



Enhancing Employability of Youth in Cultural and Creative Industries

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Entrepreneurship Skills Manual Topic Handcraft Case Studies, Tips and Tricks WP2/A5

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Executive Summary

In this document, you will explore 3 relevant case studies of this module and have an insight into the real-life's successful businesses in handcrafts. You will be inspired by their story and their vision, how they started the business and why and you will be informed how they manage to be successful. Also, some tips and tricks from the experts in every section will be provided, so you can have an overview in case you decide to start your own business.

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Introduction

The handcrafted items always hide a story because they are inspired by the culture of every country and often the artists have a story to tell about their chosen production. Many handcrafters use natural, even entirely indigenous and even upcycled materials that give quality to everyday products.

You are going to explore the best practices of the artists and the difficulties they are facing while they are trying to make a change in entrepreneurship.

1. CASE STUDIES

After you explored the beautiful world of handcrafts and how they are a unique expression of a particular culture, let's analyze 3 case studies of relevant successful businesses and have an insight overview.

Case study No1 – “Argalios” – bags made with Loom

Argalios is a family house that creates handmade bags, envelopes and bags on the loom, with designs and techniques that combine the Greek tradition with modern culture.

It all started in 2011 at the house of Elias and Katerina Politis, when they brought a children's loom as a gift to their six children. On the occasion of the appetite for creation, the passion for everything handmade and the love for tradition, the Politi family has since dedicated itself to the revival of the traditional techniques of the loom.

The source of inspiration was the Greek traditional designs from every corner of the place and he started to create original woven bags, envelopes and handbags, handmade from beginning to end, ideal for gifts for men and women.

The founding of the company Argalios in 2013 gave the family home business extroversion and prospects for the fulfilment of its vision. Maintaining the completely handmade character of its woven products, from the original design to the packaging, Argalios has won the trust of all those who value quality and recognize the effort, time and uniqueness of the handmade.

All our clutches are designed in Greece and handmade by Argalios. They combine traditional craftsmanship with innovative design, applying traditional weaving techniques to the loom and designs based on Greek motifs.

<https://argalios.gr/>

Case study No2 – “Mastos” - sweet preserves and homemade jams

Let's have an inside overview of the beautiful world of homemade sweets and jams.

“It all started in the autumn of 2013 in the renowned Prosymni (where Mastos located), which is located approximately 14 kilometres northeast of Argos.

It is there where a small family-run business producing sweet preserves and homemade jams was set up, following pure traditional recipes with fresh seasonal fruits without the addition of any preservatives.

In the sweet preserves and jams produced by Mastos, you will meet natural, soft and at the same time powerful tastes.

Mastos gathers select fruits of the Mycenaean land while supporting small farmers who love and respect nature leaving her free of fertilizers and chemicals, thus ensuring the guaranteed excellent quality of our products.

During processing Mastos takes care of and elevates the natural characteristics of every fruit and mixes them with gentle scents from fresh sweet-scented pelargonium, twigs of vanilla and other elements of nature.

And because nutrition and health must coexist, Mastos has managed to maintain a tasty balance of combinations that are beneficial for the human body and your palate!

Some Words of the Owner: “I was raised in a historic village, Prosymna, listening to the stories of my grandparents while being surrounded by fragrant sweets and delicious jams. I learned that the elements which give fruit their singular value are not limited to the bright sun, the ground, the season and the time of the harvest, but also include the diligent care they require as well as our affection.

I studied Nutrition and Dietetics at the Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki. My stay there gifted me with new tastes and provided me with knowledge and ideas informed by the traditions and cultures of multinational Salonica (Thessaloniki). My travels to Macedonia, Euboea, the Peloponnese as well as around the greater part of Greece gave me important information about traditional Greek sweet preserves and jams”.

Armed with this legacy and childhood memories bursting with aromas, along with my family I decided to create this company, Mastos.

With my mother, Kyriaki, who is the governing mind and the soul of our workshop, with great care and devotion we make all these sweet treats hidden in small jars. Jars which capture the products of the Greek land combined with love and imagination.

Today, we are proud to offer you 22 different traditional sweet preserves and 20 types of special jams, while also continuing to add new quality products and exceptional tastes of sweet temptations to our range!

A bit of history about Mastos and the region

Our company owes its name to the hill bearing the same name, Mastos.

The Mycenaean road that passes through Prosymna bears witness to the value this fertile valley had from the time of Asterion. His three daughters, Euboea, Akraia and Prosymna, were the wet nurses of the goddess Hera who nursed her with exceptional and unique foods.

Evidence has been found indicating that the Mastos region has been inhabited since the Neolithic Period. The settlement prospered during the Late Helladic Period while it appears to have followed the decline of Mycenae after the Dorian Invasion. Archaeological finds from the Mastos region are on display in the Archeological Museum of Nauplio”.

<http://www.mastos-nature.gr/gr/>

Case study No3 – “Margie Handcraft” – Handcrafted jewellery

“Margie Handcraft” is a successful business with unique handmade jewellery. The Jewellery is made with passion and love for handcrafted items, truly inspiring all of us. Let’s see what the artist behind “Margie Handcraft” has to say:

“I’m Marigo, for those of you who don’t know me. I come from Argos, Argolida, where I grew up. Until today you will find me somewhere between Athens & Argos. I have a degree in Business Administration. I love foreign languages and have managed to learn 3 so far. I like technology and try to stay up-to-date all the time. I have worked in an accounting office, a bit uninteresting. Then my knowledge of foreign languages led me to Athens Airport (El. Venizelos), where I worked for 6 years as a Ground Attendant in the Baggage Search department. An experience I wouldn’t trade for anything. Very instructive and changed even me as a person. In 6 years I had gotten everything I needed from there... and somewhere in there through some macrame bracelets for co-workers, the spark for Margie Handcrafts was lit.

Beads, cords, threads, and colours were the first materials I got my hands on, creating for me and my classmates our first bracelets. From then until today many things have changed but one thing has remained the same, my love for jewelry. In 2016 starting with silversmithing classes in Nauplio, envisioning from the beginning to create a unique piece of jewelry from a slab of metal was the beginning of the journey. Each year and each seminar brings me closer to my wonderful world of “Margie Handcrafts jewellery”, characterized by minimal, geometric, unisex lines appealing to uniquely fabulous with style people. “Margie Handcrafts jewellery” is handmade and created in a cosy workshop in Kato Patisia, using Greek raw materials

Jewelry has the power to symbolize important moments and a design should be as strong as your vision, traditions, love and the loved ones it represents. Our custom process allows us to work with you on a unique design, whether it is a new design or if you are interested in personalizing a piece from our collection.”.

<https://margiehandcraft.com/>

2. TIPS AND TRICKS IN THE SECTOR

2.1 Software Tutorials and Workflow Optimization Techniques:

2.1.1 Argalios

<https://argalios.gr/> - See how “Argalios” bags are made



Some referenced Videos about Loom Weaving:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqF-UcWchos>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4MV0RQEolB0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9wT8mZZOy4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdRKfp8ZcYY>



2.1.2 “Mastos”

[http://www.mastos-](http://www.mastos-nature.gr/gr/%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%8A%CF%8C%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%B1.html)

[nature.gr/gr/%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%8A%CF%8C%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%B1.html](http://www.mastos-nature.gr/gr/%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%8A%CF%8C%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%B1.html)

- See the variety of “Mastos” products



Some referenced Videos about handmade sweets and jams:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5KhL0AI9vE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUGjgUA-BWU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQ52N-AinPc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u85ad1SOOkA>



2.1.3 “Margie’s Handcraft”

<https://margiehandcraft.com/product-category/bracelets/> - an overview in “Margie’s Handcraft” about the different raw materials and the variety of designs.



Some referenced Videos about handmade Jewellery:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBd3LdNcEYo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyGs0fKlrwl>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBahFtAvMEk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPQ7G-Bqp-k>

2.2 Insights into industry best practices

“Mastos” best practices:

- They offer new, favourite flavours from fresh, selected ingredients
- Traditional recipes! Each jar of Mastos carries strong memories and generations of tradition!
- Guided by traditional Greek cuisine, we create glorious temptations for your palate!
- Selected ingredients
- Using the purest - freshest Greek fruits rich in nutritional value, taste and aroma.
- The equipment of the company ensures the preservation of the nutrients of the fruits while ensuring excellent hygienic conditions.
- Made with love!!!! They aim to marry the past with the present and make traditional sweets the protagonists of your culinary delights.

“Argalios” key of success:

Even though it was founded in 2013 in Greece by a small family business, the mission is to spread the Greek tradition through a modern perspective.

This “Technique” to engage the tradition with modern times, is gaining gradually attention among businesses.

“Margie Handcraft” key of success:

Marigo, the artist behind the successful business of “Margie Handcraft”, tries to make every piece of jewellery unique as her clients are, so the jewellery she sells has special value. The clients have the option to design their jewellery, with Marigo’s help all over the production process, as a result, they feel more into the art process.

Also, as the art of handmade jewellery is fading out because of mass production, the retail shop of “Margie Handcrafts” is located in a very tourist city so everyone has the chance to see the real value of this art. Marigo is mixing the Dorian style in her technique, mixing perfectly the Greek tradition with the modern era.