



# Digital Entrepreneurship Guidelines











Centrum Wspierania Edukacji i Przedsiębiorczości







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# First published: September 2023

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 the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project: GameON - 2021-1-ES02-KA220-YOU-000028541





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# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## What you need to know about GameON

The high level of unemployment among young people in EU countries reflects the difficulties young people face in finding a job, especially due to the COVID-19 crisis. Entrepreneurship is a key tool in the fight against unemployment, as it serves as a double weapon. On the one hand, the person who becomes an entrepreneur is no longer unemployed. And on the other hand, a successful entrepreneur can even be able to hire employees, facilitating access to employment for other citizens in need. However, many times young people do not believe entrepreneurship to be a path they can take, as they find many obstacles to the successful starting of a business.

Learning digital business opens a new world of entrepreneurial possibilities with new businesses and start-ups, increasing the focus on digital technologies and services. This way, acquiring knowledge on those subjects offers young unemployed people a way of developing their own ideas and the chance to achieve professional success.

GameON aims to help young unemployed people overcome key barriers and learn how to become entrepreneurs. The project emphasises digital entrepreneurship, recognising that today's young people possess a natural edge in this domain due to their upbringing in a digital-centric environment. GameON delivers training on digital business and entrepreneurship through these guidelines and through the innovative approach of a <u>video game</u>.

GameON is an Erasmus+ project implemented by 6 partners in 4 European countries (Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain).

#### Who are these guidelines for?







# **Chapter 2: Theoretical Concepts**

# Chapter 2.1: Digital Entrepreneurship

#### Introduction

In the era of the Internet and digital technologies that are reshaping traditional business strategies, structures and processes, one of the fastest-growing sectors is digital business.

The digital business also requires a new figure: the *digital entrepreneur*, focused on the development of entrepreneurship linked to digital. But what do we mean by *digital entrepreneurship*?

This chapter will help you understand what digital entrepreneurship is, providing a clear and simple definition and highlighting its main characteristics; who is a digital entrepreneur and why digital entrepreneurship can help young people address youth unemployment.

#### Digital entrepreneurship: Definition and main characteristics

According to the European Commission, *Digital Entrepreneurship* "embraces all new ventures and the transformation of existing businesses that drive economic and/or social value by creating and using novel digital technologies. Digital enterprises are characterized by a high intensity of utilization of novel digital technologies (particularly social, big data, mobile and cloud solutions) to improve business operations, invent new business models, sharpen business intelligence, and engage with customers and stakeholders" (European Commission, 2015, p. 2).

While entrepreneurship, in its most basic form, can be described as self-employment (Gohmann, 2012), digital entrepreneurship involves the pursuit of business or economic opportunities which occur on a digital platform and on the use of digital technologies (Giones, Brem, 2017; & Zhao, Collier, 2016). The use of digital tools and platforms promotes the emergence of new types of work that can hardly be classified into the traditional categories of employment, self-employment, growth-oriented entrepreneurial enterprises, etc. From this perspective, digital entrepreneurship represents not just a subcategory of entrepreneurship, but «the reconciliation of traditional entrepreneurship with the new way of creating and doing business in the digital age» (Le Dinh et al., 2018, p. 1). Entrepreneurs involved



in digital entrepreneurship are therefore called *digital entrepreneurs*, and the resulting businesses or companies are called *digital enterprises*.

# Who is a digital entrepreneur?

A *digital entrepreneur* is thus a person who has decided to use the resources the Web makes available, organizing them according to a business model, to create his or her own online business.

Digital entrepreneurs take advantage of the typical features of the online world and its systems (from social networks to management software, from content creation systems to paid promotion systems) to gain a huge competitive advantage over more traditional types of offline entrepreneurs. In fact, it is important for a digital entrepreneur to have a digital entrepreneurial mindset, which includes entrepreneurial orientation and the ability to learn and develop a general understanding of web and mobile technologies (Jafari et al., 2020) and other digital and social channels.

In general, digital entrepreneurship depends on digital technologies, which change very dynamically and require entrepreneurs to keep up with new developments and innovate continuously (Jafari et al., 2020).

# Why should young people be interested in digital entrepreneurship?

Youth unemployment is one of the biggest global challenges, exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic (ILO, 2022). At the same time, young people show a high level of interest in entrepreneurship, but despite this, very few young people are working in start-ups or running businesses (OECD/European Commission, 2021). An important aspect to consider is that *young people*, born in a digital environment, have a competitive advantage: they are familiar with the Internet, social media, etc., and can move easily in the online sphere.

The expansion of job opportunities in the digital economy, accompanied by efforts to increase education and skill levels, could contribute to the formalisation of youth employment. Indeed, the digital economy has the potential to promote youth employment, together with the policy level to transform this potential into actual work opportunities (ILO, 2022).





# Chapter 2.2: Digital Transformation and Possibilities

#### Introduction

Digital transformation is about integrating digital technology into all areas of an organization, transforming the way we work and delivering value to our customers. This rapid and extensive adoption of digital technologies has created opportunities for entrepreneurship in various industries. Only after we have clearly defined what digitization means for our company or organization, what business areas and corporate objectives should be included in digitization, what should we do with digitization? You can decide what kind of goals you want to achieve. Digitization for digitisation's sake misses the objective of the enterprise. Let's find out what digital transformation offers to our business and what opportunities it can create.

#### **Benefits and Trends of Digital Transformation**

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, businesses are realising the urgent need to adapt to new technologies and embrace digital transformation to remain competitive. This process involves leveraging digital tools and platforms to streamline operations, enhance customer experience, and drive innovation. As an entrepreneur, understanding the potential of digital transformation can unlock numerous opportunities for growth and success.

With the integration of digital technologies, entrepreneurs can revolutionise their business models, expand their customer base, and explore new markets previously inaccessible. The possibilities are vast, ranging from optimizing internal processes through automation and analytics to leveraging social media and online platforms for effective marketing and customer engagement.

Furthermore, digital transformation allows entrepreneurs to harness the power of data and analytics for informed decision-making and predictive analysis. By utilising advanced analytics tools, entrepreneurs can gain valuable insights into customer behaviour, market trends, and competitor analysis, enabling them to make strategic business decisions that drive profitability and sustained growth.

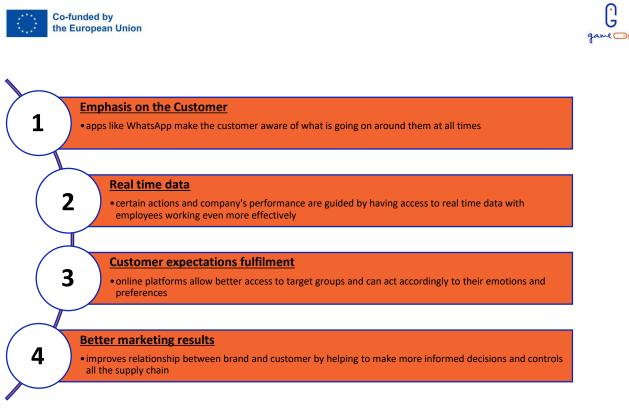


Figure 1. Benefits of Digital Transformation
Source: The Wisdom of Digital Transformation

Moreover, the advent of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), and blockchain have opened doors to innovative solutions, offering entrepreneurs the chance to disrupt traditional industries and create entirely new business models. These technologies have the potential to revolutionise sectors like healthcare, logistics, finance, and manufacturing, allowing entrepreneurs to carve a niche within these industries with disruptive and scalable ideas.

Covid 19 pandemic has sped up the process of digital transformation as digitisation became an integral part of the company's strategy and success. It is taken for granted yet enterprises need to make constant changes and updates relating to their digitalised journey.

**Resilience** in a company's business strategy is imperative for long-term success. It refers to the ability of a company to adapt and recover quickly from unexpected disruptions or challenges, such as economic downturns, market changes, natural disasters, or technological advancements. Resilient companies proactively identify potential risks and develop contingency plans to minimise the impact on their operations and bottom line. By integrating resilience into their strategic planning processes, companies can better navigate uncertainties, seize opportunities for growth



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amidst adversity, enhance stakeholder trust, maintain competitive advantage, and ultimately flourish even in the face of uncertainty or crisis.

Another important trend nowadays is *sustainability*. Sustainable business strategy refers to the long-term planning and decision-making process that ensures a company's operations align with environmental, social, and economic sustainability. A sustainable business strategy encompasses a holistic approach that integrates sustainability principles into all aspects of the organisation, including product design, supply chain management, employee practices, and stakeholder engagement. By adopting sustainable practices, companies can not only reduce costs and enhance their reputation but also contribute towards creating a more just and resilient global economy.

To fully harness the potential of digital transformation, it is essential for entrepreneurs to invest in building digital capabilities within their organisations. This may include upskilling employees to operate digital tools effectively, fostering a culture of continuous innovation, and collaborating with technology partners to keep up with the latest trends and developments.

In conclusion, Digital Transformation presents a realm of unprecedented possibilities for entrepreneurs. By embracing digital technologies and reimagining traditional business models, entrepreneurs can not only stay ahead in an increasingly competitive market but also uncover new avenues for growth and success.



Figure 2. Digital Transformation Source: <u>Canva Database</u>





# **Chapter 3: Tools for Digital Entrepreneurship**

# Chapter 3.1: Entrepreneurial Mindset

#### Introduction

An entrepreneurial mindset helps leaders create value by "recognizing and acting on opportunities, making decisions with limited information, and remaining adaptable and resilient in conditions that are uncertain and complex," said Rowena Barrett, pro vice-chancellor for entrepreneurship at the Queensland University of Technology.

Having an entrepreneurial mindset is a prerequisite for setting up a business. The approach of an entrepreneur is different from that of an employee or even a business owner, as is more focused on the business management of an established business model.

Having the mindset of an entrepreneur helps us to detect opportunities, set goals and develop projects from scratch, with a vision focused on improving society and bringing value to the customer while making profits. The entrepreneur creates disruptive and innovative projects that transform the market or improve what already exists.

# What is an entrepreneurial mindset?

The term "entrepreneurial mindset" refers to a way of thinking and behaving that includes attitudes and traits common to entrepreneurs. Willingness to take risks, creativity, innovation, proactivity, and the ability to find opportunities in challenging situations are characteristics of this mindset.

An entrepreneurial mindset is a set of beliefs, knowledge, and thought processes that equip people to recognise opportunities, take initiative, and succeed in diverse settings (CURE-E, n.d.).

It accompanies the mental structure of a business creator/entrepreneur. To develop a business project, we to analyze and know, but the most important is to have an entrepreneurial mindset.

With this way of thinking they are capable of:

- Recognising the market's conditions and the competition's shortcomings.
- Bringing a new venture to profitability.
- Determining several methods or sources of funding.





- Recognising social needs and flaws.
- Creating innovative concepts that alter the market environment.
- Putting attention on innovation, ongoing development, and adding value.
- Offering fresh, improved answers to the issues at hand.
- Creating sustainable business models and assessing the venture's economic viability.

# Some skills to develop an entrepreneurial mindset

You don't have to be born with an entrepreneurial mindset, it is an ability that can be developed over the years, with effort and hard work. That is why there are now many training courses on this subject.

Here are some important qualities of the entrepreneurial mindset:

- *Risk-taking*: Entrepreneurs are willing to take calculated risks and step out of their comfort zone. They are willing to accept failure as part of the entrepreneurial process and see risks as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Entrepreneurs are *active* and *proactive* people. They take the initiative to initiate projects, generate ideas and take action. They are willing to devote time and effort to achieve their goals.
- *Creativity and innovation*: Entrepreneurs are creative and innovative. They can come up with innovative and disruptive concepts, find creative ways to solve problems and challenge the status quo. They are constantly looking for new ways to improve and do things.
- Opportunity orientation: Entrepreneurs can find commercial opportunities in the market. They can find areas that have not yet been covered, recognise unmet needs and devise solutions that take advantage of those opportunities.
- Entrepreneurs can *withstand* and *overcome difficulties*. Because of their resilient and persistent attitude, they can stay focused on their goals despite the challenges and setbacks they may encounter along the way.
- *Strategic thinking*: Entrepreneurs can plan for the long term. They have the ability to set clear objectives, create action plans and make informed decisions to help them reach their goals.





• In short, the entrepreneurial mindset refers to a set of characteristics and attitudes that inspire entrepreneurs to seek opportunities, take calculated risks and pursue their goals with creativity, innovation, and determination.

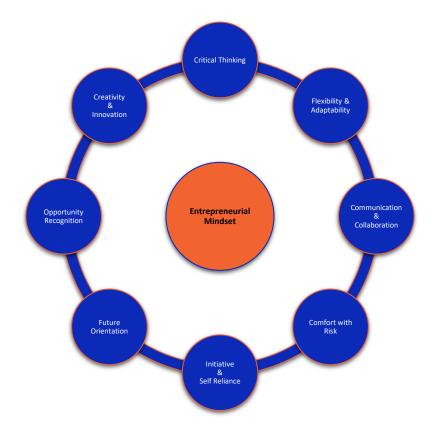


Figure 3. Eight skills and characteristics that embody the Entrepreneurial Mindset
Source: California State University Chico

#### Interactive activities and resources

*Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)* is a global educational nonprofit focused on bringing the power of entrepreneurship to youth around the country and all over the globe. NFTE provides flexible, project-based learning in classrooms, camps, afterschool programs, and online. Their programs are taught by a highly trained Teacher Corps, and NFTE students (grades 6-12) are supported by a diverse Volunteer Corps from the local community, including business leaders and entrepreneurs.

*The Youth Entrepreneurs* curriculum from *Empowered* uses activities and incentives to develop entrepreneurial mindsets in middle and high school students and is ideal for use in business, marketing, or entrepreneurship classes at no cost to the teacher, guide, or parent.





#### How can the GameON game help?

GameON's interactive game provides users with an interactive experience, promoting the teaching of entrepreneurial skills, in this case the entrepreneurial mindset. As it is a game, it will attract young people's attention and interest to try it out and play. As it is a game with a very interactive module: question - answer - feedback, young people will feel that they are learning in an easy and enjoyable way.





Figure 4 & 5. The GameON game



# Chapter 3.2: Digital Marketing

## Introduction

It is undeniable that the development of technology in the last two decades has significantly affected the lives of individuals. Digital marketing is a dynamic and rapidly evolving field that has revolutionised the way businesses connect with their target audience. Businesses and companies had to adjust their operations accordingly in order to maintain high results and achieve the yearly goals. As Marketing plays a vital role in business growth, many companies had to leave behind the traditional ways they used to market their brand and invest more in digital ways.

The term Digital Marketing lays to all marketing actions on the Internet via digital channels; such as social media, websites and search engines. Through these channels the companies can create a connection with prospective customers and also achieve a global expansion of their customer portfolio. Digital marketing, also, offers young readers a gateway to a world of opportunities. It provides insights into effective communication, opens up diverse career prospects, and equips them with skills. From data analytics to content creation, digital marketing skills are in high demand across industries. It allows for creative expression and the ability to make a meaningful impact in the digital landscape. By exploring digital marketing, young individuals can gain valuable knowledge, stay ahead in the job market, and shape the future of marketing in the digital age.

# Types of businesses

Any type of business which targets fuelling business growth should invest in Digital marketing. Each business after identifying the needs of its buyer persona, should create valuable digital content and work on methods that will attract prospective customers. But as businesses operate in a different way, their marketing strategies should also differ.

Companies can be categorised as B2B (business-to-business) and B2C (business-to-consumer). In order for both types of companies to achieve successful results, they respectively focus on different marketing strategies according to their audience. B2B companies work mainly with other businesses, hence they need to have a very well-structured and detailed website. Through their webpage and digital channels, like LinkedIn, their prospect client should be able to get fully informed about the brand and the offered services. The next step would be communication with the





management personnel to establish business-client relationship. On the contrary, B2C businesses usually attract their customers directly via digital platforms. Purchase of the offered product can be completed without the interaction with a salesperson. B2C companies usually use media like Instagram and Facebook as well as paid ads in order to promote their products and offers.

# **Digital Marketing Methods**

All businesses set some short-term and long-term goals and focus on finding ways to achieve them. In order to reach the desired results, they are using tools to build their strategy and implement methods to enhance their brand accordingly. The digital marketing methods can be various, some of them are:

*Search Engine Marketing (SEM):* the appearance of the website on top results in search engines, for example via paid advertisements, can help to increase the views and visits of the webpages

*Social Media Marketing (SMM):* refers to the use of social platforms for advertising purposes and the creation of marketing content

*Content Promotion:* this can be pay-per-click advertising, promotion through social media and via emails or influencer outreach. A multi-channel approach could bring better results

*Email Marketing:* loyal customers are the email subscribers, as either they have expressed their interest and signed up to the newsletter, either they have already completed a purchase. Marketing via emails can have the form of promotional codes for discounts, information about the offered products, promotional ones or new releases

*Affiliate marketing:* is a way that people can earn money and commissions by advertising and promoting products and services through affiliate links

*Search Engine Optimisation (SEO):* the enhancement of the social image in order for webpages to appear in the organic results. This will ensure high visibility by leads with high intentions to purchase

#### Interactive activities and resources

Interactive activities and resources play a crucial role in enhancing learning and understanding in the field of digital marketing. Nowadays businesses choose to implement personalised marketing campaigns as they offer higher profit results. In this way they can act based on the personal preferences, and behaviour of the customer. Thanks to the technological advancement and the use



of digital tools, companies can create their target audience and offer them personalised content via interactive marketing.

Interactive marketing can be achieved for instance with the participation in giveaways and contests or even with the completion of questionnaires that customers could fill in while they navigate to the website. These questionnaires are answered automatically by bots and recommend a list of suitable products, offered by the company, according to the needs of each person. Another interactive method can have the form of reminders for abandoned shopping carts or the offer of a discount code to trigger the customer to complete the purchase. Emails and pop-up notifications about sales or discounts to a variety of offered products can increase purchases. Final satisfaction surveys can also provide valuable feedback for the business.

E-learning platforms such as Udemy, Coursera, and LinkedIn Learning offer a wide range of courses and certifications, allowing young learners to dive deep into various aspects of digital marketing at their own pace. Additionally, participating in online communities and forums like Digital Marketing Reddit or joining industry-specific webinars and conferences provide opportunities for networking, exchanging ideas, and staying updated with the latest trends and best practices in digital marketing. These interactive activities and resources not only provide valuable knowledge but also foster a sense of engagement and collaboration in the digital marketing community.

# How can the GameON game help?

The GameON game will be a great opportunity for young people to obtain some valuable knowledge on digital marketing. Through this practical experience, participants can choose between different digital marketing methods, with the final goal to attract customers, while keeping a high level of services and achieving the highest profit. This could offer a close to real-life experience and can greatly supplement/complement the guidelines.





# Chapter 3.3: Business Models, Business Canvas, Business Model You for Digital Entrepreneur

#### Introduction

The aim of this part is to get you familiar with the various types of digital business models and help you acquire the knowledge and tools that you will need for starting your own digital business. Technological achievements and digitalisation are contesting the traditional way of doing business and thus, becoming familiar with digital business models is essential for you, as a potential digital entrepreneur. Additionally, this part describes Business Canvas and Business Model You for Digital Entrepreneurs as examples of tools facilitating digital entrepreneurship.

#### **Digital Business Models**

A digital business model is a business model that uses digital technologies to create market value (Bican & Brem, 2020). More specifically, it has the following distinguishing characteristics (Talin, 2022):

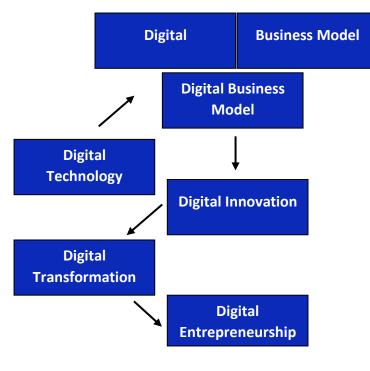


Figure 6. The digitalisation of a business model. Source: Bican & Brem, 2020.

 The product/service is based on digital technologies

 The customer needs to use a digital channel

The unique selling proposition(USP) is created digitally

The digital model is new to the market



There are various digital business models (Talin, 2022) to choose from depending on the customers and the unique value proposition you are aiming for. Some indicative examples are:

- a) *Free-Model/ Ad-supported Model*: it is based on providing a free service that is "financed" by the promotion of adverts and the collection of personal data. Facebook and Google are two famous examples of companies that use this model (Lambrecht et al, 2014).
- b) Freemium Model: the users get free access to a basic free version of the product which sets limitations to its full operationalisation. If the users want to use more features or resources, then they have the option to upgrade to the paid – premium – version (Kannan & Singh, 2021).
- c) *E-Commerce Model*: it is based on selling physical products via an online shop (Kannan & Singh, 2021)
- d) *Marketplace Model*: the sellers and the buyers use a 3rd party platform to trade their goods and services. This model is identified with several different names such as peer-to-peer or two-sided marketplace (Huynh et al., 2020).
- e) Access-Over-Ownership Model / Sharing Model: it allows customers to pay for a product for a set amount of time without really owning it. Examples of such transactions include renting a car or an apartment (Ozdemir, G & Turker, D. 2019).
- f) Subscription Model: users get access to a service, such as a streaming platform, on a monthly/annual basis (Kannan & Singh, 2021).

# **Business Canvas and Business Model You for Digital Enterpreneurs**

Digital Business Models can be better understood if you try to put the theoretical knowledge into practice. The practical implementation of theory is possible through the use of business tools. The Business Model Canvas and the Business Model You for Digital Entrepreneurs are two examples of tools of such nature. The use of the canvas presented in Figure 2 can lead to insights about the customers you serve, what value propositions are offered through what channels, and how your company makes money (University of Oxford, n.d.). You can also use the business model canvas to understand your own business model or that of a competitor.



Business Model Canvas					game CON
KEY PARTNERS	KEY ACTIVITIES	VALUE PRO	POSITIONS	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS
	KEY RESOURCES			CHANNELS	
COST STRUCTURE			REVENUE STREAMS		

**Figure 7**. Business Model Canvas. **Source**: (University of Oxford, n.d.).

The Business Model Canvas can work not only for describing organisational business models but for describing personal business models as well (Clark & al, 2012).

Note the differences between the personal business model and the organisational one:

- In the Key Resource box of the personal canvas, you analyse yourself as an entrepreneur (your personality, skills and the assets you own or control), while in the organisational canvas, the Key Resources consists of a broader range of resources, such as other people (Clark & al, 2012).
- The personal canvas can include non-monetary Costs and Benefits, such as stress and satisfaction respectively, while the organisational canvas includes only monetary Costs and Benefits (Clark & al, 2012).

# Interactive activities and resources

Now that you are familiar with the various types of Digital Business Models and Digital Business Canvas, it is time for you to combine theory and practice!

The creation of a business canvas for your own company or simply your entrepreneurial idea can be quite simple nowadays. Several online tools and platforms exist and are at your service to use them. Examples include:





- <u>Canvanizer</u>: Canvanizer is a simple web tool with easy-to-share links between team members who are brainstorming on a project, but not necessarily in the same room. It provides templates of Business Model Canvas that you can easily use and customise.
- Canva: Canva is an online design and visual communication platform that simplifies the process of preparing a Business Model Canvas. You can create your own Business Model Canvas from scratch or make use of a ready template. Once created, it is truly easy and simple to share it with other members of your team.

Besides the aforementioned tools, you can make use of online resources such as tutorials and ecourses on the topic of business models and Business Model Canvas. You can visit the following online resources to enrich your knowledge on the topic:

- ✓ A free e-course from the University of Virginia provided through Coursera: <u>https://www.coursera.org/learn/uva-darden-innovation-business-model-canvas#syllabus</u>
- ✓ An e-course provided by the Coursera Project Network: <u>https://www.coursera.org/projects/business-model-canva#details</u>
- ✓ A series of tutorials:
  - Business Model Canvas Explained with Examples: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CakUeC1sCSs&pp=ygUdYnVzaW5lc3MgbW9kZWw</u> <u>gY2FudmFzIGRpZ2l0YWw%3D</u>
  - Business Model Canvas Tutorial Uber Business Model: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtf61YDCXDY&pp=ygUdYnVzaW5lc3MgbW9kZWw</u> <u>gY2FudmFzIGRpZ2l0YWw%3D</u>





#### How can the GameON game help?

The GameON game provides users with a full interactive simulation experience focused on promoting entrepreneurial skills, including knowledge on Business Models, Business Canvas and Business Model You for Digital Entrepreneurs. The learning method being based on a simulation game facilitates the understanding of practical concepts such as business models and the use of Business Model Canvas and thus, it prepares the users for applying this knowledge and skills in the real business environment.





Figure 8 & 9. The GameON game



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# Chapter 3.4: Innovation and Entrepreneurship Core

# Introduction

This chapter introduces the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Core, a consistent initiative designed to empower young people to overcome the challenges of unemployment by equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need to excel as entrepreneurs in the thriving digital sector. Through immersive hands-on training and exposure to cutting-edge technologies, this chapter unpacks the tips and resources to achieve entrepreneurial triumph.

# Useful digital tools for entrepreneurship and innovation

In addition to the fundamental principles and skills offered by the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Core, there are different tools and resources available to empower young individuals in their journey towards digital entrepreneurship.

Let's explore some of these key elements that can enhance your entrepreneurial capabilities and foster success in the digital sector.

# Market Research and Analysis

Understanding the target market is vital for any entrepreneur. Utilising market research tools and techniques enables you to identify trends, consumer needs, and competitive landscapes. This information aids in developing innovative products or services that cater to specific market demands. Tools like <u>Google Trends</u>, <u>Statista</u>, and social media analytics platforms provide valuable insights into consumer preferences and market dynamics.

# Design thinking tools

Digital Design Thinking tools are software applications that facilitate the ideation, prototyping, and testing phases of the design thinking process. You can use them to brainstorm with a team, thus encouraging collaboration, even in a distance. It will help you solve problems, design new products, while being creative and innovative. Tools like <u>Miro</u> (whiteboarding), <u>Figma</u> (real-time collaboration), or <u>InVision</u> (prototyping) ease the workflow and collaborative work.





# Financial Management Tools

Effective financial management is essential for the sustainability and growth of any venture. Tools like <u>QuickBooks</u>, <u>FreshBooks</u>, and <u>Xero</u> aid in bookkeeping, invoicing, expense tracking, and financial reporting. These tools provide young entrepreneurs with the necessary financial insights and help in making informed decisions.

# Networking and Collaboration Platforms

Building a strong network and fostering collaborations are crucial for young entrepreneurs. Platforms like **LinkedIn**, **Meetup**, and **Slack** facilitate connections with industry professionals, potential mentors, and like-minded individuals. These platforms offer opportunities for learning, sharing experiences, and seeking support in the entrepreneurial journey.

# Hubs, Incubators, accelerators

Incubators, hubs, and accelerators are useful tools for young digital entrepreneurs as they provide valuable resources, support, and networking opportunities to foster their growth and success.

- *Incubators* offer physical spaces and mentorship programs to help startups refine their business models, access funding, and develop their products or services.
- Hubs are collaborative environments that bring together entrepreneurs, investors, and industry experts, fostering knowledge sharing, partnerships, and potential investment opportunities.
- *Accelerators* provide intensive programs designed to rapidly accelerate the growth of startups through mentorship, access to networks, and investment opportunities.

These tools are useful because they facilitate access to experienced mentors who can provide guidance and industry insights. They provide networking opportunities, allowing you to connect with potential partners, investors, and customers. This way, they offer you a supportive ecosystem that helps you navigate challenges, refine your ideas, and gain visibility in the market, increasing your chances of success.

# Fundraising

Fundraising tools for young digital entrepreneurs provide essential support in securing capital for their ventures. Crowdfunding platforms like <u>Kickstarter</u> and <u>Indiegogo</u> allow entrepreneurs to





showcase their projects to a wide audience and raise funds from individual backers. Angel investor networks such as <u>Gust</u> and <u>AngelList</u> connect entrepreneurs with high-net-worth individuals who are interested in investing in promising startups. Online investment platforms like <u>SeedInvest</u> and <u>Fundable</u> enable entrepreneurs to present their business plans to a broader investor base and access early-stage funding opportunities.

# Pitching tools

Pitching tools are invaluable for young digital entrepreneurs when presenting their ideas and seeking investment. Presentation software like Google Slides or <u>Canva</u> are useful to create visually engaging and persuasive pitch decks. Pitch management platforms such as <u>Pitch.com</u> or <u>Slidebean</u> offer templates, collaboration features, and analytics to streamline the pitch. Virtual platforms like <u>Zoom</u>, <u>Webex</u>, or <u>Pitcherific</u> facilitate remote pitching sessions to connect with investors from anywhere in the world.

By harnessing the power of these tools and resources, the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Core equips young people with a comprehensive toolkit to thrive in the digital sector. It empowers them to transform their innovative ideas into viable business ventures, overcome unemployment, and pave the way for a prosperous future.

# Interactive activities and resources

# Problem-solving activity: How to create a problem-solving Hackathon?

STEP	DESCRIPTION
Define the problem	Articulate the problem statement, identify its underlying causes, and understand the desired outcomes.
Conduct research	Gather information, analyse existing data, and explore potential solutions or best practices.
Generate ideas	Encourage brainstorming sessions to generate a wide range of innovative ideas and potential solutions.

Activity objective: To engage participants in a collaborative problem-solving process.





Select a solution	Evaluate and discuss the proposed ideas, considering their feasibility, impact, and alignment with the problem statement.
Develop a prototype	Design and build a prototype or a proof of concept to demonstrate the proposed solution.
Prepare a pitch	Create a concise and compelling presentation to showcase the problem, solution, and the prototype developed.
Facilitate collaboration and critical thinking	Encourage collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity within each group.
Provide guidance and support	Answer questions and provide guidance to participants as needed.
Group presentations and feedback	Ask each group to present their problem statement, solution, and prototype, followed by a feedback and discussion session.
Voting and recognition	Facilitate a voting or judging process to recognize outstanding solutions based on predetermined criteria (e.g., innovation, feasibility, impact).
Reflection and discussion	Conclude the activity with a group reflection session, allowing participants to share their learnings, insights, and experiences during the Hackathon simulation

# How to use Miro? A design-thinking tool

Miro is a free, easy-to-use online whiteboard designed to help people collaborate with others anytime, anywhere. Miro proposes different canvas that gives you the possibility to choose how you want to work with your team. You just have to open a new file and share the link, so everybody can collaborate to your whiteboard. This tool is useful if you want to brainstorm online, document a meeting, show something, or manage an Agile workflow.





Figure 10. Getting started with Miro: Tutorial Source: YouTube

#### How can the GameON game help?

The GameON simulation game proposes different scenarios that will appeal to your core entrepreneurial skills, starting from the easiest to the most complex situation.

In the first scenario, you are given a situation where you face some dissatisfaction regarding you studies and current employment perspective. But being an entrepreneur is something new for you, and it request innovation and creative skills, which you will work here...

In the second scenario, you have launched your startup, but you face some managerial issues, that you will have to overcome if you want to be successful in your project. You will work with design thinking and human Centred design concepts.

Finally, the third scenario is about finding investors for your startup. This challenging task require some of the key entrepreneurial competences to launch a business, including managing your resources.

These different game scenarios describe various aspects/situations of a digital enterprise. They can help you to be better prepared to face the different challenges linked to the business idea generation and its launch on the market.





# **Chapter 4: Best Practices & Case Studies**

Chapter 4.1: Best Practices

Name: Youth empowered by Coca Cola 3E

Country: Greece

Starting Year: 2017

**Ongoing: Yes** 

#### **Description of best practice**

Youth Empowered is a program which runs the last years with a timeframe from three days to one month and is powered by Coca Cola 3E. The program's main focus is the empowerment of the young generation with business skills, soft skills and digital skills. This year a new digital cycle of free seminars and mentoring will be offered by senior executives of Coca Cola, market experts and experienced trainers from Socialinnov. Socialinnov is a non-profit organisation with focus to help young and underprivileged individuals to achieve their potential and acquire skills in order to grow individually and professionally.

A variety of contemporary topics will be discussed and analysed through seminars that will last two hours each. The mentors will offer their experiences designed on a rich content based on the market needs. In total for the year of 2023, 14 presentations will be offered online for free, and the participants will have the opportunity either to participate to the live event either to see the presentation online at any time.

Some of the core topics that will be analysed will be the following

- CV design & interview preparation
- how to achieve highest efficiency with Microsoft 365 and how to manage data with Excel
- How to build the social image & reputation of your brand
- Sales and Negotiation techniques
- Basic financial knowledge
- Customer experience in the digital era





Up to now, this project has achieved to empower up to 40.000 people and their goal for this year is to inspire 10.000 people more. After the completion of the seminars the participants will have developed a skillset that will add up to their skills.

## **Motivating factors**

The young generation will have the opportunity to meet and interact with people who are already active in the field. Through the sessions they will gain valuable knowledge for their future steps, get inspired and work more on their soft skills. Through the real life examples the participants can get inspired, learn which tactics they should avoid and broaden their horizons. More specifically, the "Youth empowered by Coca Cola 3E" best practice motivates young people to become digital entrepreneurs by providing training, mentorship, and resources. Empowering youth to take charge of their businesses and showcasing success stories inspires them to embrace digital marketing and embark on a fulfilling entrepreneurial journey.

Website: https://www.socialinnov.gr/youth-empowered-by-coca-cola-tria-epsilon/



Figure 11. Youth Empowered Source: Social Innov Website





Name: Crescere in Digitale

**Country**: Italy

Starting Year: 2015

Ongoing: No, the 2022/23 edition is about to finish at the time of writing

#### **Description of best practice**

Crescere in Digitale (literally "Growing in Digital") is a project implemented by Unioncamere (Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture) in partnership with Google, promoted by ANPAL (National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies) and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. The aim is to promote, through the acquisition of digital skills, the employability of young people who are not studying or working and invest in their skills to accompany businesses in the digital world.

The first edition of the project was launched in 2015, and in 2022-2023 there was the second edition: since the launch of the first edition, more than 147.600 people have enrolled, and more than 3000 young people have found their career path through the project.

The main objectives of the project were: to enhance young people's digital skills and facilitate their entry into the world of work, and to consolidate the digital innovation path of companies through internships of young digitizers.

For all participants (young people aged 18-29/30), the project included an online MOOC course, offered by Google, consisting of 25 chapters, for a total of 98 modules and 50 hours of lectures, practical examples, and case studies on digital techniques and tools for business, e.g., social media management, web marketing, industry 4.0, cloud, digital transformation, video marketing, etc.

After passing the test, eligible young people could be called to participate in field training workshops (group and individual) where they could get in touch with the world of eligible and invited registered companies. The workshops were both group training sessions organised by the structures of the territorial Chambers of Commerce aimed at improving the young candidate's technical knowledge and skills, and individual training sessions for job orientation.

Then, if selected, the young people were eligible for 6-month paid extracurricular internships.



Through this project, participants had the opportunity to expand their knowledge of the digital ecosystem and learn how the Web can be a valuable tool to support the growth and international visibility of companies.

# **Motivating factors**

This project has been an effective and efficient example of collaboration between institutions and the entrepreneurial system, based on an original operating model that integrates new technologies and direct work "on the ground". But it has also been a concrete opportunity for many young people, who have been able to acquire new knowledge and skills related to digital entrepreneurship, and for many businesses that have positively seized this opportunity to develop their activities through digital.

Website: http://www.crescereindigitale.it/





Name: Cashy Country: Poland Starting Year: 2018

Ongoing: Yes

# **Description of best practice**

Cashy's accelerated payment platform is a tool that enables fast and efficient payment processing in a company. Such a platform allows money to be sent securely for products or services supplied and enables receivables to be managed electronically. Cashy is tackling two problems that appeared connected with the current transport industry crisis caused among other things by the conflict in Ukraine. The first issue is supplier loyalty as there is a shortage of drivers causes transport delays and problems in finding hauliers. As there is a lower volume of transports within Eastern Europe there is also a problem to maintaining companies cashflow. The long invoice payment period does not help either as it takes an average of 60 days of waiting.

Using technology, accelerated payments enable companies to receive payments faster, with fewer fees and less paperwork than traditional factoring methods. With accelerated payments, companies can receive money as soon as one day after an invoice is issued, allowing them to stay ahead of cash flow needs. Additionally, by eliminating the need to use external finance companies, companies can save time and money on factoring fees. All settlements made via the Cashy platform comply with current regulations and the Tax Office, and additionally, through integration with banking and ERP systems.

Cashy can be used in many industries where companies can carry out financial transactions quickly and securely and monitor their receivables and claims.

# **Motivating factors**

Entrepreneurs are an invaluable source of inspiration and motivation. Hearing similar stories like this one can convince young entrepreneurs that everything is possible when you work hard. Cashy CEO has built a business from scratch through his own work and commitment. It is also important to notice that very often real-life situations bring ideas and solutions.

# Website: e.g., https://cashy.pl/en





**Name**: E-COOL: Entrepreneurial and Intrapreneurial Mindset in Young People through the Dynamisation of Competences, Teaching Methodologies and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Country: Spain

Starting Year: 2018

Ongoing: No (until May 2023)

# **Description of best practice**

E-COOL is a project financed by European Union ERDF funds, within the framework of the INTERREG EUROPE programme, its aim is to promote entrepreneurial education among young people through the use of teaching techniques, skills development and a participating entrepreneurial ecosystem. The meeting marks the end of five years of collaboration in the exchange of experiences and the optimisation of plans and strategies between ten European regions.

E-COOL is leaded by the Chamber of Seville in Spain. The project believes that entrepreneurship "is an important driver of smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and it has been a prime objective of the EU regions since the EC included it into the 2020 Strategy".

E-COOL identifies and exchanges – through a quadruple helix approach:

- Good practices for creating more fruitful entrepreneurial ecosystems.
- Actions to boost entrepreneurship in young people's attitudes and mindset.

The good practices and lessons learnt will be transferred into Action Plans to be included in regional policies.

#### **Motivating factors**

This project can be useful for young people in developing entrepreneurship and their skills because it promotes many best practices in entrepreneurship, and we can also find action plans that they have developed at the end of the project providing details on how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be implemented in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within a given region.

Website: https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/e-cool/



Co-funded by the European Union



Name: Lanzadera

Country: Spain

Starting Year: 2013

**Ongoing**: Yes

# **Description of best practice**

Lanzadera is a project born to support entrepreneurial leaders, whose objective is to generate the necessary conditions to help entrepreneurs create efficient companies and add value to society by implementing a solid business model. It was created in 2013 by Juan Roig, president of Mercadona (leading supermarket company in Spain), in the Marina de Empresas building, in Valencia, Spain.

One thing that differentiates Lanzadera from other accelerators is that it shows startups the business management model applied by Mercadona supermarkets. It is called the "Total Quality Model". It is aimed at inspiring entrepreneurs to create sustainable and scalable companies, while focusing on 5 key components: customers, workers, providers, society and shareholders (or investors).

Once a startup is selected to enter Lanzadora, and depending on its needs, it will receive tailored services from the accelerator. The Scale Up phase is aimed at mature companies that have a proven and profitable model but need help to reach new goals; the Growth phase promotes companies with potential but that pursue faster growth; the Traction phase is focused on startups in their initial phase; and the Start phase is assigned to entrepreneurs who are still shaping their project. In each of these acceleration programmes, the startup will receive training and financing, but also the possibility of collaborating with large companies through agreements made in Lanzadera.

Since 2013, Lanzadera has supported over 1200 companies that have themselves created about 10.000 employment positions. The selected companies stand out for having applied disruptive technology in areas such as logistics, finance, mobility, sports, agriculture, health, education, sustainability or construction. Lanzadera not only welcomes technological proposals. Achieving a "Total Quality Model" is, for them within the reach of both digital and physical companies. And that is its main distinction in the sector. It has managed to create a financing ecosystem that supports a target forgotten by other proposals more focused on international trends.





# **Motivating factors**

Getting on the board of such an acceleration programme is by itself exiting, for all the services it proposes and the prestige that it provides to the digital startup company, as well as for the huge networking opportunities offered, with prestigious mentors and other startups. The requirements and goals are demanding to enter Lanzadera, but the reward can translate into up to 500,000 euros of financing through 0% interest loans granted by Angels (investment society partner of Lanzadera). In addition, if the startup consolidates and convinces those responsible, the loans may become shares of the group. To apply as candidate to enter in one of the acceleration programmes, the process it quite simple: it is only necessary to present the necessary documentation through Lanzadera website. About 120 companies are selected each year (From Spain, and, since this year, from Portugal as well). Currently, about 300 companies are supported by Lanzadera.

Website: https://lanzadera.es/





#### Chapter 4.2: Case Studies

Name: Pop Market Country: Greece Starting Year: 2021 Ongoing: Yes

#### Description of case study

Pop market is a startup which was designed with goal to offer online grocery delivery in just 15 min from the time of the order. There are also other well-known companies in the market but the competitive advantage of this startup and the app, is the fast delivery that promises and the low fee of one euro for the delivery services. In this day and age, people love to spend as less time as possible to complete daily tasks that require much of their time and energy. With the hectic schedules and quick pace of life it is really relieving to know that with the press of some buttons, your vegetables, supermarket essentials or food will arrive to your door, without even having to step outside. People can invest the time that they would spend by going to the stores on other more productive actitivies.

Up to now, Pop Market covers the areas around the center of Athens with higher goal to expand their services to all the neighbourhoods of Athens. In order to achieve the quick delivery, many dark stores have been created in different areas. Deliveries take place from 8am till midnight. As payment method, only option is the online payment in order to diminish the time of the interaction between the purchaser and the person who completes the delivery. The person behind the start up, had also created 2 start ups in London in the field of the supermarket delivery. After gaining all the knowledge and experience, he has now started the third business Pop market, which goal to offer quick and high-quality service.

#### **Motivating factors**

Real life examples can serve as a source of inspiration to young people. Comparing to some years ago, nowadays people have access to the Internet and many tools that they can use to their favor. World is now digitally connected, and societies are open to new ideas. Experienced people are





people who were unexperienced someday, but who took the risk, adjusted to the circumstances, and used past experience to their advantage.

Website: <a href="https://popmarket.gr/?lang=en">https://popmarket.gr/?lang=en</a>

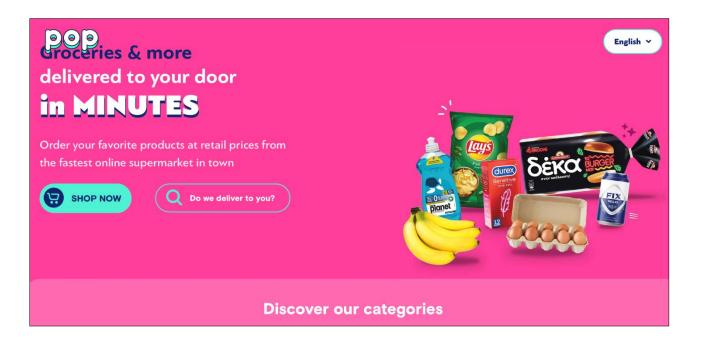


Figure 12. Pop Market

Source: Pop Market Website







Name: Satispay

Country: Italy

Starting Year: 2013

**Ongoing**: Yes

#### **Description of case study**

Satispay is a platform for digital payment and money transfers via the Internet, born in 2013 from the idea of three young people from the city of Cuneo (Piedmont Region), Alberto Dalmasso, Dario Brignone and Samuele Pinta.

In 2015, the Satispay app was born, thanks to which it is possible to pay online and in affiliated stores, exchange money with other people, make phone top-ups and donations, and pay bills. In fact, the app allows payments among individuals, by operating on a simple address book, or payment at affiliated stores on the list, using geolocation or QR code.

Independent of credit cards and a specific bank, with Satispay it is possible to transfer money to personal contacts and pay in stores as easily and immediately as a message on WhatsApp. Satispay uses only secure, non-sensitive data because it works without credit or debit cards. The app works by setting a weekly budget that cannot exceed 200 euros and linking a bank account to it. It is only necessary to have a phone number and IBAN.

There is a version of the app for individuals and one for businesses. For individuals, it is necessary to register and create a Satispay account to start using the app: all that is needed is an ID, bank account IBAN code, and an Italian tax code. Then, the app allows the selection of the minimum weekly amount of money which is safely deposited in a secured account. For business, it is necessary to create a business profile and join a network without intermediaries that allows accepting payments while reducing merchant fees. The incentive to use Satispay comes from the fact that, especially in relation to credit or debit card payments, it does not charge fees for all transactions under 10 euros, while for those over 10 euros, the fee is fixed at 20 cents.

In 2023, Satispay reached almost four million active users.

#### **Motivating factors**

Satispay is an Italian company that has developed a service that allows payments to be made using only a smartphone app, compatible with almost any smartphone with Android or iOS operating





system. It is a digital wallet, manageable with the convenience of a simple click, that replaces cash, credit cards and debit cards.

Satispay is a clear example of a digital enterprise that has been able to use the Internet and new technologies to develop a new and revolutionary payment service.

Website: https://www.satispay.com/en-it/

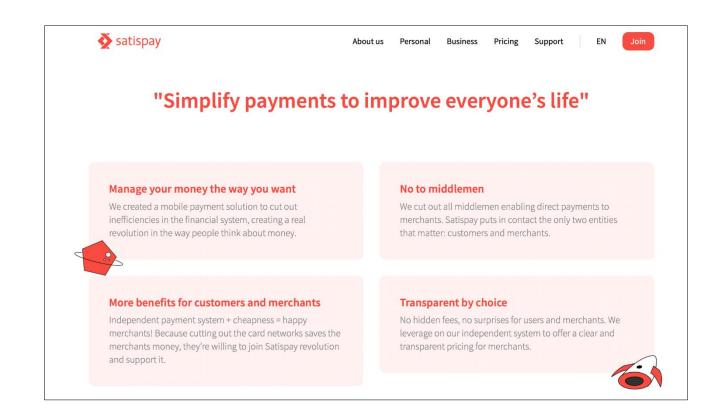


Figure 13. Satispay

Source: Satispay Website



Co-funded by the European Union



Name: InPost

Country: Poland

Starting Year: 2009

**Ongoing:** Yes

## **Description of case study**

InPost is a polish company that in 2009 introduced a system based on modern devices resembling post office boxes, so called "Paczkomaty". It allows collection and sending of parcels 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The beginnings were not the easiest, as many CEOs of various companies approached the idea of Paczkomaty with disbelief. They feared that self-service terminals would become a niche product and that the solution itself would not work in the Polish market. However, InPost parcel lockers became a huge success and are also used in other countries as they are ideally suited to the needs of today and keep pace with the rapidly growing e-commerce sector.

In 2018 along with an industry 4.0 development they introduced "Paczucha Bot" which is a chatbot designed to be a customer service tool. It is able to show the status of a parcel, call the courier or easily find the nearest parcel collection point. Within less than a month of its creation, the InPost chatbot was used by over 12,000 users.

The revolutionary approach resulted in a great InPost success that is hugely popular nowadays. Customers can avoid waiting for a courier, long queues or picking up a parcel only at a particular place at certain times. Furthermore, using parcel lockers pays off in terms of price.

Lately, they have also introduced a mobile app that opens the parcel box automatically and we do not have to do it manually on the touchscreen.

## **Motivating factors**

This case study can reassure young entrepreneurs that it is important to be courageous and go beyond the current and well-known patterns and believe in your own capabilities. It also shows hard work and perseverance as success may not appear immediately and very often you need to overcome a lot of difficulties first.

## Website: https://inpost.pl/en





Name: DeleiteWear

Country: Spain

Starting Year: 2020

**Ongoing**: Yes

## **Description of case study**

DeleiteWear is an ecommerce company that offers the HORECA sector to revalue its textile waste in uniforms and merchandising with social and environmental value. The company operates using upcycling and old blankets from the hotels as raw material to design shirts and other clothes, so as to eliminate waste and following circular economy principle. Deleitewear is a social company and work with workshops that train vulnerable people, survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation who need to be integrated into society through a profession in dressmaking. Their current working process is as follows:

- Rescue of quality waste that is sanitised in the laundries of luxury hotels (collaboration with Cáritas, spanish charity that collect old textiles)
- Design of professional wear
- Sewing in local insertion workshops in Spain
- Delivery of unique uniforms of high quality. Their products are 100% vegan (Their process refrains from land exploitation, protecting the biodiversity of forests) and 100% upcycled (avoiding pollution that would mean wasting valuable textiles.)

They work with hotels, restaurants, tourism delegations in their sustainable transformation. They have achieved working with large size companies such as RTVE (public TV and radio in Spain), ACCOR or NOVOTEL. This start-up was build using LEAN Canva method. Its main channels are the company corporate website and Instagram.

This start-up founders highlight the digital dimension of their business, which relies entirely on digital marketing and online strategies for its sales. Instagram especially has been an entrance door on the market, to make them known. They have received already several entrepreneurial awards. Recently, they were selected to work with the Lanzadera programme (see Lanzadera Best Practice), a pioneer Spanish business accelerator.

Project: GameON - 2021-1-ES02-KA220-YOU-000028541

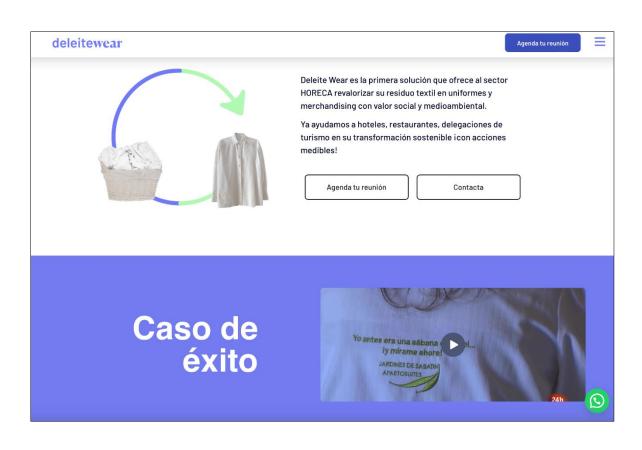




#### **Motivating factors**

Laura, young entrepreneur and founder of Deleitewear, has an inspiring story. She studied textile engineering and wanted to work in the fashion sector. Despite a strong entrepreneurial spirit, she didn't want to create a new brand associated with new textile waste, as she was aware of the contamination created by this sector. And then she discovered the upcycling concept. It was during the pandemic, she had time to think about her project, and together with her mother and Nuria, her associated, they took benefit of the lock down to start working on this project. They planned everything online, and their business is entirely based on digital tools. In addition, it relies on key concept of youth and women empowerment, social economy and environmental protection.

#### Website: https://deleitewear.com/



#### Figure 14. DeleiteWear

Source: DeleiteWear Website





Name: VICIO

Country: Spain

Starting Year: 2020

**Ongoing**: Yes

## **Description of case study**

VICIO is the digital restaurant born in Barcelona at the beginning of the pandemic and which has achieved a growth of 900% and a turnover of almost 4 million euros in its first year. It is a different concept of food that its creators, the chef and entrepreneur Aleix Puig and his partner, the also entrepreneur Oriol de Pablo, were clear that it should be based on quality. Under this premise, they have created a real brand with a lot of personality, which goes beyond a restaurant, and which constitutes a whole experience, from the moment you order until you finish eating. No catches Quality supported by a modern and fresh brand. Beyond its products, VICIO is an experience in itself that exudes provocation and with which thousands of users already feel represented. So much so that the brand, after invading cities with its VICIO stickers, recently put on sale some merchandising products, such as home mats, which sold out in a matter of hours. in a matter of hours.

The implementation of the latest technologies is a determining factor in VICIO's success. The development of its own software and the incorporation of a CTO (Chief Technology Officer) in the team have allowed the brand to become more efficient, reducing time and maintaining quality. while maintaining quality. In this way, it has achieved an increase of more than 400% in the number of orders in just a few months. Number of orders in just a few months. A Burger is sold every 15 seconds.

## **Motivating factors**

VICIO was born out of the desire to be an entrepreneur, to create something different. In inhospitable circumstances, such as the start of the pandemic and the consequent lockdown, the chef Aleix Puig, winner of the MasterChef programme, and the entrepreneur Oriol de Pablo began to strike up a conversation on social networks. Although they did not know each other, together they saw an idea and a project that they had to carry out. So, they set out to create a digital brand to sell in delivery.

## Website: https://www.ganasdevicio.com/



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## Project: GameON - 2021-1-ES02-KA220-YOU-000028541

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