

VOICE by Maddyness: Meet Emma Sayle, founder of Killing Kittens

Our fourth guest on the VOICE by Maddyness podcast is Emma, founder of Killing Kittens. The business hosts female-orientated sex parties globally and has an online community of over 100,000 members.

Founded in 2005, Killing Kittens was created to meet the demand from independent single women and couples who needed something more in the sex space. This evolved into a global business offering highly exclusive, decadent and hedonistic parties focused on the pursuit of female pleasure.

An important part of Killing Kittens is putting women first. Initially, solo men weren't permitted at the events, with men attending only if invited by a female member.

"When we launched, giving women a safe space to explore their sexuality and not be judged was the core of what we did," said Emma. "If you added single men into the mix, the dynamic changes, the testosterone factor kicks in, and that safe space with women at the helm disappears.

"This ethos is still very much at the centre of everything we do, from the online Killing Kittens world to the offline events, but we have added some education events and parties where we do allow single men now as it's important that conversations around sex involves all genders."

These events are varied in their subject matters, covering everything from

pegging and squirting, to writing love letters and the art of striptease.

“It’s all part of the education of learning what makes you tick sexually and looking after your sexual wellbeing,” said Emma. “We’ve been hosting 1-2 events a week for the last three years and they have all sold out. Over the past year during the pandemic, we’ve seen a big increase in the number of couples and singles wanting to explore their sexuality online.”

Normalising conversations about sex

Talking about sex was once taboo. Although huge strides have been made in quashing that archaic approach, there is still a lot of progress that can be made. Businesses like Killing Kittens are normalising sex for pleasure.

“Our sexuality drives us,” said Emma. “It is the absolute core of us and it makes us who we are, so why do we block it? It makes more sense to spend the time to get to know yourself and what really makes you tick sexually because if you know that and you are your absolute truth sexually, you will be a much happier person than pretending you’re something else.

“To me, it’s the third pillar of wellbeing – physical, mental and sexual – so get talking!”

“The more people talk about it, the more it provides a safe space to have those conversations and make it normal and mainstream. My experience is people want to talk about it and they want to open up, but they’re too scared of being judged.”

Investing in sextech

As we’ve explored in this series of *VOICE by Maddyness*, getting investment as a *sextech business* isn’t easy. To launch Killing Kittens back in 2005, Emma didn’t need to fund as she used a friend’s venue and funded the staff and basic website through ticket sales. But as the business has grown and the tech world boomed, it was time to get investors on board.

“I was self funding for the first decade before the tech and digital world properly kicked in and funding needed to go big or go home,” said Emma.

“Investors go both ways: either they totally get the bigger picture and the potential of the business, or they instantly see sex as this dirty, seedy thing that they can’t possibly be seen to be involved with.

“It is what it is and I’m never going to beg anyone to give me money. If they don’t get it, then not a minute is wasted trying to persuade them round – it’s just a ‘next’.”

Growing Killing Kittens

The business has hugely evolved since 2005. The workforce is now made up of 10 full-time staff members and 30 freelancers, the parties have gone global – with the first overseas event taking place in New York in 2014 – and the restrictions caused by COVID-19 has helped its online community boom. So, what’s next?

“We have been classified as a tech business on paper for five years now as most of our revenue comes from the online membership side,” said Emma. “I see the digital Killing Kittens world expanding, with everything from our own ad platform launching soon to the online social network platform we launched last year.

“Our platform is a place where all sex educators, influencers and adult safe-for-work brands can promote themselves, run courses and just be part of this big collaborative world of sex, as well as it being the biggest adult social network in the world with a big dating site element. We also launched our ‘It’s a Kitten’s World’ merchandise store last month.

“To me, Killing Kittens will become this massive global brand encompassing all things adult safe-for-work and sex positivity.”

What would Emma say to someone who is considering attending a party in the future but is a little nervous?

“I would say come with an open mind and know that you can leave at any point. You don’t have to get naked, have sex or take any clothes off. Come and meet members and leave if you feel uncomfortable. You have one life, so just

come see it!"

Emma Sayle is the founder of Killing Kittens.

Interested in learning more about the story behind Killing Kittens?
Listen to the fourth episode of the VOICE by Maddyness podcast,
available now.

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