Handsome set-up: how to launch (and build) your very own business

From the best schools for useful degrees to tips from leaders who've lived it, MONOCLE meets the people shifting fresh products, services and experiences.

DO YOUR OWN THING

A 24-page special report

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Entrepreneurs, from retail to tech, reveal how they do it
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+ 14 PAGES DEDICATED TO NAILING A FIRST IMPRESSION

LISTEN IN TO OUR WEEKLY EDITION OF THE ENTREPRENEURS ON MONOCLE 24
Now 2008 was a year that left many shirtless and bald. It was the year when the global economy went off the rails and took bankers, businesses and whole nations with it. It was a year when everyone got scared. Well, sort of. As Monocle we look back at 2008 almost fondly because Monocle taught us a big lesson about you, the people who buy Monocle, and what you are made of.

As other magazines put out covers featuring illustrations of fraught crosses about to jump out the window of graphs showing the only way was down, we decided to stay positive. OK, things were tough in Reykjavik, New York and Dublin, but what was the vibe in Rio de Janeiro or Singapore or Perth?

Again and again we sent out our reporters and editors to find the business leaders who were starting ambitious, groundbreaking projects and you responded. Then in 2009 we ran our first Small Business Guide encouraging people to take the plunge and go for it – and we still get the emails from you did just that and are now running their own law firms, hotels and design agencies.

Maybe everyone does have a book in them but monocle readers definitely have a business idea filed away for an “I resign” day. That’s why this month we are publishing our second Entrepreneurs Guide, which offers advice for anyone considering a startup moment and also some encouragement for anyone already at the helm of a small or medium-sized venture. And, in a way, that includes ourselves. Monocle is at heart a family-style enterprise that maintains the buzz of a startup and over the past seven years we have learnt lots about how to make a business that hums and the people you need on your side to succeed. Hopefully that’s why the guide works – we believe in this stuff.
TOP TABLE

Villency

US

Back in 1932 Scottish immigrant Maurice Villency founded one of the US’s first contemporary furniture brands out of a loft in Manhattan’s Greenwich Village. Today, Maurice’s grandson, Eric Villency, still creates the sofas, beds and cabinets that his family famous for.

The younger Villency (pictured, top right), as VDC’s CEO, is keenly aware of the challenges his role presents. “There is a tremendous weight of expectation in being part of a family business – a sense of stewardship as one transitions to ownership.”
Back in 1932, Scottish immigrant Maurice Villency founded one of the US's first furniture stores in Greenwich Village. Today, Maurice's still makes innovative, handcrafted furniture that's unique. Eric Villency, grandson of Maurice, says the family business is a senior by tradition. "There is a tremendumous weight being part of a family business in the US," he says. "As you get older, it becomes more difficult to own and run the business."

"I was working on my own," he says. "But when you have a family business, you have to think long-term. You have to think about how to make it work for the family for the next generation."