

# Velloy, the insiders membership card to get the most out of life

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Hugo Cannon, founder of Velloy, about building a business to offer premium member-only benefits, expansion into the US market and the human desire to get the most out of life.

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Velloy was created out of the want to get the most out of life. It was created to satisfy my own need to always want to know what's going on and do more with our lives – and I thought others might just feel the same. Moving to London opened up a whole new world of experiences – launch parties, film premieres, pop-ups, and new restaurant openings every week.

My previous business was a venture-backed vitamin company (Feel Vitamins) and after I transitioned out of the day-to-day running led me to explore what was next. I quickly realised my friends were coming to me to ask for recommendations, ideas and plugs so it naturally formed into a company.

I've been running businesses since school so it was always inevitable to start a company. Working as a VC for a few years was an incredible learning experience but it only made me want to jump in the trenches even more.

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

Velloy is a members-only card for those looking to get more out of life. It provides premium member-only benefits and offers, access to exclusive experiences and curated dining recommendations.

The goal with Velloy is to get people to make the most of their most precious resource: time. Experiencing the best events, tasting the best food, and being fully immersed in the best the world has to offer certainly helps to achieve this aim.

We reach our members in a few ways. First and foremost we're a digital platform so our company runs on organic content and paid media. Our website is more than just a place for our members to check out our latest events, but is somewhere anyone can dive into the world of luxury. Velloy has an amazing team that develops exclusive content into the best that the world's biggest cities have to offer. This blog content allows us to reach our desired clientele and allows us to deliver an inside scoop into restaurants, events, and more. We also like to let what we do speak for itself, and word of mouth is something that we don't underestimate.

## How has the business evolved since its launch?

We first launched in 2022 as an online-only platform. Since then we have worked with some of the world's top events and brands including F1, Louis Vuitton, Net-a-Porter and more! And we don't intend to stop. This year has been our most exciting year as we continue rapid expansion into the US market. Our newest development earlier this year is our dedicated members app and digital members card.

## Tell us about the working culture at Velloy

We're a remote-first team with an HQ in Pavilion Club, Knightsbridge. At Velloy we believe in a flexible working life that supports our team's wellbeing – which

we believe brings out the best in our staff. Our team also travels a huge amount for work, so we embrace a get-things-done and lean on each other approach.

## How are you funded?

We are entirely bootstrapped. We're fortunate to have a fast-growing, loyal membership base so there is currently no need for outside capital. We have had a lot of interest from VCs and angel investors and will potentially look to do a round in Q2 2024 for further US expansion.

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

Our biggest challenge thus far would be one that many other startups would find themselves facing in that first year: getting others to believe in your mission. Now, with almost two years under our belts, we are in a place where others are wanting to work with us and share our passion. However, when you first start something, there will always be those voices of doubt, from others and even yourself, but if you and your team believe in what you're trying to do, you just have to stick it out.

## How does Velloy answer an unmet need?

It speaks to the human desire to get the most out of life. You soon realise that time is limited – and the future is now, so if you're fortunate enough to be in the position to be in such an amazing city as London or New York you may as well take full advantage of it. We aim to provide a world-class customer experience. Every day we start by thinking about the customer first and orient our thinking about what we can do to make the experience of our members 1% better every day.

## What's in store for the future?

We're extremely excited to launch Velloy Worldwide in February 2024 which will cover even more experiences across the globe – from front row at the F1 across the Middle East and Europe, to festivals in the US and fashion shows in every major city.

We are also looking forward to adding in a larger travel component to let our members not only enjoy the city they are currently in – but see the best of every city they visit.

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

The single most important piece of advice I would offer to other founders or future founders is to focus relentlessly on listening to your customers. They are the only people who can help you solve the problem you're trying to fix. They are the ones that can allow you to understand the differences between a minor inconvenience and a major one, for them or for your business.

It's also very important to balance thinking big with being meticulous in execution. Juggling visionary thinking with practical action. This is not always easy as some ideas that you're passionate about may have to be put on hold to focus on the practical side of things. The hardest part about this is there's no way of knowing for certain when you're in equilibrium.

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

I'm currently training for a marathon so this includes a lot more running than usual. To start my day I run 8 miles before a high-protein breakfast. Depending on the day of the week, I will skip breakfast as I have found intermittent fasting to be something beneficial to my daily life. Then I'm right into work.

Prioritisation and planning are some things I've found key to my success. I review my tasks and objectives for the day, focusing on 'the one thing' that is the most important to achieve that day.

I personally like doing "real work" in the mornings and speaking to people on calls during the afternoon. You should always reserve your most productive time, whenever this may be for you, for creative work and not spend it on Zoom.

After work I like to get out and about with friends, and soak in my surroundings in London, where I always find something new.

Sleep is something I highly prioritise – I've tracked my sleep for over 7 years using the Sleep Cycle app and this is one of the largest drivers of the next productivity.

Three rules I live by would be to face resistance, create space, and have fun.

Usually, the hardest things in life deliver the greatest rewards. The impulse of most people is to quit when things are hard – and they believe they are right because they never reach the reward afterwards. So, giving up allows them to protect themselves from failure. The difference between the things you want now versus the things you want most is what you are willing to give up in between. So when you feel resistance it's a sign to double down, not give up.

Create space. Don't rush. Artificial deadlines and constraints lead to problems like over-hiring or overspending. These can be avoided by just opting out of that game – find the time and create your own space.

Most founders and entrepreneurs in the tech space are chasing something external and put themselves under a tremendous amount of pressure – and often once they've achieved their goal wonder "Is that it"?

The important thing to remember is that the journey is the destination and those who win the game are those who are having the most fun. This leads nicely to my favourite quote:

*"The best climber in the world is the one who's having the most fun." Alex Lowe*

Hugo Cannon is the founder of Velloy.

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