
Case study – Swoon Editions

Topics covered:

- Why new business ideas come about
- How new ideas come about
- The role of business enterprise

Swoon Editions: The Story

In 2012 Debbie Williamson quit her job in digital product development to start her own business, an online furniture manufacturer called *Swoon Editions*. The aim of the business was to enable its customers to buy hand-made furniture at cheaper prices than the mainstream market, along with the convenience of using an online process.

The business idea came about by Debbie and her friends recognising that, when renovating their homes, the cost of buying new furniture was too expensive. ‘Every idea starts with a problem’, states Debbie. She went on to create a business to solve this problem.

The ‘Eureka moment’ for Swoon came when she was on holiday in India. She met the furniture manufacturers behind one of the upmarket UK high street interiors brands, and realised the extent of the profits they were making on each item.

It turned out there was a simple solution. The furniture industry has overheads that pushes prices skyward – shops, warehouses and middlemen.

We created Swoon Editions as an alternative.

Source: www.swooneditions.com/about/our-story

The brand name has become established in the market. *Swoon Editions* has gained over £5 million in venture capital investment over the past three years. The business has seen a 300% growth in sales and employs 60 staff across London. Debbie was awarded the prestigious title of Women in Business at the Startups Awards 2015.

Questions

1. Debbie had to decide whether to produce a good or a service. Which **one** of the following is an example of a service? (1 mark)
 - A. Train journey
 - B. Magazine
 - C. Headphones
 - D. Mobile phone
2. State **one** risk that Debbie faced when starting Swoon Editions. (1 mark)
3. Outline **one** way that Debbie’s business idea came about. (2 marks)
4. Analyse how Swoon Editions is able to add value. (6 marks)

10 marks