

A dose of business and beauty realness: Introducing Made By Sunday

Chaymae Samir is the founder and CEO of beauty brand Made by Sunday. Born in Morocco, Samir has worked at the UN in Geneva and a hedge fund in New York, but saw a gap in the beauty market and decided to change tact.

What was the catalyst for launching Made By Sunday?

After moving to the UK, I noticed how young people were obsessed with cosmetics and skincare like I've never seen before. As an outsider of both the country and *the beauty industry*, I was able to spot a white space.

I saw an opportunity to bring clean, affordable beauty products to the masses that didn't stick to the rules of emphasised perfection, or what I call the 'aspirational realness' that you see from a lot of brands trying to bring that 'authentic' voice that still feels like the marketing department is behind it. After researching and studying the big retailers, I realised that the typical pharmacy beauty product really hasn't changed in decades.

Made By Sunday is all about finding what's relevant, finding the white space at the time or what's coming and delivering against it. The company relies on a faster supply chain than other competitors, and gained notable success after our fuzzy velvet makeup sponges became a viral hit on social media.

From there, we expanded to other beauty tools and finally, in February 2020, to skincare. I personally feel more aligned with a burgeoning cultural backlash against the artificial Instagram beautification of everyday life. Made By Sunday really embodies that.

How does the business today compare to that initial idea?

I started the business with one product and my goal was to sell that product to fuel the growth of the company. When that goal was achieved, I took a step back and, in March 2020, decided to reinvent how we do what we do, bringing new alternatives and reframing our vision.

Our brand has always been about being a special sort of pick me up, kicking those boring generic products to the curb. However, I felt that through it all, we lost sight of our ultimate goal and social mission. I had to have real conversations about where we are and what we need to succeed, and ultimately, we were comfortable with this change.

I believe our messaging is helping to change the way people feel about their beauty and the products they purchase. This is an urgent to-do for me because I knew our customers are dynamic, free-wheeling and expressive, I wanted to make the fun choice the right choice.

I realised the brand wasn't doing the job I want it to do and thought a simpler, more distinctive and encompassing evolution of it could do that job better. It was a huge shift when we changed our name from Sunday Ivy to Made By Sunday, thus changing our identity, vision and perception. This change also means we now make and package most of our products in our facilities in Oxfordshire.

How have you managed your business' growth?

Diversifying our model to include retailers definitely gave us that stable regular injection of cash needed to expand the company into new product categories

and hire people.

Feelunique gave us our first shot when we barely had packaging, and then many more followed in the UK and across the world: Urban Outfitters, the Boohoo Group, Watson's, Virgin, and so on. It was a deliberate organic growth and, so far, probably the thing I'm most proud of.

What has been a highlight in your career so far?

Very early on, I realised that my life's purpose - whether through talks, my company's business model, or even simply existing as an immigrant woman of colour in the business space - is to let other people know they can do it too, and give them the tools to achieve their goals.

I myself come from a place where people are so quick to assume you can't make it to the highest grandest levels in life. I want our customers to come for the beauty products and stay for the empowerment, the feminism, and that kick in the butt they need.

What top tips would you give to aspiring female founders?

I'd tell women to just start and not overthink it. It's hard because as women we do constantly question things and worry about what people think. It doesn't have to be perfect the first time. It's just about getting the demand and then working on the business.

I've met so many people who were born into the right family, who had the resources, the education, the health. Yet, self doubt kept them playing small. It's by no means easy, but you have to believe first, then take consistent

actions to run into your fears. Everyone has ideas. Execution is everything.

What does 2021 hold for Made By Sunday?

We have a few more products in the pipeline for skincare and we're planning on expanding in exciting new product categories. We are working on new retail partnerships and I'm also really excited about our Sunday School, where we get to grow our social impact and truly make a difference in our community.

Chaymae Samir is the founder and CEO of Made By Sunday.

Article by KIRSTIE PICKERING