

Artisan workshops at your fingertips, meet Wecandoo

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Edouard Eyglunent, cofounder of Wecandoo about crafts, connections and international growth.

Temps de lecture : minute

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From a young age, I have had a curiosity and passion for artisan craft and understanding how things are made. I've had a few different careers in industries such as travel and business development but my passion for handmade crafts never left and that is what inspired me to start Wecandoo. My other cofounders, Grégoire and Arnaud, also share my passion for craft and human connection. We all have different strengths meaning we each bring something different to the table which is what makes our team so great.

A business that helps other people experience that passion, and connect with their own creativity, seemed like a fulfilling path for me to follow. As the idea developed, I realised that I wanted Wecandoo to be as much about the artisans that our platform connects with, as it was about giving consumers the opportunity to try out a new craft.

Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, and so on?

Wecandoo is a platform that helps local artisans to curate and deliver unique craft workshops to showcase their profession and teach

consumers a new skill and perspective on how things are made.

We aim to put craftsmanship back into daily life. For example, you can make your own leather bag, build your own cabinet, or forge your own knife. You can learn to brew beer or grow your own mushrooms. Wecandoo has built a community of over 2,200 passionate artists, makers, and producers to deliver these experiences right across Europe.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

Wecandoo launched in 2017 in France. At first, it was relatively small, offering sessions with just a few craftspeople in a few cities. Our first 100 customers were serious DIY and craft addicts who immediately fell in love with the concept and the diversity of craft offering on our platform!

Over time, we have expanded the services to other cities in France, and later to other European cities like Brussels, Antwerp, London and Amsterdam. We have also continued to diversify our craft offering (we now have over 120 different crafts to choose from) and we have expanded the number of artisans we represent.

The pandemic somewhat catalysed this growth as people found comfort in creative hobbies and acts of crafting.

How are you funded?

My cofounders and I funded the platform independently until 2021 when we raised €3.2M to help the company's expansion abroad. This investment came from *Breega* and Educapital.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

As I imagine many other startups can relate to, our international expansion presented the biggest challenge to growing our business. It required us to think about organisation in a new way and shift the culture of the company to accommodate new branches. We have recruited amazing local teams in the cities we now operate in to help us do this - both on business and cultural levels.

The pandemic was also, naturally, a massive challenge given we aim to connect people - in person! We rapidly adjusted the business to focus on online workshops that could continue to support craftspeople. We also stopped taking a commission from craftspeople while the lockdowns continued. In the long-term, this worked out well for the company, since the members of our community appreciated the support, and potential customers reconnected with the value of craftsmanship (most of us know at least one person who picked up baking sourdough at home!)

How does Wecandoo answer an unmet need?

Our two principal stakeholders are our customers and the craftspeople who join our community. For the customers, we connect them with unique experiences that they would otherwise struggle to find, offering them a unique glimpse into the lives of craftspeople. It's an opportunity to create memories with family and friends, but also to develop one's understanding of the world.

For craftspeople, we offer them a new revenue stream. We connect them

with new potential customers, plus we save them time by managing their bookings, customer service, and advertising, so they can focus on their creative work. We also give entrepreneurship training and help with content creation for artisans to further promote their businesses on websites and social media.

What's in store for the future?

A lot of our time at the moment is spent on developing our London service, which as you can imagine, is a big undertaking.

We're also working hard on developing group bookings. Businesses are focussing a lot on creating attractive compensation packages for their employees and also supporting their general wellness, and Wecandoo fits in well with that trend.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Choose one goal that you want to achieve within a certain timeframe. Then make sure everyone understands it – and sticks to it.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

I participate in a Wecandoo workshop every month (how lucky am I!) to stay close to the service we offer customers and get to know our artisans in person. But also, obviously, it's a huge amount of fun, and a true passion of mine.

Edouard Eyglunent is the cofounder of Wecandoo.

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