to review our orders and waste and see where we can improve.’

Clean green
‘Most regular cleaning products contain ingredients that are toxic, hazardous, non-biodegradable and from non-renewable resources. Choose eco-friendly products – if you have cleaners, ask them to exclusively use them.’

MEET THE... INVESTORS

Courier chats to two US-based investors with a keen interest in sustainability to discuss what's currently piquing their interest – and what's turning them off.



James Joaquin
Obvious Ventures
Los Angeles
Co-founder at Obvious Ventures, investors in world-positive consumer brands.
@obviousvc



What business models are interesting you currently?
'We were early investors in software and services that accelerate the deployment of renewable energy generation like solar and wind. We look for companies that have a scalable business model not requiring government subsidies or carbon taxation. Examples include Sighthen (software for solar installers) and Mosaic (customised financing for residential solar and energy efficiency).'

What sectors are hot at the moment for ethically-minded brands right now?
'We're excited about two consumer sectors at the intersection of profit and purpose: plant-based foods and wellness. Shifting away from eating animals has a profound positive impact on both climate and human health – our investment in Beyond Meat is a great proof point. In wellness, we saw great success with Olly vitamins and we're now investing in CBD wellness with Beam.'

What do you want to hear from a sustainable founder?
'First, I want to know "why". Of all the things you could do, why this? Starting with purpose is important. After that, the team, the market size, and the uniqueness of the product are all key.'

When you get a pitch, how do you judge it?
'I believe interpreting a pitch is part art and part science. There are tangible things to fact check and measure, and intangible feelings and intuition that come into play.'

What buzzwords are you tired of hearing?
'Honestly, I'm tired of hearing the UN Sustainable Development Goals in pitches. They are really important as a global *lingua franca* for impact, but they're way too high level for the nuts and bolts of building a startup.'

How do you assess the trade-off between profit and doing good?
'I think this is a false trade-off. For the right kind of company,



Sari Azout Bakalarz
Level Ventures
Miami
Early stage consumer investor at Level Ventures and runs strategy for Rokk3r, a startup studio.



What business models are interesting you currently?
'Many sustainable businesses have innovated on materials; I'm interested in businesses that combine that with business model innovation. Horizontal "as a service" models that allow any business to tap into sustainability, like Repack, or aggregators that reduce the burden of choice, like Package Free.'

What sectors are hot for ethically-minded brands right now?
'Apparel and food are two obvious ones, but consumer packaged goods stands to be reorganised. I'm particularly interested in household and personal care such as Blueland and Cleancult.'

What do you want to hear from a sustainable founder?
'I want to see a product that actually works. Perhaps there's some margin, but to ultimately replace incumbents, products need to be better and accessible. The bottom line is: consumers are willing to go green, but don't want to sacrifice.'

When you get a pitch, how do you judge it?
'It's important they pass the "villain test": if the customer was motivated by pure self-interest would they still buy it? It has to be better, more affordable, more delightful. Proof of efficacy is also key. With so many direct-to-consumer brands making dubious sustainability claims in the last few years, consumers have become a little jaded.'

What buzzwords are you tired of hearing?
'I'm a little tired of hearing the term "science-backed" in pitches. The term "sustainable" as a catch-all I also think does a disservice, as sustainability is a wide spectrum. I want to see more closed loop products; businesses being responsible for a product's end of life.'

How do you assess the trade-off between profit and doing good?
'Maximising shareholder value can't be the only filter companies

ILLUSTRATION: Ana Cuna.

CASE STUDY MANAGING THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Feeling uninspired by the workings of the wider chocolate industry, Wilf Marriott founded 'seed-to-bar' brand Islands Chocolate, and tasked himself with controlling the entire process.



Plenty of founders multitask, but not many need to take a chocolate-tasting exam. When Wilf Marriott decided to branch out of his family's cocoa farm business, St Vincent Cocoa Company, to launch Islands Chocolate in 2018, it was just one of the many roles he'd take on. Having previously worked on cocoa farms, in chocolate factories and as a cocoa salesman, Marriott wanted to offer a sustainable, ethical alternative to the large conglomerates who he felt lacked passion towards the provenance or flavour of cocoa.



That means being at the source. Working in tandem with St Vincent Cocoa Company, Islands grow the highest-yielding cocoa varieties using natural agroforestry systems. They pay higher wages than those advocated by Fair Trade and have employed over 200 people. Being on the ground is, according to Marriott, 'the only way to guarantee there are sustainable practices'. Islands plays a prominent role in the community: between 70-80 independent farmers have been taught how to grow cocoa, and among other local projects they've refurbished a school library.

With a 75g bar retailing at £4.50 and a saturated market dominated by the likes of Lindt, and Green & Black's, Marriott soon realised that to scale up he would need other routes to market. Enter the premium hotel and restaurant sectors, which accounted for 95% of sales prior to Covid-19, and where customers are more discerning about traceability. 'With retail there are so many people to go through,' says Marriott. 'But if you walk into a restaurant, you'll know a head chef is in there. All I need is half an hour.'

Making chocolate in bulk combined with a growth in demand has meant tweaking the supply chain. Most of the



chocolate is now made through a chocolatier in Belgium ('It's 35 degrees in St Vincent!'), but Marriott retains control, visiting several times a month. 'We work on the recipes and I make the first batches. Then it churns over and we have our own line,' he explains.

Marriott admits that controlling the entire supply chain means everything takes twice as long. 'We're doing something completely different. We're a blank canvas wanting to revolutionise the way chocolate is made,' he says. At time of writing, Marriott is seeing the positives of taking an enforced, momentary step back and refocusing priorities: product, community and planet – including their operations in the UK. 'We're going the extra mile in St Vincent but we need to be going the extra mile over here too.' 🍫

✂️ MANUFACTURING

CASE STUDY GROWING SLOW WITH STORY MFG

Despite increasing popularity and verging on cult status, fashion label Story MFG has kept its relatively small-scale, slow-moving design process the same – preferring to gradually build a relationship with manufacturers.

Since launching in 2013, UK-based clothing brand Story MFG has stuck to a ‘slow made’ ethos, creating the company’s distinctive unisex clothing at highly-skilled manufacturers in India and Thailand that employ time honoured techniques, natural dyes, recycled fabrics and renewable energy. With production runs limited due to the laborious nature of the design process – and having only recently hired their first full-time staff – the team have consciously kept operations small. Here founders Katy and Saeed Al-Rubeyi discuss the effects of their approach.

SYMBIOTIC GROWTH

SAEED: ‘We learn and rise together. They [manufacturers The Colours of Nature] make 90% of our stuff and we’re 80% of their revenue. There’s a strong friendship and shared values, and an interest in what can be done with the limits of natural dyes and how we can develop the space. They didn’t know about making samples and fashion shows; we didn’t know how long it takes to do certain dyes and the implications of the seasons.’

surprise people. They [CoN] set the prices, essentially. Normally you’d design a pair of trousers, give it to the factory and say this needs to be £12; they’d say, “Okay, we can’t achieve that, but we can take out this material and construct this pocket slightly differently and that will work.” For us, we have upwards of nine months to make a dress, for example, and the last day we find out how much it will cost us. There’s no wiggle room but it takes one struggle out. We rely on their honesty.’



‘When you have a brand you’re told you need to hire all these people to manage. We thought, there’s all these people being themselves and that breeds an authenticity.’

THE LIBERTY OF LIMITATIONS

SAEED: ‘There are so many limits but actually it’s quite freeing. We’ve got five or six months to make a piece – and there’s the natural limit of colours and the weather. You have to innovate from within, working with the exact same toolbox as before. It can be really good.’

KATY: ‘If we had the options other brands had, it would look very different. Now everything is really slow. The only way to speed it up is to have more people. But we’ve grown slowly on purpose; we would get nervous if it grows too fast.’

CEDING CONTROL

SAEED: ‘Some of our practices would

EMBRACING INCONSISTENCY

KATY: ‘No one complains when wine tastes differently year to year. The problem we have is that occasionally we photograph something and it looks different when it’s actually made. We have control but only towards the later stages. I have a picture in my mind and then it might be completely different, but it’s always something quite lovely. In that sense, we do have to roll with it.’

NOT MAKING INSTANT HIRES

SAEED: ‘When you have a brand you’re told you need to hire all these people to manage. We thought, actually here’s all these people being themselves and that breeds authenticity. We need PR but we

would have suffocated if we’d done it straight away. It’s the story that brings value to the item. Just knowing how something was put together – I’d choose that over something else every day.’

NEXT GEN

SAEED: ‘We always explain why we do what we do – why we fly or use recycled plastic. We’re part of the conversation – as much as it’s important for consumers to know, it’s more so for the next batch of designers to know and not compromise. Sustainability is a large word but it doesn’t mean anything in particular, it’s often a big red arrow pointed at anything. What we can do is have a positive impact on what we do.’ 🌱

⚖️ ETHICS

APPLYING AN... ETHICAL APPROACH AT BOBBY UNIVERSE

It’s something of a stretch to call an accessories producer ‘sustainable’, but Emma Rosenhain, founder of Australian handbag brand Bobby Universe (@bobbyuniverse) is incorporating strong ethics into every facet of her business.



01. MANUFACTURING GROUND RULES

Emma Rosenhain was keen to get the foundations laid right from the start. ‘There’s a tendency to always talk about product quality as the number one thing, but for me, the ethics of our production was profoundly important – particularly while establishing our manufacturing base in China,’ she says. With an artisanal labour force handcrafting her products offshore, Rosenhain chose a factory approved by SMETA to guarantee the workers’ safety, health and human rights. Factory managers are trained in labour standards and ethics, building standards are maintained, and the artisans are paid appropriately and work regular hours.

02. SOURCING THE RIGHT MATERIALS

While the use of leather is something of a lightning rod in the post-vegan age, Rosenhain maintains that the leather used, which is strictly a byproduct of India’s meat industry, has the least impact on the environment. She doesn’t believe any clothing or accessory producer can legitimately call itself sustainable, but maintains that ‘the fashion industry can do a lot better in terms of environmental ethics by using non-polluting manufacturing processes and natural materials.’ She adds, ‘Natural materials break down faster than synthetics, so that’s one of our key pillars that will never change.’ Her next materials to explore? Cactus and pineapple leathers.

03. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Having suffered from mental health issues, Rosenhain is conscious of fashion and social media’s duality. As she has grown her brand into a six-figure business, she’s used its increasing clout to create ‘Be You’ video campaigns on her website, where inspirational women – such as dancer and choreographer Sophie Apollonia – share personal stories on the subject of mental wellbeing. The business is a supporter of Beyond Blue, an Australian mental health charity, donating 2% of their profits to it. ‘In fashion, I think there’s a responsibility to be doing more than just going after sales,’ says Rosenhain. ‘For me, that means shining a light on mental health.’ 🌱

TAKE NOTE: SUSTAINABILITY TERMS TO KNOW



Carbon Disclosure Rating

A numerical score (out of 100) that indicates the level of reporting of a company’s climate-change initiatives.

CDR (Corporate Digital Responsibility)

Using digital technologies to promote ethical and sustainable business practices including data capture, decision-making, impact assessment and refinement of tech.

Cleantech

Also known as Greentech, this refers

to tech products or services that improve the businesses’ operational performance while reducing costs, waste, energy use and negative environmental impact.

Collaborative Consumption

A system where consumers share access to products or services by a peer-to-peer model, rather than individual ownership.

Community Investment

Businesses invest in strategic long-term community projects with charities and local organisations, rather than providing one-off donations.

Differential Pricing

This refers to the charging of different prices for the same product to different customers – typically linked to financial situation or disabilities.

Green Procurement

A strategy of buying products with a reduced environmental impact in direct comparison to similar products.

Remanufacturing

Rebuilding, repairing, or restoring a product to meet the same consumer standards as new products.

Supply Chain Transparency

Requirement of companies to know what’s happening throughout the supply chain and to communicate this knowledge both internally and externally.

Waste-to-Profit

Using one company’s waste or byproduct as an input or raw material in the manufacture of something else. This process is also known as ‘byproduct synergy’.

STARTUP DIARY

ELIZABETH HAIGH



1 MID MARCH 2020 CLOSING THE RESTAURANT

‘The day we have to officially close the site to the public is probably one of the worst days I’ve ever had. On the last day we did a flash sale of everything in the shop and gave stuff to charity – I didn’t want anything to go to waste. The next day there was this bubbling anxiety. I’m a control freak, I need to know exactly what’s going on but there was nothing within our control. Information is coming in trickles – our life savings have gone into this project.’



3 LATE MARCH 2020 LOOKING AT FINANCIALS

‘Being part of Borough Market means we don’t pay business rates and are zero-rated, so we can’t even qualify for any business grants or loans – we’re just too young a company. It’s a kick in the teeth that there’s no financial support despite losing all our income. Not hearing from our insurance company is also driving us a bit insane; we pay so much for it – we pressed a claim straight away, but we just haven’t got any response.’



2 MID MARCH 2020 FURLOUGHING CONUNDRUMS

‘I don’t put the staff on furloughed leave straight away – I decide to pay them in accrued holiday. I feel like there’s so much misinformation out there. Then we get more info about the furlough scheme and I’m able to make the decision to do it. The staff are all very relieved and it gives me a huge sense of relief. It feels like there’s a bit more security for the team – that was my main worry. I can work for nothing, but they can’t.’



4 EARLY APRIL 2020 PIVOTING

‘Our brand is quite nimble and phase two of the company was always going to be the retail side. I spend almost two weeks researching what’s the best produce, what will sell and come to the conclusion it’s the Sambal chili paste, the Kaya coconut jam and spice mixes. I research into subscription services but it gets complicated because of postage. Luckily I’ve already done a lot of the legwork for the e-commerce in terms of recipe testing – that’s easy.’

Michelin-starred chef Elizabeth Haigh launched her Singaporean counter-style restaurant Mei Mei at London’s Borough Market in November 2019. After rave reviews, the business was beginning to thrive – before the pandemic forced its closure. Here she details the ups and downs of an unprecedented couple of months.

To check what Elizabeth’s up to between issues, follow her at @the_modernchef



5 MID APRIL 2020 LAUNCH DAY

‘We launch the site to our newsletter subscribers, which is about 200 people; our hardcore supporters. The website crashes because of demand – we have £1,000 of orders within six hours. It’s a shine of positivity; it makes me feel that people want to support Mei Mei, because all of this is going to support the company. It helps us cover our rent. Everyone is messaging us really positive things and seem really excited – knowing there’s demand there is a really positive thing.’



6 MID APRIL 2020 WFH

‘I’m loving spending time with my son and seeing all his changes but it’s really difficult. It’s like you’re wearing two hats all the time – trying to be a mum but my brain is somewhere else, thinking about getting all these orders out. Every lunchtime is spent together and we go on our daily walk. Stuff like explaining to a two year old why a park’s closed – managing that brings up your stress a lot, and coming back into work afterwards is tough.’



7 MID APRIL 2020 PRODUCTION CHALLENGES

‘We have all these orders come through and I have to make about double what I have in stock, because I didn’t set a stock level. I have to make 14kgs of coconut jam! I get a lot of messages like “the website’s crashed” and “can you help us?” I’m not an e-commerce, distribution or packaging expert, I’m just a chef. My phone is bleeping and bleeping. There are only so many arms you’ve got, especially with our staff furloughed. I’ve counted on asking favours of my sisters, mostly for moral support.’



8 LATE APRIL 2020 DELIVERY TRIAL AND ERROR

‘On the first day of using our courier service, two of the deliveries go missing and a customer angrily messages me. I’m livid. I try to get hold of the company and the driver, but they just treat us appallingly. I feel so much anger – we should all be looking out for each other right now. I find a new company but it means I have to increase the shipping costs. It feels like we’re sticking our finger in the air to see which way the wind blows at the moment.’ 🙄

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5

Life
LOCKDOWN

The home life and habits of
a jewellery maker in Greece,
a composer in Los Angeles,
a dog trainer and yoga teacher
in London, and an Australian
chef – as photographed by their
partners, neighbours and friends.



Leila McNeelance DOG TRAINER

Leila McNeelance is founder of Huxley & Hooch, a dog training and behaviour consultation service based in Walthamstow, London. 'I've had way too many careers already,' she says. 'I was on the music gig circuit for a bit but I wasn't very fulfilled.' A dog-lover, she started taking dog behaviour courses and attending live seminars – and was hooked. She's now a qualified trainer, but since the pandemic has shifted to remote sessions by video call. Here, she's shot by her partner @dan_rosss.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Dan Ross. ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo, Han Valentine.

LONDON



BREAKFAST



► **ON 3 YEAR-OLD HUXLEY:** 'I found our dog Hux on a run. He was roaming around the streets of Walthamstow – we don't know whether he was dumped. He was microchipped to the original breeder so we

managed to get his information – and we ended up adopting him. He's a Jack Russell cross. I've always said I'd never get a terrier and I've ended up with the most terrier of terriers! Now I love them. Hux is lovely, but has

so many issues. Through training him, I realised that I love working with anxious dogs. Sure, I love working with puppies, don't get me wrong – puppies are the best – but working with rescue dogs is really rewarding.'

KEEPING YOUR DOG HAPPY

1. Make their brains work Mental stimulation will keep your dog's brain happy and healthy, and will also help to tire them out so you can get in that much needed work (or Netflix) time in. There are loads of great toys available for mental enrichment, but I like to raid my recycling for quick, cheap homemade toys. Toilet roll innners are great tear-up toys with a treat popped inside, and cardboard boxes can be used to get your dog problem solving. [But be sure to supervise them to

prevent them ingesting things they shouldn't...]

2. Make your walk count Lockdown or not, varying your walks is one of the best things you can do for your dog. Encourage some proper sniffing and exploring on every walk to ensure a tired, fulfilled dog when you get home. It's really important that dogs get a chance to use their natural instincts, so you can always take their food out with you and give them opportunities to work for it, instead of just popping it in a bowl.

3. Leave them alone It feels wrong to be at home and not loving on your dog all the time, but it's important to make alone time part of their daily routine so they have time to be calm and rested, which is really necessary. It will also lessen the blow when everything goes back to normal eventually, and you have to leave them occasionally. Using food-based toys that encourage licking and chewing can be helpful for this if you're struggling to get any time apart.

Dogs need alone time? I better have something nice to chew on.



DAILY WALK



► 'I went from saying "I'm a dog walker and do a little bit of training on the side" to one day saying, "You know what? I'm just as good as the other trainers in my area doing the same job." I was constantly testing myself and giving myself fake scenarios, asking, "Would I know how to fix this?" And more and more, I was like, "I do know." I've got my qualifications and I'm a dog trainer – but I still get imposter syndrome all the time. I'm also very young in a very old industry. That's slowly changing though.'



HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DOG — STEP BY STEP

1. Make it fun! Figure out what motivates your dog, and use it. Training should be about play and enjoyment for both of you, and you'll get much more valuable results that way.

2. Set yourself a goal, but don't worry if you don't always get there. The learning process is just as important! For me, taking time to train is about working your dog's brain, building new skills and (most importantly in my opinion) building a really lovely, trusting relationship.

3. Work with your dog. If they're not getting something, make it slightly easier and more manageable for where they're at and work up from there. There's no point in both of you getting more and more frustrated – just be patient and understanding and you'll both feel better for it, learning more effectively in the long run.

4. Little and often. For most dog parents, the best training happens in small, regular sessions. This can be as short as the time it takes for the kettle to boil or your toast to pop up. Remember that training is happening all the time, so you might as well implement it in everyday life rather than setting unrealistic goals each day.

5. Don't be afraid to call in a professional. Whether you're a complete novice or an experienced dog parent, there will always be something new to learn. Dog trainers and behaviourists exist for a reason, so don't ever feel like you've failed if you need to learn from one! We don't bite, promise.

@huxleyhooch



TRAINING



► 'This past January, suddenly I started getting loads of new clients – enough to pay the bills and live the lifestyle I want. But then the crisis hit, and I was like, "Oh god, I've just started smashing it. This is a fucking nightmare." And then I realised

that a lot of the industry is moving a bit digitally anyway and a lot of what I do is consultation-based, so actually there's a fair amount I can do just chatting over a video call.'



KEEPING IT POSITIVE



'There are some old-school styles of training, like making the dog fear you to respect you. You know Cesar Millan, the 'dog whisperer' on TV? A lot of his methods were really damaging. For a whole load of us, his name is one we don't use! Positive training is the thing: training your dog without fear or intimidation. It's one of the least aversive methods possible; trust-based rather

than saying, "I am your ruler, I'm dominant and you will listen to what I say or you might get hit or poked". We want to train because they want to, because it's fun for them, because they're just as valuable as we are, basically. We get called 'cookie pushers' in the industry because we do a lot with treats. But even aggressive dogs can be trained to be non-aggressive, without fear. And we're proving that.'



ADOPT PRODUCTIVE PRACTICES

The **process of getting ready** automatically makes me feel more productive, regardless of what I'm doing with my day. This is usually just making sure I get dressed (even if it's just fresh joggers!) and doing my skincare routine.

I've made a **daily to-do list** for as long as I can remember. I only ever set myself five key things to get through, as any more makes my brain implode (there's science in there, I think), but

I can always add to this when I'm finished or if I have the time or brain power.

The 9-5 model has never worked for me and leads to procrastination. Instead, I'll **decide how many hours I want to work**, then spread them throughout the day depending on when I'm feeling the most focused or when I want to spend time with Hux!

I set **three times during the day to check email**. We've

become so used to instant information that sometimes we forget we're human. Setting boundaries has helped to feel less pressured.

It's important to **be adaptable and flexible**. Adjust your list of priorities to make breathing space for added stress and allow yourself breaks, pep talks and Tiger King if that's what you need. Spending time in nature is non-negotiable for me and has a massive effect on my work drive and mood.



ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo, Grace Lee.

ATHENS



DOWNTIME



STUDIO



Stefani Stoyanof
JEWELLERY DESIGNER

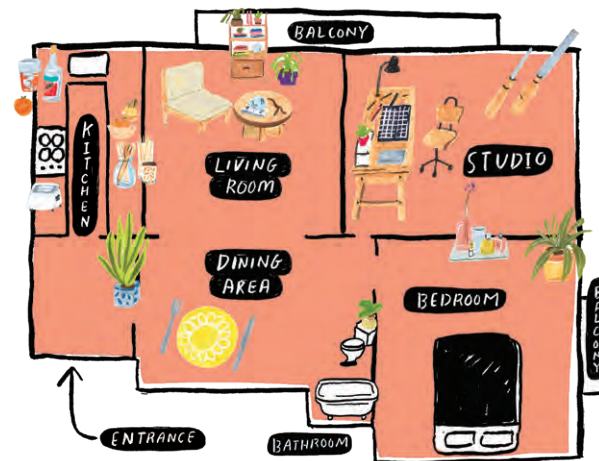
WORKSPACE



► 'I'm self-taught – I took silversmith classes for fun, to start, and watched a lot of YouTube videos. I wanted to create jewellery

you can wear everyday and that becomes your second skin. You take it with you on your adventures, whether you're

travelling or swimming or going to work. And I loved the idea of swimming to the moon – it's magical.'



► 'I'm very into natural oils and taking care of my face and skin, so I usually spend 20 minutes having a mini gua sha facial before I head to the bench to work. That's my favourite time of day, when I'm at the bench, where I'll work on assembling

pieces that have come back from the casting studio or carve new pieces using wax. Since the casting studio has been shut down and production has halted, I've been carving everyday – which is what I love most about the process, anyway!'

Make time each day for self care



SELF-CARE

A DAY IN THE LIFE

I wake up and open all the blinds and windows to get fresh spring air flowing in. I'll make breakfast – usually porridge with bananas, nuts, and maple syrup – and sit down for an hour while eating, drinking coffee and responding to customer emails. Then I'll head to the bench to work, which could keep me busy anywhere from one to three hours.

My husband normally cooks lunch, then I'll sit on the balcony if it's sunny and warm, or in the living room reading my book and drinking afternoon tea. Post-lunch, I'll head back

to the bench and carve more or sketch ideas in my sketchbook – it keeps my wild imagination organised and tamed.

In the evening I'll work out in our living area for 40 minutes, then talk on the phone with family and friends. Happy hour has become a daily ritual, right when the sun is setting. The bartender (my husband) will whip up some negronis, then we'll cook dinner – lately we've been really into making gnocchi from scratch (recipe p93). Finally, it's shower, movies on the sofa, then drifting away in bed.

► 'My workout routine usually includes a warm-up, then online HIIT videos from trainers I've come to love in recent years, finishing with a cool-down. I also try and jog outside every other day, or – and I absolutely hate this but I will force myself to do it – run up and down the stairs in our building. It's death. Mondays, Wednesdays and

Fridays are abs and legs/glutes days. Tuesdays and Thursdays are arms and jogging. Saturdays are also jogging days, and maybe abs. I was a competitive swimmer all through high school and I love every and all water sports. I rarely go to the gym because I actually find it quite boring, but I'd sometimes do a couple of pilates classes each month.'

PHOTOGRAPHER: Marco Arguella. ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo, Han Valentine, Grace Lee.



'Adapting to the lockdown has thankfully been a fairly easy transition, since my daily routine pre-quarantine already reflected a slow lifestyle.'



HOW I SPEND MY TIME:

1. Making something decorative for the house using moulding clay. I've been making jewelry dishes, of course.
2. Blind contour drawing, or upholstering furniture with a staple gun and recycled fabric.
3. Planting flowers or herbs – perfect timing for spring.
4. Watching a new genre of film; right now I'm enjoying French New Wave.
5. Having an at-home spa day: facial, manicure, pedicure. Even better is having someone around that's willing to give you a 30-minute massage!

► 'What keeps me sane during this time is keeping my mind active and occupied on creative projects. Designing jewelry has always been the perfect way for me to express my creativity. In the last month, I've spent a lot more time designing and creating new pieces or reinventing old ones. It's important to let your imagination run wild.'



swimtothemoonjewelry.com / @swimtothemoonjewelry

ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo.

HOMEMADE GNOCCHI

I like to use red-skinned potatoes for this, but any kind works well.

Serves 4-6

½ kg potatoes, skin on
200g plain (all-purpose) flour, plus extra

1. Put the potatoes in a pot and cover with water, season well with salt and bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered for about 20 minutes, or until all of the potatoes are cooked through.
2. Drain and leave to cool for no more than 2 minutes. Carefully pull off and discard the skins.
3. Mash the potatoes in a bowl and, while they're still warm, start adding the flour, very slowly – about a ¼ cup at a time. (The less flour you use the better.) Once it comes into a malleable dough, divide it into four portions.



4. Take each portion and roll out on a floured surface into a long snake about 1½ cm thick. Cut into even, bite-size dumplings, and place spaced out on a floured surface. Press each one with the back of a fork to create little ridges. The gnocchi will keep overnight in the fridge, or frozen for up to 3 weeks (just dust well with flour first to stop them sticking together).
5. To cook, bring a pot of salted water to a boil and drop in as many gnocchi as can fit in a single layer. They only take about 1 minute to cook – as soon as they rise to the surface remove with a slotted spoon. Divide between plates and serve with your choice of sauce.

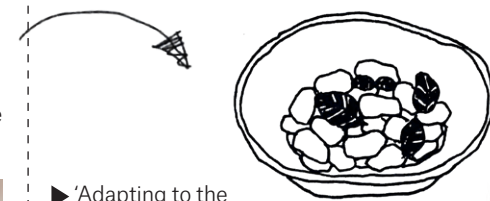
CLASSIC NEGRONI

You can vary your liquor ratios according to your preferences.

Serves 1

30ml gin
30ml sweet vermouth
30ml Campari

1. Fill a mixing glass with ice and add all three spirits. Stir well until chilled. Strain into a glass over ice and garnish with an orange twist.



► 'Adapting to the lockdown has thankfully been a fairly easy transition, since my daily routine pre-quarantine already reflected a slow lifestyle. I go to the farmer's market and supermarket once a week, I'm lucky enough to work from my home studio and, excluding the casting studio which is shut down, all my other local vendors are able to deliver products to my house via courier. The most terrifying thing for me involves panic over my e-shop sales and wholesale accounts. But you can only try and stay positive and keep doing what you can do make your small business survive. I remain hopeful.'



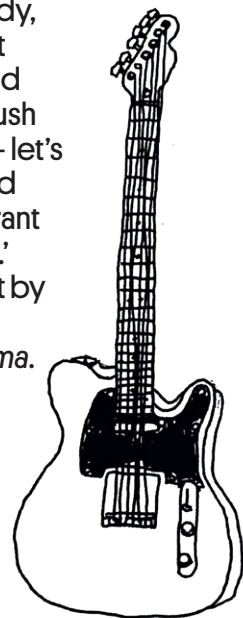
MELBOURNE

RESTAURANT CHECK-IN



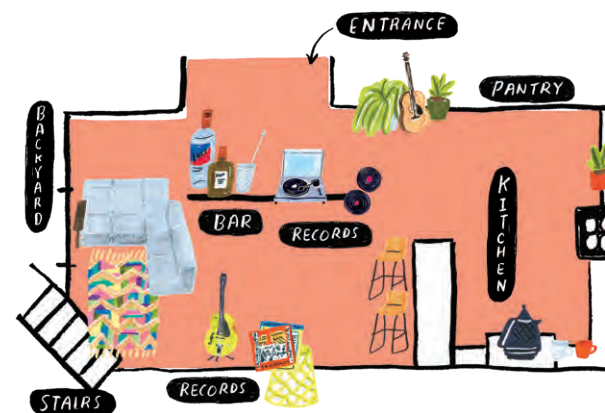
Aaron Turner
RESTAURATEUR + CHEF

Aaron Turner is one of Australia's most celebrated chefs and the brains behind Igny and Hot Chicken Project. His day-to-day lockdown life is far from gentle – he's opening Tacos y Liquor, a tiny 'stationary taco truck' in Geelong, which is where we caught up with him. 'It's the weirdest feeling in the world,' he says. 'The taco shop was on its way and we'd paid for a lot of things already, so we thought "Why not?" and decided to push ahead with it – let's see if we could open a restaurant in a pandemic.' Here, he's shot by his neighbour @julian_kingma.



► 'The space is on the same street that the Hot Chicken Project is on. It's a tiny corner spot that gets all the morning and afternoon

light. It used to be a cocktail bar and the lady that owned it had a young family, so we bought it off her and started renovating it.'



AARON'S EMPIRE

1. IGNY

Ryan Place, Geelong
VIC, 3220.
Australia
@restaurantigny

2. Hot Chicken Project

84a Little Malop St,
Geelong VIC, 3220.
Australia
@thehotchickenproject



COCKTAIL HOUR



TUNES

► 'I've always made music and played in bands. I've got a few guitars – two Gretsch Streamliners, a Stratocaster and an LTD which is a metal guitar. I've also got about 600-odd records at last count. My main genre, I guess, would be the Californian punk I grew up on – I still love that. But really, I like everything from Norwegian black metal to Willie Nelson.'



PHOTOGRAPHER: Julian Kingma. ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo, Han Valentine, Grace Lee.

RECIPE TESTING



'They say LA's got better tacos than Mexico – and there's a lot of good stuff there. My partner is American and we spent a lot of time over there. It's something that's done well. But there's not that much of it here, not on that street-level sort of vibe. It did have its day in Australia, probably five years ago, when a lot of Mexican restaurants opened, taking from Tex-Mex and traditional stuff – but we just wanted proper street tacos.'

PORK BELLY TOSTADAS

Serves 4

1.5kg pork belly, skin scored
1 tablespoon salt flakes

Red salsa

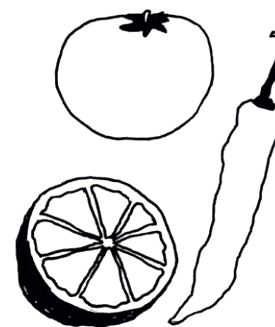
2 ripe tomatoes, chopped into chunks
1 garlic clove, minced
1 long red chilli, finely chopped
½ small onion, finely chopped
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
Juice of 1 lime

To serve

8 tostadas
Tajin seasoning
1 lime, cut into quarters
30g fresh coriander
Hot sauce (optional)

1. Rub the pork with the salt and let it sit for 1 hour. Rinse and pat dry – the drier the belly, the better the crackle will be.
2. Preheat the oven to 180°C (360°F). Place the pork skin-side down in an unheated, oven-proof griddle pan. Place over a low heat, then slowly bring temperature up to high.

It's always tostada time



'Tacos y Liquor is tiny and has a really small kitchen, but you can do a lot of tacos out of a small kitchen. And the love of street tacos from LA and Mexico – we didn't have anything like that in Geelong.'



3. Once the pork belly is crackling and spitting nicely, transfer the griddle pan to the oven and roast for about 1 hour, or until the belly is golden and cooked through.
4. Remove the pork to a board to cool, but leave the cooking juices and fat in the griddle pan.
5. Place the pan back over a medium heat and add your tostadas to the pork juices. Toast, both sides, until golden and just starting to crisp. Set aside.

6. To make the salsa, combine all the ingredients in a small bowl and season well.
7. To serve, roughly chop or tear the pork belly and season to taste with the salt and Tajin. Squeeze over the lime juice.
8. Let everyone build their tostadas to their liking with the pork belly, salsa and freshly torn coriander. Season with a dash of your favourite hot sauce, if you like an extra kick.

DISCOVERING A LOVE

'When I was 21 I travelled around the world – and at one point I made my way from Houston down into Mexico. I wasn't a chef at that point, I was a graphic designer. But it was on that world trip that I started cooking in Europe, found my love and changed careers. That was an adventure.'

ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo.

Los ANGELES

Roy Werner is a composer working under the alias G.S. Sultan. With an upcoming European tour cancelled because of the pandemic, Roy is at home in LA's Altadena neighbourhood with his photographer wife @maggiehshannon (who shot these photos). He's coping by devoting more attention to →



Roy Werner
MUSIC COMPOSER



MORNING ROUTINE



A DAY IN THE LIFE

We live northeast of the city in a little area called Altadena, more commonly known as Pasadena. It's a little more suburban and very quiet. We've been here almost three years now.

I've been riding my bike a lot, mostly around the Altadena area. It's pretty spaced out and there's not a lot of traffic now, so it feels safe and you can just cruise around and be one with your thoughts and in your own head – without being

hyper-conscious of not getting hit by a car. Getting out on the bike has helped to keep me sane.

We've been pretty explorative with our cooking. We haven't really ordered in any food at all in the past month, so we've been pretty much exclusively cooking and getting a lot of local produce from a CSA (community-supported agriculture). We try to improvise with new techniques.



► 'I grew up in LA in the San Fernando Valley – basically the suburbs of LA. I went to school at UC Davis near Sacramento and was in a new media

studies department, specifically focused on sonic arts with an influence of technology. So, my bachelor's degree is effectively

in experimental composition. Then I met Maggie in New York and lived there for a while and we've since moved back to Los Angeles.'



the minutiae of life. 'It's about dedicating yourself to treating something artfully instead of just utilitarian,' he says. 'Making dinner becomes more of an art than just something that you do for sustenance. The way

we've been living has been more about thinking about the implication of the things we're doing – not necessarily in a political way, but in a peace of mind way; giving things more mental headspace.'



Roy's new album, *Music For a Living Water*, will be released by Orange Milk Records in June.

@nwslimers

PHOTOGRAPHER: Maggie Shannon. ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo, Han Valentine, Grace Lee.

THE MUSIC

1. I'm really dedicated to my music, but I certainly wouldn't say it's my primary source of income. It's beyond a hobby, but it's not financially substantial.

2. Live shows play an important role. Some money comes through sales of tapes, records and physical ephemera, but less so digital downloads; the cheque is a few dollars every few months.

3. Musicians have been creative during lockdown, but I'm not sure how well they have been able to exploit it financially. Mostly I see Twitch or Instagram Live shows with a donation button at the bottom. But I'm hopeful. If this is to continue, and it seems like it will, we'll all have to find a way to work with it.'



► 'My music is principally digitally-based, so I don't need too much space or equipment. Lately, though, I've been working a lot with piano, which has been nice. Something positive that has

come out of the quarantine is that I've had a lot of time sitting at my piano, practising and trying new techniques. I'm definitely leaning into it as a release from whatever's happening around me.'

DOWNTIME



COMPOSING

VARIETY KEEPS IT INTERESTING

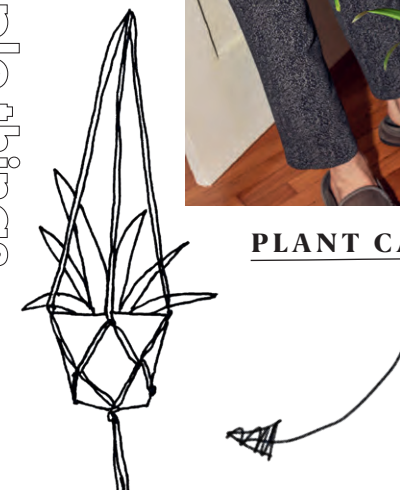
'I work as a freelance art handler for a company that specialises in the shipment of fine art and high value objects. A lot of what I do is packing stuff for shipment, making sure that it gets across the country safely, picking up stuff from galleries and installing hanging works in private collections. It's strange in that you get into a lot of really, really bizarre places that you would otherwise never find yourself in, like the highest wealth apartments in LA or NYC. It's a specialised field that's not necessarily the most difficult craft to wrap your mind around – at a base level it's just packing stuff to make sure it doesn't break in a box. I also sometimes work with Maggie doing photo assistant stuff.'



ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo.



Focus on the simple things



PLANT CARE



In quarantine our work/life balance needs a reshuffle.



► 'With music during quarantine, I've had to almost invert the work and leisure relationship. Something that you once derived a lot of pleasure from in your leisure time becomes the only thing that you can do. You're now spending so much time on it that you have to find a release from it!'



Natalie Jameson YOGA INSTRUCTOR

Natalie Jameson is a yoga and pilates teacher who's been able to continue teaching via online classes during the lockdown. 'My job requires me to give tactile cues and hands-on assists for the client to reach their full potential,' she says. 'So, not being there physically has tested me.' Keeping a healthy diet, a training program and sticking to a routine has helped her to stay sane. 'Once this is all over, my aim is to be so healthy that I'm literally going to run out of here trying to make back all of the stolen time.' Here she's shot by local photographer @fullalove.

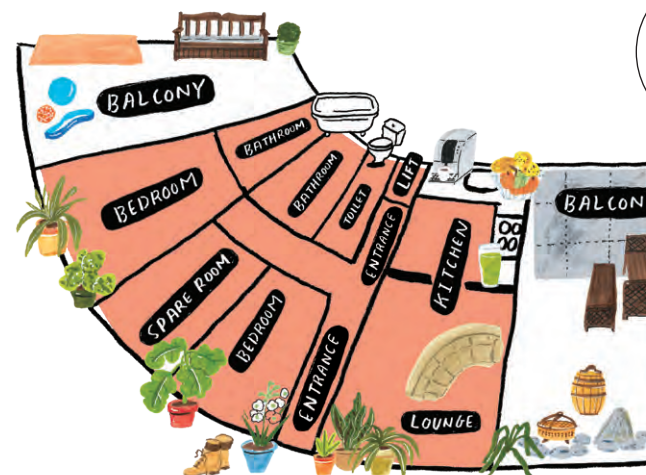


► 'Try to meditate when you first wake up, before coffee or food, and before the rest of the world wakes up! Start with a 10-minute

meditation at first, then work your way up from there. Practice focusing on your breath – it's a great way to train the brain to be still. Don't

worry if you don't think you're very good at it. No one is when they first start (trust me!). Just keep with it, and you'll see progress.'

PHOTOGRAPHER: Luke Fullalove. ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo, Han Valentine, Grace Lee.



A morning routine – and coffee – sets me up for the day.



A DAY IN THE LIFE

7am

Fruit smoothie, coffee and a stretch – every morning.

9am

A self practice, whether that's yoga, pilates, meditation or a workout (we luckily have a Peloton at home!).

10am

Zooming with clients.

12pm

Lunch is salads, a fresh sandwich or leftovers from dinner. I try to be as healthy as I can and limit the amount of gluten, so I'll eat as many greens as possible.

1pm

I'll go through my planned classes for the week. I mostly teach private clients and I need to make sure the workouts of the clients I see multiple times a week are challenging and fun.

2pm

Zooming with clients.



4pm

I'll usually go through another stretch session or join a pilates class – I'm loving Hot Pilates and Sami Clarke's workouts on Instagram. I'll also go through my own live classes for that week – they're always sweaty 30-minute sessions, so they fit in between clients perfectly. It's important to know how a workout feels in your body before you take someone else through it. I'll also try to do two or three 5km runs each week. On these days I'll just have a long stretch.

6pm

Usually dinner – protein, veg and brown rice or pasta. Everyone in the house is quite healthy so it makes life easier! Depending on what day it is there will probably be a glass of wine involved. I try to limit my alcohol intake and keep it for Friday and Saturday nights.

8pm

Time to switch off!

FEELING MOTIVATED

It's really important [and I can't stress this enough] to not be too hard on yourself. None of us have ever gone through something like this and no one knows what's best for someone else.

1. My main tip is **having a routine** to get your day started and feel somewhat normal. I'll always set an alarm, have a shower, get dressed and have my morning coffee on the balcony or in the lounge, which gets me up and running for the day. I make sure I have a lunch break and tea in the afternoon and try to stick to this.

2. I have one day a week where I don't put workout clothes on. It's simple, but **putting on jeans** or a nice



► **ON GETTING ENERGY:** 'I take vitamin B every day, which gives me so much energy and is a vitamin that I don't get from food. It helps me to stay productive and active throughout the day.'

@natjameson

shirt makes a difference, even if you're only going from bedroom to lounge. I'm also grateful for the classes I teach – they've allowed me to create a routine, with set clients; I can plan around those times which has definitely helped keep me sane. I know a lot of people haven't been as lucky, so I'm really thankful.

3. A **healthy diet** and a small amount of exercise each day is key. You literally only need 30 minutes a day and I try to do this outside as often as I can.

4. I also set little personal daily or weekly **goals**. It might be a long-term one or to try something new. Keep yourself busy but know when to switch off – it's totally okay to relax and do nothing!

ILLUSTRATION: Sayuri Nishikubo.



'The other day we potted sunflowers and herbs – the names on the flowerpots are my housemates, as we're having a competition to see whose will grow taller.'



Create a calming space



WANT TO START AN AT-HOME YOGA OR PILATES PRACTICE?

Find a quiet space big enough for you to move around in. You don't necessarily need an expensive yoga mat or a mat at all – an empty space will be fine. You also don't need a beautiful 'zen' space – as long as it's quiet and feels good, it's good enough for a class!

Choose a time of day that works for you – make it your 'yoga time' and try to stick to this. I like doing public classes on a Saturday morning, as that's what I used to do pre-Covid.

Before you run out and buy yoga equipment, have a look around the house first – books for yoga blocks, tea towels for straps, pillows for meditation cushions. For pilates, though, I recommend a small soft ball which costs around £10, and resistance bands for glute exercises – it really intensifies your workout. For weights, you can use tin cans, which I use for arm workouts. Body weight can always be used and is still just as good if none of the above is possible.

Try loads of different teachers, either via Instagram, YouTube or directly through a local studio. Every teacher is so different. Support your local teachers or studios if you can!

Make sure you're aware of any injuries you have. Some online classes might not be best for you and you need to take responsibility for your own body – unless you're taking a private class in which case you just need to tell the teacher.

Allow yourself a 10-minute stretch before and after the class – I always find I never get a good stretch with online classes.

BOTANIC LAB

TAKE FIVE - CBD DROPS



TAKE FIVE is your daily reminder to stop, take a few moments and focus on your own wellbeing.

A premium CBD oil, from the experts at **Botanic Lab**, with zero THC guaranteed.

The botanical alchemists that we are, we've added hemp terpenes including myrcene, limonene and pinene. That means maximum functional benefit in each drop and some wicked flavour notes for you CBD connoisseurs to vibe over.

**GET THE ANTIDOTE
TO MODERN LIFE**

Visit botanic-lab.co.uk



**Botanic
Lab**

@Botaniclab

+ CATALOG

WASTE NOT: From repurposed fashion to recyclable packaging, making greener choices has never looked better. **PLUS:** favourites from Courier's Editor-at-Large, Tatsuo Hino.



**TATSUO'S
TOP PICKS
ON P128**



**DRAV
>>> P120**



**THE WAX APPLE
>>> P125**



**BOLD DOTS
>>> P127**

**CLICK AND GROW
>>> P130**



**FLOCK
>>> P119**



**FOEKJE FLEURES
>>> P118**



**GRL AND CO.
>>> P116**



**ONE THING
>>> P123**

FOR THE HOME

It's the best place to be right now, so elevate your space with functional pieces that spark joy, too – from handcrafted textiles and sustainable storage, to a reusable candle and cleaner cookware.



BE-POLES

FROM \$9

With every fold and crinkle these **wax paper bags** accrue character over time. A storage solution that works in any room. @bepoles



DRIADE X FAYE TOOGOOD €410

Avant-garde London artist Faye Toogood worked with Italian design house Driade to create this joyfully curvy **Roly-Poly chair**. @driade_it



CASE STUDIO X JEAN JULLIEN €75

Case Studio collaborates with artists for limited-edition pieces; graphic artist Jean Jullien's fish **bowl** is an understated highlight. @case_studio



MONTA MONTA

£22

Antioxidant **hand wash** made by this East London sustainable skincare brand – contains parsley seed, basil and black pepper. @montamonta_



CARAWAY

\$395

Caraway's cookware is non-toxic – free of harmful chemicals that could leach into food – and uses a mineral-based, non-stick ceramic coating. It's also beautifully designed; this stylish **cookware set** includes a storage system for pans and lids, and comes in five pleasingly dusky shades. @caraway_home



GRL AND CO.

\$45

Hailing from Queens, New York, design studio Grl&Co make artworks with simple typographic statements that champion equality and representation. This **hand-sewn cotton/muslin banner**, with hand-cut felt letters, brings a pop of positivity to any wall. The vibes that we all need right now. @grland.co



DEJA

\$39

This **cotton pillowcase** has multiple layers that can be easily flipped, giving eight nights of clean sleep with less laundry hassle. @getdeja



BIPPY

\$14 FOR 8

Bippy aims to wipe out environmental damage done by regular **toilet paper** – its bamboo version is soft, strong and biodegradable. @heybippy



COFFEE SUPREME

\$22.50

Brandish your brew affiliation with this Coffee Supreme stacker **mug**. Sold individually, so collect and stack at will. @coffee_supreme

THE HANDWOVEN
NATURE OF THESE
MOROCCAN RUGS
CREATES VARIATIONS
IN THE PATTERNS
AND COLOURS, SO
EACH ONE IS UNIQUE



BENI RUGS

FROM \$345

Beautiful **rugs** made to order in the Atlas Mountains, from 100% natural wool. This Angles design combines contemporary lines with desert-inspired hues. @beni_rugs



LICK

£38 FOR 2.5L

Makeovers made easy: durable **paint** in decadent shades with peel-and-stick samples. @lickhome



ESPELMA

£110

Each unique, hand-blown Murano glass jar holds a refillable **scentsless candle**. @espelmacandles



FOEKJES FLEURES £16.90

Plastic bottle refills are all well and good, but Bubble Buddy goes the extra mile. The **soap dish** is made from recycled plastic waste, keeps bar soap dry, and the grater in the lid lets you flake the soap into suds for dishes and laundry. Better for the planet, and more satisfying to use than liquid soap. @foekje_fleur



ELLA HOOKWAY £65

London artist Ella Hookway creates clean, functional ceramics, like this **face vase**. Painted by hand, each piece is one of a kind. @ellahookway



THE SILL \$22

Creating an indoor Eden is easy with The Sill's **plants and garden supplies** such as this handy organic Potting Mix and Lava Rocks kit. @thesill



PRIMARY GOODS \$299

Primary's temp-controlled **comforter** is made from all-natural materials and promises to keep you cosy all night, every night. @beprimary



DÉSIRÉE MALESSA NEST \$TBC

A response to nomadic modern living, **NEST (Nomadic Essentials for Simpler Transitions)** is a furniture set that makes moving easier for urbanites. This bed, desk and shelf can be packed up into one easily transportable crate. Planned for release once the manufacturer is confirmed: watch this space. @malessa.studio

EAT + DRINK

Nourishment for mind and body, from coffee fix to cocktail hour: keto treats and cannabis sweets; spirits with or without the booze; the ultimate iced tea; and cookbooks to revolutionise your routine.



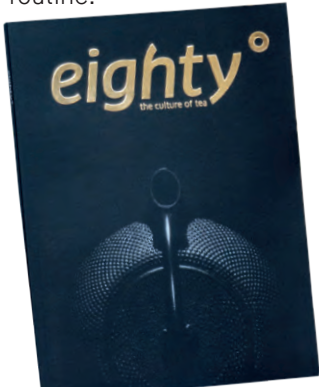
FLOCK \$3 PER BAG

Crispy chicken skin is transformed into this high-protein, **keto-friendly snack** – all the crunch of a potato crisp without the carbs. @flock.foods



WOKEN \$6.75 (10 CAPSULES)

Woken's mission is to wake people up with **compostable espresso pods**. Its medium-bodied Arabica roast should help. @wokencoffee



EIGHTY DEGREES MAGAZINE €15

The history of tea is rich and storied, inspiring this UK **magazine**, infused with the rituals and everyday joys. Issue three out now. @readeighty



VINA £2.79 EACH

While those in the know have long embraced the benefits of **apple cider vinegar** – believed to aid digestion and improve gut health – Vina's sparkling versions are here to make it more palatable. Made with fresh fruit and zero artificial sweeteners, flavours include orange turmeric and cherry rooibos. @vinaacv



TRUE GUM £14 FOR SIX

All natural and vegan, this greener **chewing gum** from Copenhagen is available in fresh flavours such as mint and ginger-turmeric. @truegum

MICROPLASTICS USED IN REGULAR GUM STICK AROUND FOREVER – TRUE GUM USES CHICLE, A TREE SAP WHICH IS FULLY BIODEGRADABLE



CALENO £24.99

Bottling a tropical infusion of juniper, citrus and spice botanicals brings all-important zest and zing to this **non-alcoholic spirit**. @calenodrinks



JAPANESE FOOD MADE EASY
BY AYA NISHIMURA £14.99

Whether ramen or sushi, dashi broth or tonkatsu sauce, this **recipe book** offers an approachable guide to Japanese classics. @ayamomochan



PARTAKE FROM \$14.99

Gluten-free, vegan, and packed with whole foods, these **double chocolate cookies** are a moreish indulgence with extra goodness. @partakefoods



HUSKEE FROM £13.99

HuskeeCup takes **reusable mugs** one step further – their stylish version is made from the waste coffee husk left over after milling. @huskeecup



MAEV \$24

Maev's raw, nutrient-dense **dog foods** are available on subscription and include this tasty and immunity-boosting bone broth. @meetmaev



GNISTA €21

This Swedish **non-alcoholic spirit** serves up an intense yet balanced blend of wormwood, green herbs and immunity-boosting bone broth. @gnistaspirits



DRAV FROM £1.75

Québec-based craft brewery Drav aims to bring a fresh and approachable twist to independent beers, with a hoppy, flavour-forward selection of **IPA, ISA, APA and stout**. Montreal-based creative studio Wedge created the eye-catching cans, its retro vibe designed to keep in tune with emerging culture. @drav.chx



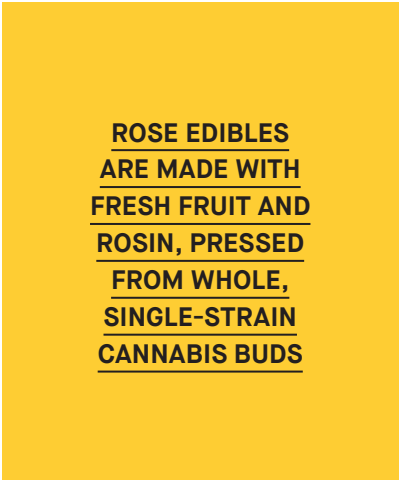
UNA LOU ROSÉ \$40 FOR A BOX OF 4

Summer beckons with this **canned rosé** from Andrew Mariani, co-owner of northern California's Scribe winery, and his wife Lia. Named for their daughter, Una Lou is a celebration, with notes of white peach, jasmine, and wild strawberry. Chill a four-pack for that first post-lockdown picnic. @unalourose



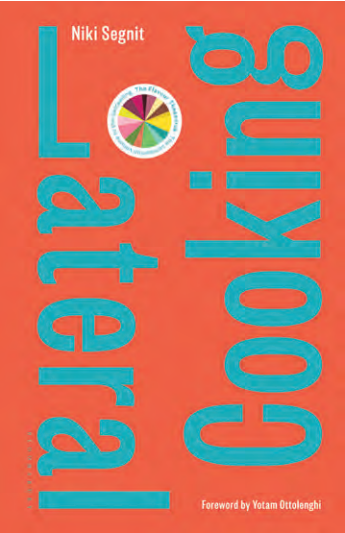
ROSE FROM \$22

A more refined take on **cannabis-infused treats**, these seasonally flavoured turkish delight edibles offer a sweet high. @rose_losangeles



KOLLO \$39 (CASE OF 6)

Kollo's luxury **cold-brew iced tea** is made in Los Angeles from organic, single-source tea leaves, free of preservatives and flavourings. @kollo



LATERAL COOKING
BY NIKI SEGINIT £35

Niki Segnit's new **cookbook** takes 12 basic culinary categories then expands them with clever tweaks, for intuitive cooking. @nikisegnit



MARK T WENDELL \$18 PER 8OZ

The brand's signature black tea has a delicate, smoky flavour. Follow the steps on the tin to get the best from each infusion. @marktwendelltea



TONKOTSU £6.95

Japanese chilli oil from a beloved UK ramen restaurant; the umami flavour gets an extra kick from fermented scotch bonnets. tonkotsu.co.uk

BEAUTY + SELF

Simplify skincare and unwind the mind with bespoke facial serums, body-healing soaks and lotions, kinder menstrual care, a comb to last the distance, and oils applied inside and out for much needed calm.



BIRTHDATE CANDLES \$38

Know thyself in style: every date has its own **candle** with a unique personalised scent, character profile, and more. @birthdatecandles



ANATOMÉ \$35

Apply this **blend of oils** and Japanese seaweed to the temples before bed – natural sedative properties promote a deeper sleep. @anatomelondon



FORGO £38 FOR THE STARTER KIT

Named for the very notion 'to do without', Forgo's mission is to reduce waste and live more sustainably. They've created a **sustainable hand wash**, delivered in recyclable sachets of powder which, when added to water in their reusable glass bottle, transforms into a foaming liquid soap. @forgoessentials



3RD RITUAL \$32

A sumptuous **body lotion** from this US collective, with essential oils, activated charcoal, and moonstone extract for groundedness. @3rdritual



BOIE BODY SCRUBBER \$10

Buff skin with this durable, self-cleaning **body scrubber** made from antimicrobial, thermoplastic rubber in a range of colours. @boieusa



ONE THING FROM £4

South Korean skincare is renowned for pushing the boundaries, yet this brand strips things right back. As per the name each One Thing **facial treatment** features a single ingredient – a pure, high-grade plant extract – for a specific intention, from calming troubled skin to boosting hydration. @onething_official



EBI \$45

Gentle **postpartum bath herbs** for new mothers heal and repair tissue and restore balance. @ebi.kit



PRIMA \$45

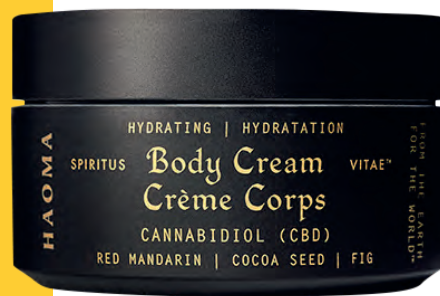
Made in California, these CBD **supplements** boost focus and ease stress, for better balance. @prima



CROWN AFFAIR \$36

Keep hair tangle-free and give the scalp a root-nourishing massage with this **wide-tooth comb**. Hand-carved in Switzerland from robust, plant-based acetate, it's made to last. @crownaffair

EVERY PURCHASE
FROM HAOMA
DIRECTLY PLANTS
A TREE THROUGH
ITS PARTNERSHIP
WITH TREES.ORG



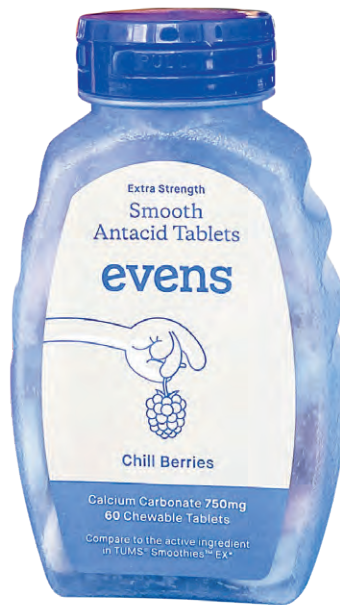
HAOMA \$100

Slather skin with this **body cream** from Haoma's Cannabidiol Collection – fig, red mandarin, cocoa seed, plus a boost of sativa CBD. @haoma.earth



TREATY \$129

A therapeutic **oral formula** to support the body after exertion. Aromatic extracts instantly invigorate while CBD eases inflammation. @ourtreaty



EVENS FROM \$3

Keep heartburn at bay with Evens' **antacid remedies** – they're FDA-approved and available on a regular subscription, as needed. @evens



ATTOLA FROM \$35

Through thorough but simple at-home analysis, Atolla creates a **personalised facial serum** to tackle individual skin needs. @atollaskinlab

BILLIE FROM \$9

Billie's **shaving subscription** delivers razors on the regular, while the slick handle comes in dynamic colours (even glow-in-the-dark). @billie



YONI CHAMPIONS
ORGANIC COTTON –
IT'S FREE OF TOXIC
PESTICIDES, USES
91% LESS WATER TO
GROW, AND CREATES
BETTER CONDITIONS
FOR FARMERS



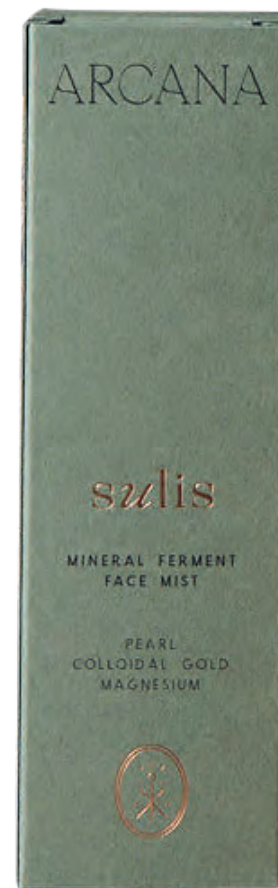
YONI FROM €3.99

Dutch brand Yoni has a valuable mission: to make periods 'free of plastic, chemicals, and shame'. Their **tampons, pads and pantyliners** are made from 100% organic cotton, making them fully biodegradable – but just as importantly they're comfortable, breathable, and provide total protection. @yoni.care



SESSION SKIN £17

A cult **primer** designed to combat the impurities that burden pores during exercise, while giving complexions a smooth, soft-filter finish. @session



ARCANA

Ecology and skincare unite in this range of high-quality, **plant-lead skincare**. Ingredients are harvested via biodynamic farming or from the wilds of the brand's native Scotland, for serums, oils and sprays which hydrate and regenerate skin at a cellular level. @arcana_skin



£72 (MIST), £75 (OIL)



AYOND \$110

Ayond takes tips from the desert for remedies that protect skin from environmental stressors; the **Taos Blue day cream** uses antioxidant-rich prickly pear, rock rose, and aloe. @_ayond_



HENRY WILSON STUDIO £102

This elegant **oil burner** doubles as an 'objet d'art'. Designed by Studio Henry Wilson for Australian skincare brand Aesop, it's crafted entirely from solid brass. @studiohenrywilson



WOODEN SPOON HERBS \$36 EACH

Plant-based remedies for everyday wellness, inspired by the company founder's Appalachian roots. These **tinctures** help to enhance mood and restore balance. @woodenspoonherbs



THE WAX APPLE MASSAGER FROM \$25

LA-based curator Juliana Hong regularly joins her grandmother in Taiwan to hunt for unique, well-crafted products. These **massage tools**, made from robust sandalwood or animal horn, not only roll away knots and worries but look beautiful in the home. @the_wax_apple

WEAR + CARRY

Keep it comfortable with terry towel attire and cotton-heavy outerwear, New York hoodies and tees that empower, bold print shirts to stand out in, zero-waste bags from Mexico, and the lavender jumpsuit of dreams.



OAS €99.90

Swedish resort brand OAS's terracotta terry towel **Cuba shirt** is the top choice after a dip in the pool or splash in the sea. @oascompany



ISTO €25

Lisbon-based luxury brand ISTO leaves nothing behind – its Japanese denim **tote bag** is made with excess fabric or unsold stock. @isto.pt



JAKHU £250

From this London-based studio come these silver Muyu **earrings**, handcrafted in Peru using traditional techniques. @jakhu_studio



MACHINE
WASHABLE
COTTON

OFFHOURS X GOSSAMER \$345

Styling itself as 'inactive-wear for being indoors', this Offhours collaboration with cannabis culture magazine Gossamer couldn't be more fitting. Their **green unisex Dogwalker housecoat** is a layer of soft, quality cottons that keep things warm but light. The cozy embrace a late-night walk demands. @offhours.co



RHONE \$78

The US premium activewear brand's **versatility shorts** combine comfort and breathability with a quick drying fabric to handle any workout. @rhone

THE INVISIBLE
ZIPPERED
POCKET KEEPS
KEYS AND CARDS
SAFELY STASHED
DURING EVEN
FAST-PACED
SPORTS



TELFAR \$346

Stay warm in style with this ribbed-knit **ski mask** – a clever use of mesh shapes the opening in the New York brand's T-shaped logo. @telfarglobal



PYER MOSS \$950

Stand out in this bold yellow cropped **cotton-blend puffer** – the bungee drawcords and flap pockets keep the look tucked in. @pyermoss



ASHYA \$695

Pronounced 'agh-shya', this New York design label brings utility and luxury to its unisex travel accessories. Their **Cedar Valley Multi-Green Viper belt bag** is high-end style in the crocodile-printed cow leather and gold-plating, while the handy removable pockets speaks to thoughtful functionality. @ashya.co



BOLD DOTS \$718

Bold Dots' slick eyewear was founded by designer Akshar H Patel who aims to bring a touch of design elements from his Indian heritage to his handmade, high-quality frames. The **Madison** elevates the classic round-frame look with subtle speckles of colour and just the right amount of edge. @bold.dots



MAYBE TODAY NYC \$75

This Spring Rose heavy cotton **hoodie** speaks to the Brooklyn label's ethos, to support and inspire artists and entrepreneurs. @maybetodaynyc



MANUAL PHOTO \$35

Revel in the analogue with this **Smile T-shirt**, emblazoned with the New York film photography company's pithy call to action. @manual_nyc

ON MY WATCH

COURIER'S EDITOR-AT-LARGE
TATSUO HINO ROUNDS UP
PRODUCTS THAT HAVE
CAUGHT HIS EYE

VINTAGE
WEAR
MADE NEW



+ BABETT

'Hailing from Copenhagen, BABETT creates handmade, one-of-a-kind attire, mostly made from vintage fabrics which have their own stories from the past, but are repurposed to live in the now.' @babett_shop

+ ZUCCA X OUTDOOR PRODUCTS DAY PACK

'Zucca champions understated aesthetics in this collaboration with Outdoor Products. Their day bag is very light with a unique colour and matte texture, and uses Konbu water repellent nylon, so it can be thrown into laundry machine – it's so easy to care for.' @zucca_official

+ MARVIN

'This new LA style brand will make its debut in June with a punk rock messianic vision for the future by the founder and visionary of Marvin Jarette Scott, who founded RayGun Magazine and Nylon Magazine. The brand to watch out for.' @marvinjarrett

+ COLETTE MON AMOUR FILM

'An hour-long documentary film on what went on behind the most iconic Parisian powerhouse, Colette. I'm not sure what their screening plans are, but it is an amazing, very emotional film loaded with personal anecdotes and human-touch stories.' @colette_mon_amour

+ CATHRI

'A relaxed, nostalgic collaborative brand with Japanese lifestyle company BEAMS, and Kurume Kasuri [an indigo cotton textile] which has been used more than 200 years – the technique is acknowledged as an important and intangible Japanese cultural asset. Cathri will be a perfect companion for high summer.' @cathri_official



DAILY PAPER

£36

The Amsterdam fashion and lifestyle brand's **keychain bag** delivers extra storage and a welcome pop of colour on any belt loop. @dailypaper



E.L.V.

£350

East London's sustainable denim brand creates these two-toned, **high-waist jeans** from repurposed and vintage materials. @elvdenim



HUMAN BY NATURE

\$718

Nostalgia meets new, and American concepts merge with themes from designer John Lehman's Asian upbringing. HBN encapsulates the best of both worlds – case in point, this Tokyo Athletic Club Blue WW2 **Camo Jersey**, the classic football shirt given a contemporary street-style twist. @humanbynaturehbn



INFINITY PILLOW

£39.99

A compact, versatile **travel pillow** from Amsterdam studio BCXSY that unfurls into all manner of supportive iterations. @infinitypillow



MR WOOD

£120

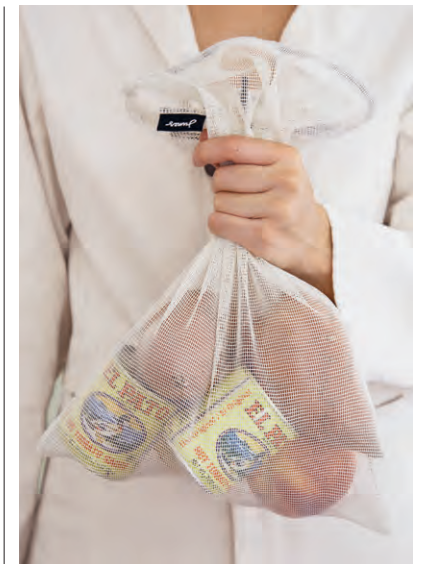
Each **shirt** from this London designer is a numbered limited edition – their flamingo print (one of only 84) is the pick for summer. @mrwoodlondon



MAGGIE MARILYN

\$291

This sustainable luxury brand blends feminine and masculine with their **Bite The Bullet Jumpsuit** in organic cotton denim. @maggiemarilyn



JUNES

\$14 FOR 3

This **zero-waste carry-all** is made by a women's sewing co-operative in Mexico and can be used for just about anything. @junesbags



MALLE

£139

Vintage motorcycle enthusiasts create gear for travelling in style, and their unisex **merino jumper** is both classic and utilitarian. @mallelondon



L'ENCHANTEUR

\$150

This **Velvet Brimless Wpe Cap** hails from a Brooklyn design house that looks to science and magic for unique inspiration. @l_enchanteur

FOR FUN

Ways to keep boredom at bay – pick up knitting, get into gardening, screen-free fun for the kids, and a history lesson in jigsaw form.



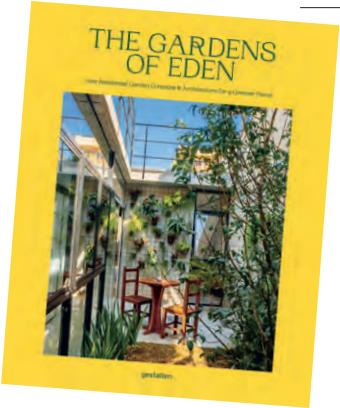
DAVE BUONAGUIDI £360

Bold new pieces from East-London artist Dave Buonaguidi feature screen printed statements on **one-off vintage maps** of the solar system – all finished off with a flourish of glow-in-the-dark ink. Available exclusively from printclublondon.com @printclublondon



WOOL AND THE GANG £58

Time to learn a new skill – Wool and The Gang's **knitting beginner kit** has all the tools and tips needed to make your own blanket. Plus live workshops on its Instagram. @woolandthegang



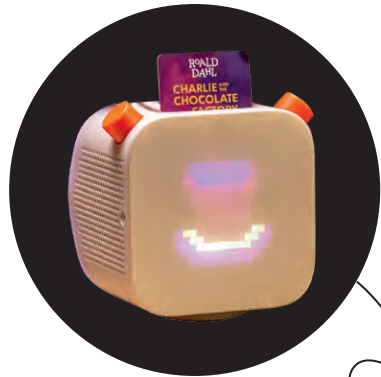
THE GARDENS OF EDEN €39.90

A **book** that celebrates urban green spaces and imaginative residential gardens. @gestalten



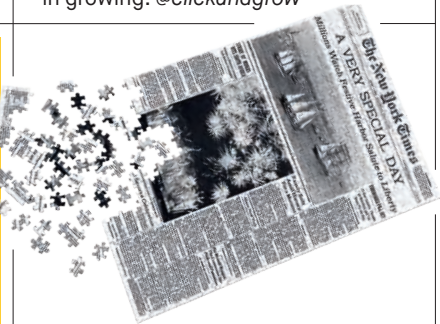
CLICK AND GROW FROM €99.95

Smart gardens that take care of all the watering, light and nutrients, so even garden neophytes can find joy in growing. @clickandgrow



YOTO £79.99

Kids can access stories and music through loaded slot cards in this innovative **screen-free entertainment system**, by London tech start-up Yoto and Pentagram design. @yotoplay



UNCOMMON GOODS £40.49

This site creates a **jigsaw puzzle** of any New York Times front page since 1851 – a clever gift to commemorate a special date. @uncommongoods

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