

# How to be a MUMMPRENEUR

If you have a business idea brewing away, LAUREN MONAGHAN finds this advice

If becoming a mummy has got your creative and business juices flowing, you're not alone! Many mums have found inspiration, put in the hard yards and managed to work their way to mumpreneur success – just like the wonder-women finalists in PP's inaugural Mumpreneur of the Year Awards.

These entrepreneurial mums are joining a growing number of business-minded women, with the Australian Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry reporting that the number of women starting up their own businesses has doubled in recent years. Girl power!

Setting up your own business has a lot of appeal, with working from home, flexibility and getting to do something you truly love being big drawcards. But it's also tough going, involving a lot of time and potentially a lot of money, with a large percentage of small businesses folding in the first few years. It takes persistence, passion and a lot of positivity to succeed, so here a few tips to help you on your way.

## SO, YOU'VE GOT AN IDEA?

The first step to deciding whether your dream can become a reality is research.

"Before jumping into business, you need to conduct research into whether the product or service you want to offer is needed, who your target market is and how much they'll pay for it," says Alli Price, who runs Motivating Mum ([www.motivatingmum.com](http://www.motivatingmum.com)), a website and events service offering support and advice to mums in – or wanting to be in – business across Australia.

It's also important to make sure you have the time, money and energy to dedicate to your business, which Alli says can't be underestimated. "Yes, it's flexible, but you may be working until 12am most nights for three years or more before turning a profit."



**Kate Sutton**, mum to Lulu, nine, and Cam, four. Designer, jeweller and director of Uberkate ([www.uberkate.com.au](http://www.uberkate.com.au)), a family owned and run jewellery design studio.



**Elise Easdown**, mum to Julius, three, and Charlotte, two. Owner and managing director of What's On 4 Australia online directories ([www.whatson4.com.au](http://www.whatson4.com.au)).

To help get into the mumpreneur mindset and prepare for the road ahead, you may want to attend a relevant course or seminar. Otherwise, "try and read a business article or blog post a day," Alli recommends.

Courses and online reading can help when it comes to the practical aspects of going into business, but it can also be a good idea to find a mentor – another mumpreneur or person running a business who has travelled a road similar to the one you're about to. Many avenues may need investigating, from legal considerations surrounding your product or service (think licenses, product safety requirements, registering your business) to the practical aspects (such as how and where your product will be produced). Someone who's been there, done that can be a great help!

## TAKING FLIGHT

When you've got a product or service to sell and are gearing up to spread the word, make sure you've done some careful planning. "Don't

get a business card, logo or website designed until you have your brand developed," Alli advises. "Work out how your target market needs to feel about your business – mine are passionate, friendly, informal and honest – and then develop your marketing from there."

When you're ready to reach out, "get out and network" are Alli's wise words. "You might feel you don't have the time or energy, but networking is amazing for getting customers, generating word-of-mouth via people you meet, picking up tips for business, and gaining motivation and inspiration by getting out of the house and interacting with like-minded people." Networking can also be done online through forums, blogs and professional networking sites such as LinkedIn.

To help promote your product or service, you may start by offering free trials or discounts to friends, and let the word spread from there. Markets, flyer drops, press releases to local media and expos are all utilised by up-and-coming mumpreneurs



# PRACTICAL PARENTING MUMPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

# EUR

getting it off the ground

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**FINALIST #3**  
**Carrie Felton**, mum to Charlie, 17, Harry, 14, and Dugald, 12. Owner and CEO of Stuck on You ([www.stuckonyou.com.au](http://www.stuckonyou.com.au)), as well as Penny Scallan Design and Golly Gosh.



**FINALIST #4**  
**Alison Stephenson**, mum to Matilda, two. Runs Room for Chocolate ([www.roomforchocolate.com](http://www.roomforchocolate.com)), a business offering personalised chocolates and sweets.



**FINALIST #5**  
**Nikki Hills**, mum to Toby, 11, Emma, eight, and Abby, six. Noah, who died after Emma was born, would be 10. Founder of Mouths of Mums ([www.mouthsofmums.com.au](http://www.mouthsofmums.com.au)).

– and don't forget the power of Twitter, Facebook and other social media!

"Social media is great for reaching your target market," Alli says. "But do make sure you research not only how to use it, but the etiquette of using it. You can do more harm than good to your business by jumping in without checking the rules first."

### THE BALANCING ACT

Working towards goals, both short- and long-term ones, is a good way to stay on track

with your business and also for helping you achieve the work/life balance you want.

When you're starting out, Alli suggests writing down your priorities for life and why you're starting your business. "Pop them somewhere you can see them and review them regularly to stay on track. Many mums start out running a business wanting to be with their kids and then find they lose track of their 'whys' and end up running a business 24/7."

Checking in with your goals and progress can also help you find room for improvement.

"Conduct regular reviews of all you're doing in your business and determine what's making money, what's imperative to branding and what can be culled, to save time and energy," Alli says.

Know your strengths and weaknesses. Ask for help when you need it along the way. Trust your gut instincts. Follow your passion. And most importantly, Alli says, enjoy and reward yourself. "There's no point running a business if you can't step back every now and then and pat yourself on the back for your great effort." ★

**WINNER GETS \$5000!**

## WHO DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE VOTED PRACTICAL PARENTING'S MUMPRENEUR OF THE YEAR?

Practical Parenting and Maclaren have been on the lookout for Australia's Mumpreneur of the Year and have five great finalists. Now we want you to help choose the winner! Read each mumpreneur's story and vote online

at [www.practicalparenting.com.au/mumpreneur](http://www.practicalparenting.com.au/mumpreneur). The lucky winner will receive \$5000 to help their business, plus a Maclaren Techno XLR Stroller valued at \$629.95. Voting opens 10/10/12 and closes 24/10/12!

Please note: unfortunately our sixth finalist had to withdraw from the competition just before print – we wish her every success in the future. Visit [www.practicalparenting.com.au](http://www.practicalparenting.com.au) for full conditions. Voting will open online at [www.practicalparenting.com.au/mumpreneur](http://www.practicalparenting.com.au/mumpreneur) from 10/10/12 to 24/10/12. Total prize value is up to \$5629.95, as at 2/3/12. The winner will be notified by phone/email and their name will be published online at [www.practicalparenting.com.au](http://www.practicalparenting.com.au) on 14/11/12. The Promoter is Pacific Magazines Pty Ltd (ABN 16 007 410 896). \*The voting period for our Mumpreneur competition has been amended to commence from 10/10/12 to coincide with the on-sale date of the November issue.