



NEW VISION PACKAGING

This time next year Rodders, we'll be millionaires

If any of you out there read my last blog, you'll have heard me talking about the spirit of the Olympics and how this positive attitude should reflect in our business lives. A call to arms as it were!

And now, some weeks on, we hear that perhaps things weren't as bad as the economists and politicians first feared, and that the double-dip recession might not have happened! Apparently, it's hard to measure the economy accurately!!

Wow. This leaves me almost speechless (almost, but not quite!).

Firstly, if the Office for National Statistics is unable to accurately measure our output, then how can we ever know again the state of the British economy? It is absolutely vital that the politicians and economists get this right – the foundations of UK PLC are built on confidence, and if the ONS continue to announce incorrect figures and statistics, it will prevent British businesses from investing and growing.

But, more importantly, this tells me that the world of business has changed forever, and perhaps the ONS will never be able to keep up. You see I believe that the UK (along with America) is still one of the best countries in the world for opportunity. Here in the UK you can, if you're so inclined, start a business with nothing and, with hard work and a helping of luck, create a successful business for the long-term. Of course we have issues (too much red tape for small businesses, being one) but none of these problems prevent anyone from starting a business in the first place if they have the desire to do so.

And now, with the birth of the Internet, it's easier than ever. We have thousands of people buying and selling on eBay (not a surprise when, fundamentally, the UK has become a nation of traders as much as we are creators). And these are not insignificant businesses. You may have heard the story of PF Jones, a company selling car parts from four bricks-and-mortar stores in the North of England, that have been trading for decades. In 2009, they opened an eBay store. Now they sell over £1,000,000 worth of goods a year through eBay, shipping 100 to 150 orders a day.

Of course this is one success story, and I'm sure there are many others. There will also be hundreds of Del Boys that didn't quite get it right (British Rail paint, anyone!).

And with this entrepreneurial spirit, Britain is in a great place to grow and remain a global business powerhouse. All three major political parties know that small and medium businesses are the key to Britain's success, and they all know (even if they won't admit it) that there's very little they can do to help these companies grow. Yes, they need to remove the red tape and make the framework for business as simple as possible. But in the end, it will be the desire from within that makes people take the risk, and make the jump to becoming their own boss. And it couldn't be easier in 2012...

Some years ago, a friend of mine was working for an insurance company, and it's fair to say she became quite disillusioned. So, at the age of 55, she left and opened a shop selling hats and jewellery for weddings and special occasions. She's had some ups and downs over the past few years, and she couldn't really have picked a worse time to enter the world of retail. But she's just moved into new, larger premises, and her business is thriving. If I asked her today, she'd tell me it was the best thing she's ever done, and I'm sure she'd never go back to a corporate life.

So, are we in recession? I don't know, but I don't think anybody else knows either. What I do know is that it doesn't matter to most of us in the small business world – we carry on, doing what we do, and trying to serve our customers in the most efficient and professional way.

If you have dreams of starting your own business, then do it now. Make the leap and, this time next year, you could be the next eBay millionaire!

BR

Steve