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Accelerator Case Study

Pink Aubergine Branded Cakes

**Pink
Aubergine**

DELICIOUS BRANDED BAKES



Sector: Food and Drink

Size: Micro

Location: High Peak

About the business

[Pink Aubergine Branded Bakes](#) was started by Claire Humphreys, initially as a side hustle, then full-time from December 2017. It supplies hand-baked sweet treats decorated with edible toppers for corporate gifts, events and giveaways. Based in Whaley Bridge, High Peak, the business offers companies an opportunity to share their brand and message in a fun and innovative way. Claire is a sole trader and brings in a team to work with her on an ad-hoc basis.

Challenges faced

For Pink Aubergine, finding customers, getting the message out and sharing what they do was one of the biggest struggles. For Claire, it was hard to be working both 'in' and 'on' the business.

Raw ingredients, equipment and utilities have dramatically increased in price. Most of this has had to be absorbed by the business rather than passed onto the customers. This has added to the pressures of running Pink Aubergine reducing margins and limiting growth.



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Solution and Impact

Claire has taken advantage of support from the Accelerator Project. Accelerator is funded by High Peak Borough Council's share of the Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and delivered by East Midlands Chamber.

The Chamber's Adviser Manager, Abi Phillips has supported Claire on a 1-2-1 basis through a business diagnostic to find out where her business is and where she wants to take it. As well as creating a new business plan, the meetings highlighted that support was needed on website performance and functionality, as well as search engine optimisation. The business was successful in receiving a Growth Voucher which enabled it to have specialist digital support for improvements to the site and user experience.

Accelerator Project Partner, The Food and Drink Forum also helped Claire with new product development and innovation. She had two practical kitchen sessions to perfect her brownie recipe and explore different toppings. They also worked on her flapjack recipe and toppings in the test kitchen.

During this time Claire took advantage of the fully funded Accelerator workshops and webinars. This includes WordPress Masterclass, 20 Simple Ways to get your Website Generating more Business, Successful SEO, Blogging with Authority and Trust, and Food Labelling and Nutritional Information Legislation. Claire says that the support has helped her to improve the way she shares information, writes posts and blogs and develop her website.

A word from the business:

"I am constantly wowed by the amount of support available; it really is invaluable.

Running a business can be lonely, just being in a room with other small business owners is uplifting and a learning experience.

The consultants have always been brilliant too – great presenters and experts in their fields. I have been lucky enough to learn about suppliers and gain insight from an Adviser too."

Claire Humphreys, Owner & Baker in Chief

Accelerator has provided:

- 1-2-1 Adviser support
- Growth Voucher
- Specialist consultancy support
- Workshops and webinars

Impact to business:

- Increased skills
- Improved website
- Product diversification



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