

60 SECONDS WITH AN ENTREPRENEUR...

KIRSTY LUNN

Role: Creative Director / Founder

Company Name: Molke Ltd

Sector: Manufacturing & Retail

Founded: 2016

Base: Perthshire

Purpose: To make boobs and bums happy!



Tell us a bit about your business? Molke is an ethical Scottish manufacturer and retailer of fun, non-wired underwear and swimwear. We make the majority of our products here in Perthshire and are Real Living Wage accredited employers. We believe people of all shapes and sizes deserve to be catered for and have underwear that is comfortable, fits well and supports. We are inclusive, honest and focused on celebrating all bodies. We also pride ourselves on offering sustainable products that are made to last.

How did you come up with your business idea? I was fed up with ill-fitting, uncomfortable bras that didn't make me feel good about myself. I sat down at my sewing machine and just had a go at making something that would work. Once I started sharing the photos I was inundated with requests to order from others who clearly felt the same!

What's been your biggest challenge to date? I think setting up and getting that initial funding proved to be the most difficult challenge we faced. Being a female-led business making a product for women was definitely a disadvantage. Especially as we wanted to set up manufacturing ourselves here in Scotland. We were constantly told to outsource overseas cheaply. Fortunately we had lots of support and it was all worthwhile.

How has SE (or any other support org in the ecosystem) helped you on your journey? We've been really lucky with all the support we've received, from Growbiz and Business Gateway in the early days, through to SE and Scottish EDGE. Having such great support for businesses here in Scotland is something I am extremely grateful for. Knowing we have people there to help us with any issues has made a huge difference to us, especially during periods of growth.

What's been the highlight of the last year for you? Coming out of Covid and still having a good year, with growth. We've also released new products that have gone down a storm and are continuing to grow our team here in Perthshire.

Is there anything on your business bucket list? I really want to get a Boob Van and drive around the UK holding pop-up shops and meeting our amazing customers.

How did you come up with your business name? When we first set up Molke we were breastfeeding focused, so Molke was a nod to that. It has a Scandi influence but also was a name that didn't limit us, I wanted to ensure we could diversify and not be stuck with a name that would focus on one product.

What's your favourite thing about being an entrepreneur? The different challenges that each day brings. I love variety and being able to cover different aspects of the business is ideal for me. Also seeing my ideas turned into products and then being worn and loved by customers is so much fun.

What's the best thing about being an entrepreneur in Scotland? The awesome community!

What has been your proudest achievement since starting your business? Our launch day in July 2017. So much build up to that day, months of preparation and hard work. We'd had so many people telling us the business wouldn't work as it was too niche. On the day of the launch all our supporters turned out to celebrate with us. We sold out in an hour and the website collapsed under the influx of customers!

Who's been your biggest supporter? I've some amazing cheerleaders around me but my husband has been incredible. I couldn't have done it without his support and understanding.

What's the best piece of advice you ever received? I've had plenty bad advice, but the best was to keep going and ignore all the negative comments. To have faith in myself and keep believing in what I am doing.

How do you care for each other's wellbeing at work? We do try and have fun at work when we are in the office. We like to play office volleyball with the inflatable dinosaur suit we have. Check out our TikTok to see the videos of our fun.

How do you start your day? Being jumped on by a small child and two cats. No secret motivational method here!

What's the best business book you've read? I haven't read any, I prefer to do things my way and by following my instinct.

Any office pets? Sadly not, fabric and animals aren't a great combination and we'd hate to send out garments with pet hair on.

What's your best tip for achieving a good life/work balance? This is such a difficult one! Having a strong team around you makes all the difference. For me social media is a huge part of my day to day so I have to put my phone down or turn it off to force me to resist the urge to check on things.

What would you say is the secret to success? Hard work, determination, and a belief in what you are doing.

What's your big dream? I want to see the fashion industry changed to be a far more sustainable industry, with better working conditions and pay for workers.

How would you like to be remembered? As someone who challenged stereotypes and broke the norms, whilst wearing an inflatable dinosaur suit.

Where can we find out more about your business? www.molke.co.uk / @molke_uk