

# Ask the Experts

Our panel of experts is on hand to answer all your crafting and selling questions

## Our experts

**There's no question that's too big or too small for our crafting gurus**

**JOANNE DEWBURY** is a multi-award-winning small business owner, a successful author and blogger, as well as being a busy mother of three.



**ERICA MARTYN** Creative designer Erica has developed a knowledge of CE marking through self-assessing her toys since 2011 and now helps other artisans achieve the same.



**SUSANNAH BRADLEY** is the Seller Development Specialist at Etsy UK and helps Etsy sellers to optimise their creative business. She is also an artist with her own Etsy shop.



**DAVID WARRILOW** is a patent and trademark attorney who founded London IP in 2009 (londonip.com), a law company that represents a diverse range of clients.



IMAGE: www.pixelsize.com

## Craft catch-up

**Q** I've just graduated and dream of setting up my own craft business. The online community have been wonderful but I would love to actually meet up with people who may be able to help or are in the same position. What is the best way to go about this?

**JEANNE ROBINSON, KINGSTON**

**A** JOANNE SAYS: Online is always a great way to arrange offline meetings. Search on Twitter for your local #hour. For example, mine is #DorsetHour 7:30-8:30pm on a Monday night. This is a great way to network with local small businesses and to find out any local networking opportunities. Women in Business, Networking Mummies LTD, the Chamber of Commerce and Etsy often have local groups that are well worth checking out. You could also start your own group by looking at connecting with craft cafés and haberdasheries who might be interested in hosting craft networking events.

## Pricey post

**Q** I have just set up my craft business from home and while I'm getting a few sales, I'm struggling with postage costs – some of my items cost more to post than to sell!

**ALEXANDRA HEALEY, NOTTINGHAM**

**A** SUSANNAH SAYS: You might be thinking the shipping prices are putting people off, but online buyers are used to paying additional charges for shipping. If it's clear the item is coming from overseas, they're more likely to be flexible on spending more. If you want to make the shipping costs appear less than the item value, you could transfer some of the postage costs to the product itself. You could also offer postage discounts for additional items. For more tips on postage and setting up your craft business, check out the Etsy seller handbook at [etsy.me/seller-handbook](http://etsy.me/seller-handbook).



Don't let your postage pack you in

IMAGE: www.berryred.co.uk

MY TOP  
10 TIPS

**ELLA GOODWIN** is an illustrator and designer whose often cat-themed work can be found at [etsy.com/uk/shop/ShopMissElla](http://etsy.com/uk/shop/ShopMissElla)

- 1 Set yourself mini goals and make it public on your blog so you'll have to do it.
- 2 Get up early and enjoy relaxing in the evening.
- 3 Back up everything you do regularly.
- 4 Get out and about selling to see what customers like.
- 5 If you sell online, learn about SEO.
- 6 Join communities and groups of like-minded people.
- 7 Don't think of every idea as something to make money with.
- 8 Listen to your body and take a day off to chill out and refresh.
- 9 Share with your crafting colleagues.
- 10 Get outside and go for a walk or a run – it's great for the body and soul.



## Safe and sound

**Q** I'd love to add fun noises and squeaks to my baby toys but I'm not sure how safe they are.

**GEORGINA PEARCE, BRISTOL**

**A** ERICA SAYS: Internal components for toys such as squeakers, rattle discs, crinkle material, jingle columns and so forth are completely safe to use as they shouldn't be accessible to a child within a finished toy. Advice from the UK testing house, MTS, is to enclose the insert inside a fabric case before embedding into the stuffed toy for additional safety. If you are selling your toys, then the actual inserts themselves do not need to be tested through the EN71 part three. However, the finished toy itself will need to have been tested in accordance with the EN71 toy safety directive. Visit [mts-global.com](http://mts-global.com) for more advice and information.

## What's in a name?

**Q** I've read something about having to have a .uk domain now. Does this mean I have to transfer my co.uk address and will it cost me much? Is it something that has to be done soon?

**LIZZIE CHAPMAN, SURREY**



FAQ

This month our top Facebook question is...

**Q** I've heard people talking about a weft when they're sewing..what is it?  
**Nancy Brannigan**

**A** ERICA SAYS: The line of thread moving from selvage to selvage is called a weft. In sewing, the weft is mostly referred to as the crosswise grainline. The next time you buy fabric, watch the fabric being cut. It will be cut along the crosswise grain.

Leave your website domain where it is



IMAGE: [www.aspace.co.uk](http://www.aspace.co.uk)

**A** JOANNE SAYS: It's still early days with the .uk domain to know whether it's the new best thing or if it will flop, so don't rush to get rid of your co.uk domain just yet. I know people who purchased a .me.uk domain and then struggled with it not being the norm. However, it's worth considering buying your business name as .uk if you already own the co.uk account so it will be reserved for you. This costs around £12 for two years and you could redirect the .uk domain to your homepage. Your domain supplier and website provider should be able to help with this.

## ESSENTIAL CRAFT TOOL



**NAME:** Sakeena Edo  
**SHOP:** Lumiere de Londres  
**WEBSITE:**  
 lumieredelondres.com  
 Type: Candle Making and  
 Natural Beauty Workshops  
**TOOL:** Silicone moulds  
**AVAILABLE:** Most good  
 craft shops  
**COST:** Varies from £1-£10

"For me, silicone mould is the best invention since sliced bread! Whether you're making soaps, candles or throat lozenges, the process couldn't be any easier. Just pour the mixture in, allow to set and then simply tease out of the mould. They require no extra ingredients like silicone spray or mould release. They are also very cheap and re-usable, which helps to reduce our waste. Plus, they come in a multitude of colours and shapes to suit any project. These moulds

have just made my life so much easier especially when running workshops where you need everything to go smoothly. If a student has a product stuck in a mould that you need to help them rescue, it completely interrupts the flow and timing of the workshop. Because they're so reliable, they really help calm my stress levels when making products to sell. Rumour has it they're extremely good for baking as well!"



## GUEST SPEAKER



**Michael Jacobsen** is an Australian-born entrepreneur. He draws on his rich experience of owning and operating global entertainment businesses to provide the practical guidance that creative start-ups need to get going. Here he talks about the importance of daydreaming.

**What is vision?** It's the ability to look at what everyone else is looking at, but to see the potential waiting there to be unlocked. It's the gift of being able to dream with your eyes wide open with your energy and intellect fully on the job. It's the skill to see the goal before the journey has even begun. The vision is the setting of the course for the journey ahead.

**Vision is standing for something** in such a way that others will see what they can achieve if they join you on the journey. It's the light that illuminates the organisation you are building.

**At school we are taught not to daydream,** but in business we must daydream. This is the critical time at which the vision will be established and the path to implement it will become clear. Only those who look into the distance can free themselves from the confines of present limits.

**Entrepreneurs should daydream often** - in fact daily. Bill Gates was renowned, when CEO of Microsoft, for taking weeks out each year just to dream and set strategy. Modern companies such as Google are even building their offices in a daydream-friendly manner to encourage all employees to be able to access this part of their brains at any time during the day. The very windows in your workspace are an invitation to look beyond its confines. The sky is not the limit; dreams will take you further.

*Craftseller* readers can benefit from a special discount when they purchase *The Great British Entrepreneurs Handbook 2015* for £9.50 plus P&P (RRP £12.99) by visiting **harriman-house.com** and using the code **CSGBEH\_Pb**



## Copy that!

**Q** I'm thinking about setting up my own handmade card business. My artwork uses collage style images. Is it safe to use what I want as long as it doesn't bear the copyright sign?

**CAROLE BROCKWAY, BRADFORD**

**A** **DAVID SAYS:** Just because something doesn't bear the copyright symbol doesn't mean that it's not protected by copyright. For example, as soon as something is written out, the author automatically owns the copyright. Conversely, something bearing the copyright symbol might not be protected by copyright, as there are no restrictions on its use in the UK (unlike the ® symbol that can only be used next to registered trademarks). Old pictures may be out of copyright, if it's 70 years from the author's death, but most will still be protected.



Be careful not to step on anyone's toes when it comes to sourcing images

To minimize the infringement risk, you may need to pay for a license or find a source of 'copyleft' pictures. Have a look at [morguefile.com](http://morguefile.com) where you'll find a varied selection of high resolution images that are free to use.



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