



‘Start Smart’ - Session 1

‘The Seed of an Idea’

20th January 2026

About Business Gateway West Lothian

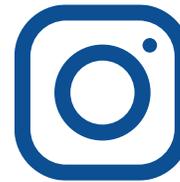


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www.bgateway.com/local-offices/west-lothian/local-support



My background & session run down

- Michelle Brown PR Ltd founded in 2014
- Love Your Business networking club 2018
- Business consultant for start up and growth companies
- Media/marketing guest lecturer
- The session run down, 10-11.30am, slides, exercises and brainstorming – and a quick 5 minute break in the middle
- Let's start with a who's who in the room

The Start Smart 8 Week Programme

Week 1 – The Seed of an Idea

Week 2 – Plan Like a Pro

Week 3 – Digital Marketing Essentials

Week 4 – Money Talks

Week 5 – Wellbeing for Entrepreneurs

Week 6 – Your Personal Brand

Week 7 – AI for Business Advantage

Week 8 – Presenting Your Start-up Vision

Introduction to session 1 – The seed of an idea

- Session 1
 - What's your passion
 - Identifying gaps in the market
 - What's the 'big idea' - brainstorm
 - How do you know it will work – the 'road-testing'



What's your passion

PRIMARK

- What do you like and dislike
- What's important to you
- Trends, prices, sustainability



Identifying gaps in the market

Research -

- Qualitative – interviews and observations
- Quantitative - surveys
- Ask people – what would you like and can't find?
- For me – a multi-purpose, waterproof, easy to carry bag for my sea swims would be good!



'The big idea' – case studies

- Reusable water bottle
- Golf equipment hire





What's your big idea?
Let's brainstorm

Road-testing an idea

- What's your goals
- Define the problem & solution
- Target audience research
- Market and competitor research
- Helps clarify whether your idea will work or not, if there's any holes in the plan and allows you to get real-time feedback



Road-testing an idea – case studies

- The balance bike – kids who tried it out
- Chilli jam – hotels trying it



Case study - Vinted

- Milda from Lithuania was 21 when she started Vinted in 2008
- She built a website with her friend to help get rid of clothes as she was moving out of her house
- It was originally named manodrabužiai (meaning "my clothes" in Lithuanian)
- Her **mission** is that 'we can all live in a green world'
- She now helps business start ups
- 'How my business idea became a million-dollar online business' (worth about £3 billion)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zttrp9q>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZLzgZxq7Sg> – telling her personal story on stage in 2017



Your task this week

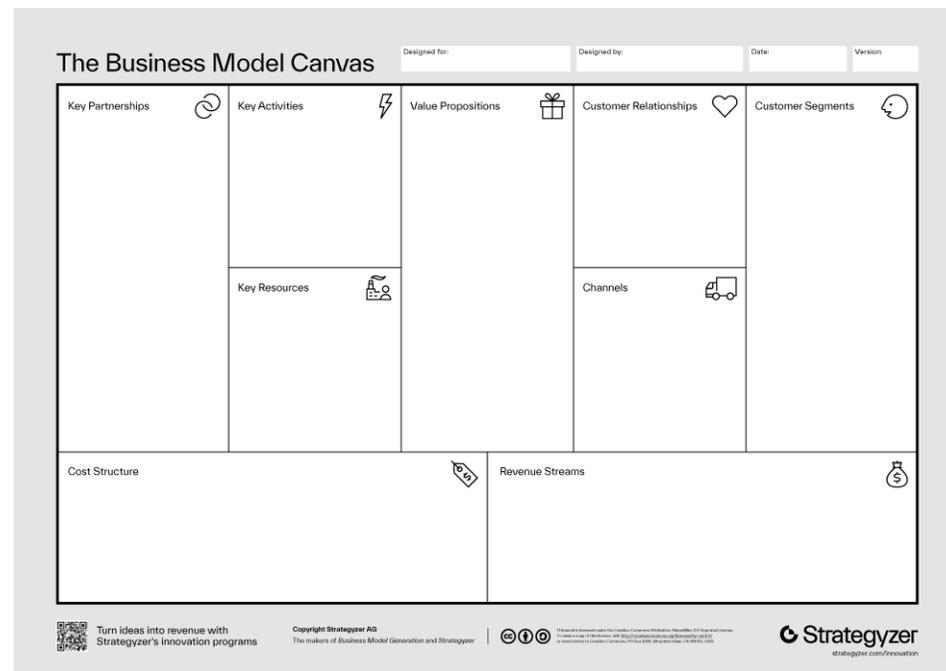
- Read the article and watch the Vinted video and list one or two of Milda's biggest learnings and what she took from them
- Outline ways in which you will test your big idea



Next up is Session 2 – Plan like a Pro

It's all about the planning!

<https://www.strategyzer.com/library/the-business-model-canvas>



ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact Us



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