

Monetising your personal skills

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I've often come across people possessing great proficiency in cooking, illustration, video editing, art etc. looking for a way to monetise the skills they possess but having no idea how to. Converting your skills into a business can be tricky as businesses require a steady plan, dedication and confidence in your personal skills. So if you're looking to earn some cash out of your skills, here are some tips you can follow.

KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOOD AT

It's important to evaluate how good you are at something before stepping into making a business out of it. Test it out on people who would give you constructive feedback and criticism. Secondly, find out if you're passionate about the skill you're trying to monetise. You can be a person with many skills but you need to find the one skill that drives you the most. It's a business after all and once it's out there you need to have the drive to continue it.

KNOW YOUR MARKET

Understand the demand for a product you're trying to sell. This is crucial as most business die out for misunderstanding how the people around them operate, thinking if the product is out there, they'll buy it. Sometimes understanding whether or not a market exists for a product can be tricky. For that, you can create a survey relating to the product you're trying to sell and check the



response. Make sure that your survey is organised and plan out what you want to know from them. If people say yes, then you have a market you can operate on. Don't give up on your product if people respond negatively to the product, understand why and improve your product.

SET AN OBJECTIVE FOR YOUR BUSINESS

What's your business? Is it goods based or is it a service that caters to people's

day to day needs? It's time to ask yourself which purpose/need of the masses your product serves. If you can't link back your business to your objective, you can't convince people that they need the product you're trying to sell. A good way to find an objective is to ask yourself which problem your product solves and if it's not a problem, which need it caters to.

PLANNING IS KEY

I urge you not to jump to open a Facebook page before you ask yourself

questions like—

1. What is your budget for the production of the product?
2. Have you set the price for the product and is it affordable?
3. How would you market your product?
4. Do you need help running the page?

If you don't have the answers to these questions, it might not be the wisest thing to establish the page just yet.

KNOW YOUR COMPETITION, LEARN FROM THEM

It isn't uncommon to find people with established businesses in your field of interest. They might have several thousand likes or more but it's important not to get intimidated by that. Rather, try and learn what they did right and how they did it. Find their mistakes—learn from them, go through their products and see what you would've done differently, take inspiration but don't copy. This experience will offer you the unique perspective you'd need to spearhead in your business.

CONSULT PEOPLE IN THE RELATED FIELD

Find people who've flourished in the field of your interest, ask them the do's and don'ts. This will better prepare you on what to expect in the future and how to deal with adversities if there are any.

Nazifa is a paranoid teen who is a strong believer that melted cheese is the solution to all life's problems. Fight her at nazifa45678@gmail.com

ADVENTURE ON THE ROCKIES

A wonderful experience at the Glacier Adventure

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Jasper is a small town hidden between the Canadian Rocky Mountains in Alberta, pretty close to British Columbia. We visited the town on April 25, 2018, and stayed for three days. It takes an estimated 4 hours and 30 minutes from Calgary, the capital of Alberta province, to Jasper -- a total of 450 kilometres on road.

The roads that lead to Jasper are very unique. Some lead to the top of the mountains and some go as low as the lakes. Forests cover all the mountains around the region. During our drive, we were able to see some wild bighorn sheep and deer. Interestingly they did not pay any attention to us.

When we arrived in Jasper, we took a SkyTram to the top of a mountain. We even found a gift shop and a coffee shop at the summit. It was great to be able to see the whole town from the top.

The following day we planned a trip to go and experience the "Columbia Icefield Glacier Adventure". At around midday, we headed to the place where we would take a bus towards the ice field. On the way, the bus driver told us a lot about the region. It was a 4-minute drive to the place and the bus driver talked about some trees that were located to the right of the road. The driver asked us, "Do you know the age of these trees?" Most people said the trees were 20 years



old at most because they were pretty small in size. I couldn't believe it when the driver said they were around 450 years old. He also told us about how these trees don't get enough nutrient and only grow 60 days a year. Some trees didn't have branches on one side because the glacier sometimes send tiny, sharp icicles down and when they hit those trees, the branches fall off. Hence, these type of trees are known as "flag trees".

The tourist bus dropped us at an ice stoppage and we boarded a hiking bus there, especially made for the ice mountain area. The wheels of the bus were almost as big as me. The driver said there were only 20 such buses in the entire world. Surprisingly, the bus aced

that course with no problem, and we arrived in the second-biggest glacier in the Rockies, the Columbian Icefield. The place was 300 feet of ice and remains as it is for hundreds of years. I kept on kicking the snow until a weird, blue type of snow came up. The tour guide informed us that this occurred when the ice didn't have enough oxygen content.

Lastly, we left for the Glacier Skywalk. On the way we saw many signs that had a lot of information about the area. It said that the Skywalk was constructed from between 2013 and 2014. It was at one side of the mountain, 280 metres over the valley. It was made of 4-inch thick glass that can hold up to a snow bus carrying 3 passengers. As I walked on to the Skywalk, I felt very scared. The view from the platform was amazing -- you could see the mountains, rivers, forests, waterfalls, and if you were lucky enough you could even see animals. We took lots of pictures there.

Although the Skywalk was at a height that made us dizzy, it was really beautiful up there. After a while of taking pictures we took the bus back to the place where we bought the tickets for the Glacier Adventure. The next day we took our car and headed back towards Calgary. All in all, this was a wonderful experience.

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