**Samsung give Mapp of London a route to future success**

**[INTRO COPY]**

As part of our SME London campaign, we partnered with The Supper Club to offer one small business the chance to win business mentoring. Here are the results.

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**It all started with a tweet**

Earlier this year, Samsung took More Good Days to London. We connected with local small businesses to offer expert advice, showcase our latest tech offerings and celebrate business success.

On social media we gave SMEs the opportunity to pick the brains of a business expert by offering them the chance to win a mentorship session with a member of The Supper Club – the exclusive membership club for CEOs and fast-growth enterprises. To win this invaluable experience, entrants simply had to tweet about their good day at work and tag their business.

One of our winners was Emma Mapp, owner of her very own camera bag business, Mapp of London. Her winning tweet read: *“I’m setting up my camera bag business – my good day is working for myself & selecting designs.”* #MoreGoodDaysAtWork

**Mapping out future business success**

Emma Mapp had been running her new camera bag business for just 12 months – rebranding in May 2017 – when she found out she’d won our business mentorship prize. She was keen to learn how she could grow her sales online using effective PR and marketing methods.

So we teamed up with The Supper Club member Stephen Sacks, who’s also the founder and owner of Funding Nav, which works to make businesses more profitable and cash generative. One of the ways Stephen is able to achieve this is by advising on innovative pricing and marketing strategies, which are proven to improve profitability and cash flow. This presented Emma with a great opportunity to pick up useful hints and tips, make positive changes to the way her company operates, and review her business goals.

Stephen organised to meet Emma at Selfridges. London’s world-famous department store was a fitting meeting point, giving Emma the chance to check out the competition and draw inspiration from the high-energy retail environment and products on sale.

The store was also the perfect setting for Stephen to discuss the potential market size of Emma’s camera bag business. The rise of smartphone photography has undoubtedly had a huge impact on camera sales, which in turn has affected sales of camera accessories. Then there’s the dominance of big, globally recognised brands such as Canon and Nikon to compete with. So Stephen had a few tips to help Emma stand out from the crowd and generate sales:

1. **Do more market research**

“Market research is invaluable for understanding what your customers want and the potential pain points they’re facing. By understanding what your competitors are doing, you can improve your products and find your niche. In the camera bag market, for example, it may be better to target more casual photographers or gallery photographers rather than photojournalists.”

1. **Rationalise your own ambitions**

“Focus on a vision and a goal and strive to achieve it. Knowing what you want your business to be and what you want to achieve is vital. Do you want to be the number one brand in your market or is your business something you’re happy to do to make some extra cash in your free time? Understanding the ultimate goal of your business will determine how much you’re prepared to give and the risks you’re prepared to take.”

1. **Take risks**

“You can’t tell people to take risks, because only they can decide what they’re comfortable with and how far they’re prepared to go to achieve their ambitions. But success is rarely ever achieved without stepping out of your comfort zone. If there’s a strong ambition to really make it with your product, you’re probably going to have to be brave – whether that means taking out further financial backing, employing more staff, expanding your operation or even investing in some retail space.”

**Developing an SME**

Emma found Stephen’s mentorship useful and his honesty refreshing: “I’ve had life coaching before, but I haven’t spoken to a mentor about my ideas and plans for my business. Stephen was brutally honest about my business and I found this a very refreshing approach. I would rather be told the truth than someone sugar-coat the reality. He’d also taken the time to really think how we could spend the morning together in order for me to gain the maximum benefit from the session.   
   
“Having said this, I also think it’s important to follow your gut instinct about your business – sometimes other people’s opinions may not be wholly correct, but it’s important to take the positives and negatives from any advice.”

The experience gave Emma plenty of food for thought, and Stephen’s advice and expertise could lead to some exciting business developments in the future. Emma is keen to look more closely at getting additional finance to help push her business forward, a step that has proved quite daunting up to this point. Stephen’s expertise on pricing strategies also struck a chord with Emma, who is now open to reviewing her product pricing to help encourage sales.

Meeting at Selfridges was a bit of a masterstroke too. Emma is now determined to spend less time behind her computer and more time getting out into the field to canvas opinion about what the market wants and what their pain points are – while continuing to make camera bags that she’s exceptionally proud of.

Other advice from Stephen that Emma may pursue further includes finding a business partner to complement her personality and enhance areas of weakness, working in collaboration with influencers in the photography industry, and regularly marketing to previous purchasers to drive sales.

The mentorship session certainly helped Emma and gave her a lot of ideas for future business success. We wish Emma all the best with her SME and hope Stephen’s advice bears fruit and drives growth.