



Co-funded by
the European Union

Making a successful business out of her hobbies

Nastja Kramer Pesek
Slovenia



*This story has been developed within the project
"SkillsXcellerate: Empowering youth on their path to independence through entrepreneurship"
This material was developed as part of WP2 A2 Best practices*

SkillsXcellerate



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or National Agency (MUCF) or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project code: 2023-2-SE02-KA220-YOU-000171087

HOW AND WHEN NASTJA STARTED HER BUSINESS

Nastja was 25 years old when she decided to start her own business. At such a young age she did not have all that many experiences except working in online marketing for a year. She did however have some theoretical knowledge about business that she received from university where she studied economics. She soon realized that she wanted something different from the regular 8-hour job, something that would enable her to make her own schedule and most importantly something that would let her have freedom when it comes to making her ideas come to life. She decided to combine things she liked, like cooking, sports, a healthy way of living, and online marketing – and make a business out of it. Once she had a rough idea of what her business would look like she invited her friend Andreja to join her on this entrepreneurial path. To this day, they still have joint ownership of Malinca, a company that offers natural cosmetics and quality food supplement products. Their page also shares tips for healthy living and easy and quick recipes for every day.

HOW NASTJA DEVELOPED HER BUSINESS

Nastja and her friend Andreja soon realized that they would need some initial capital which they, just coming from the university, did not have. Nastja asked her mother if she would be willing to lend them some money. She agreed and they used this start-up capital to buy supplies and create a web page where they started selling food supplies. Since none of them had much experience in business-related matters, they relied greatly on online resources and various training courses to come to speed with knowledge in different areas, from design to management and from accounting to marketing.

At the time when they started selling their products, the food supplement business was not as big as it is now and they did not have much market competition, at least not in Slovenia. This circumstance enabled them to grow their business quite fast and they soon started to employ more people and sell wider product varieties.

Hiring new people turned out to be quite a challenge because they both thought that they were good at managing people but it turned out that that was not the case and that there were many things in this area they needed to learn. And they did! Nastja is a very optimistic person and always finds a solution for obstacles that come her way and is always able to see a bright future for her brand.

After 4 years into the business, they decided to change strategy and move from selling products of other brands to selling their own. They saw that this strategy had more potential for growth and started investing more money in product development.

As far as the funding is concerned, they applied a few times for a short-term bank loan to cover the stock supplies and they also applied for state money that the Slovene Enterprise Fund lends to Slovenian businesses with a potential to help them grow. They used these funds for product development and marketing.

When it comes to valuable lessons that Nastja learned along the way, networking and marketing are the areas she stresses as the most important: you can have the best product in the world but if nobody knows about it, it does not matter, she illustrates.



WHAT ARE NASTJA'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Nastja and her team have a clear long-term vision for their brand but when it comes to short-term goals they set them for a year ahead. For this year, they have planned to develop and launch a few new products and also concentrate more on the Slovenian and Croatian markets.

Nastja hopes that the content she and her team create helps people to make healthier choices for their lives, not just food-wise but also for their mental health and relationships – achieving an overall healthier balance in life is something she also strives to do.

WHAT ARE NASTJA'S SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WILLING TO START THEIR BUSINESS

Nastja admits that entrepreneurship is not for everybody and although it definitely has great benefits it also has its challenges. Being an entrepreneur means being prepared to go out of your comfort zone. For Nastja one of the least favorite parts of the business (but, nevertheless, an important one) was networking and exposing herself. She had to come to terms that her private life often interwinds with her personal life – she is the face of Malinca! Although there are some things to consider, if someone has a desire to start a business and has an idea that he or she wants to expand, he or she should try it! As long as it is not financially demanding there is not that much one can lose, she adds. Even if it does not work out in the end, one is richer for a new experience and knowledge that was gained along the way. That being said, if she had a chance, she would, without hesitation, choose the same path for herself!



Image source: all pictures used in this story are from Nastja's personal archive.

We wish good luck to **Nastja!**

If you are interested in learning more about Nastja's business or to get in touch with her, you can contact her by

Email: Nastja.kramer@malinca.si

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/zdrava.prehrana.recepti>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/malincanastja/>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@malincanastja/>



All content is under CC BY-ND-SA 4.0