

Your 12-step guide to setting up in business

Ria Mishaal ARPS and Geoff Blackwell ARPS share their top tips to get the ball rolling

1

IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS AND YOUR PRODUCT

Become a specialist in one area. Develop a distinct and original style to set yourself apart from the competition.

2

ESTABLISH YOUR IDEAL CLIENT

Discover who you want to work with and why. Identify what kind of service they're looking for. Your business effort should be targeted at your ideal clients.

3

RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH

Investigate your potential clients, the market, the price and demand for the service, as well as your competitors.

4

CREATE A BUSINESS PLAN

Develop a guide to how you intend to run your business. See it as a business tool that allows you to measure your progress against your aims.

5

PREPARE A YEARLY BUDGET

Calculate your financial requirements, including recurring expenses, and personal needs. Consider this, and your competitors, in determining your price.

6

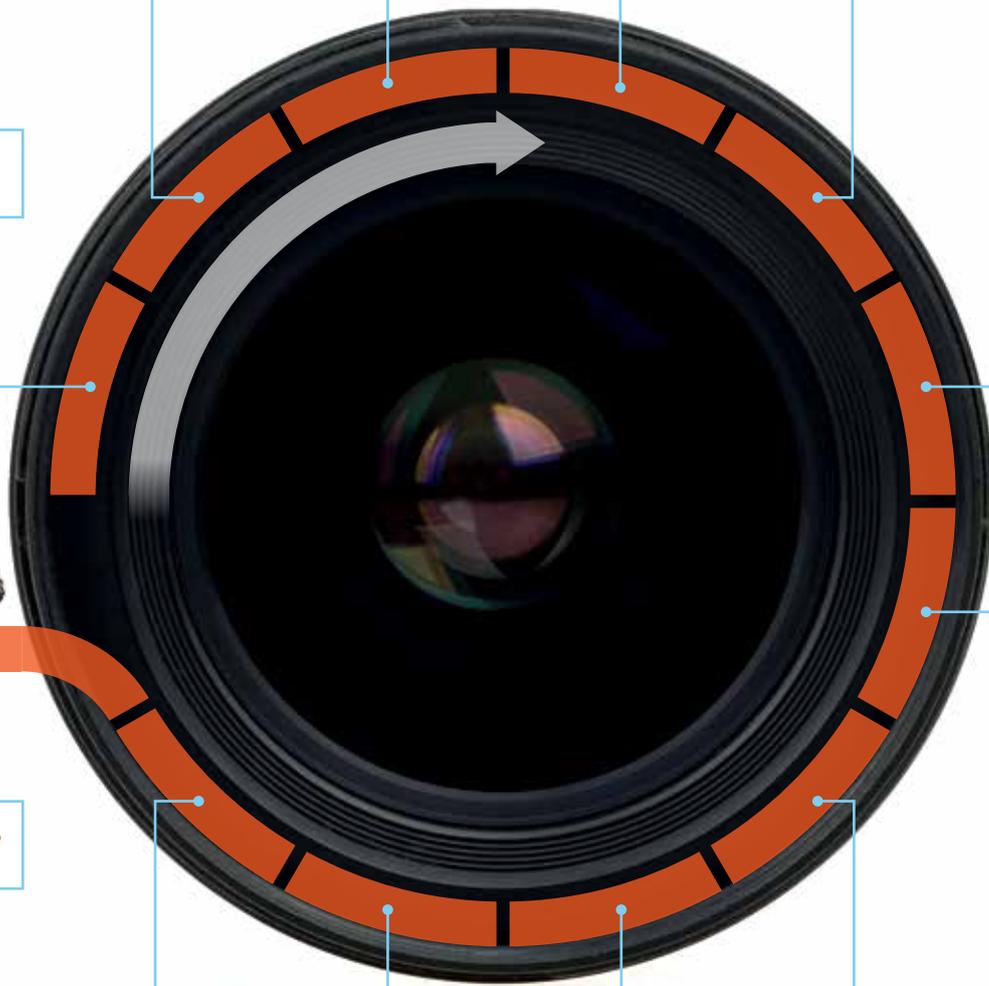
KEEP RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS IN ORDER

If records are kept up to date they will feel less of a burden. Record all income and expenditure as soon as you can. Obtain and retain receipts where possible.

GETTING STARTED



ONWARDS, UPWARDS



12

BUILD A REPUTATION

Publish your work on blogs and in magazines. Take part in events with your peers, enter competitions and form alliances with other suppliers in your industry.

11

SHARE WORK ONLINE

A blog lets you connect with potential clients. Key social media platforms are Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram and Pinterest. Enable share buttons for these on your site and blog.

10

BUILD A WEBSITE

Make your site easy to navigate. Display only the most salient information, and your best portfolio. Ensure it is compatible with mobile devices and different web browsers.

9

DETERMINE A BRAND

Design a logo and colour scheme that reaffirms what your business stands for. Use templates for your marketing material, with the brand colours, logo and fonts.

8

CREATE A MANUAL

Write down every process involved in your business, simply and concisely. This will give you something to refer to and help you make decisions quickly.

7

ESTABLISH GOOD PROCESSES

Invest in good client-management and back-up systems that will keep your work safe. Back up all your data and keep a copy of the software itself.

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