

Reprinted
with new Foreword

T-Shirts and Suits

A Guide to the Business of Creativity

David Parrish



"A very useful and stimulating book, and a much-needed companion for would-be entrepreneurs in the creative industries."

Dag Kjelsaas Hotvedt.
Akerselva Innovasjon, Norway.

"Owning this guide is equivalent to having a professional adviser on call."

Anne McInerney. UK Trade and Investment.

"More than just a great read, T-Shirts and Suits is a valuable tool for anyone embarking on, or surviving, business in the creative sector."

Diane Earles. Chartered Institute of Marketing.

"T-Shirts and Suits demystifies the ins and outs of building a business in the creative industries by providing a practical guide for creative entrepreneurs that uses case studies to illustrate best practice."

Alexander Schischlik. UNESCO.

“Clear and concise with a lovely clean design.
T-Shirts and Suits is a great mixture of theory, practice and inspiration.”
Fiona Shaw. Capsica Publishing.

“Really useful, motivational and colourful for creative people and beyond! You can dip in and out and it reads like a creative mind.”
Patricia van den Akker. Cultural Industries Development Agency.

“We both read this over the same weekend, which you can’t say for many management books, and we found it both inspirational and practically useful – particularly essential when working in creativity when sometimes people think the inspiration on its own will be enough.”
Ronnie Hughes and Sarah Horton.
A Sense of Place.

Successful creative enterprises integrate creativity and business. T-Shirts and Suits offers an approach which brings together both creative passion and business best practice.

Written in an engaging and jargon-free style, the book offers inspiration and appropriate advice for all those involved in running or setting up a creative business.

Marketing, intellectual property, finance, competition, leadership – and more – are included in this guide.

Examples of best practice are illustrated in eleven 'Ideas in Action' sections featuring a range of creative businesses and organisations.

David Parrish specialises in advising and training creative entrepreneurs using his own experience and international best practice.

www.t-shirtsandsuits.com

"David's book is great! It's accessible and provides information that can be dipped into as and when it's needed by nascent entrepreneurs."

Lorna Collins. National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship

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The views expressed in this publication are the author's own and may not necessarily reflect those of Merseyside ACME.

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Foreword by Shaun Woodward MP

Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism

The Creative Industries are hugely important to the UK's economy and they are only going to become more important in the future.

If that future is going to be bright for our Creative Industries, we need our small and medium sized businesses to have sound business skills and a strong entrepreneurial base. That's an essential driver of growth and prosperity in a modern economy.

But at this moment in time, the average life span of an SME business in the UK is just 24 months. It's at that point that a poorly conceived business strategy begins to show the cracks.

How can we stop that happening? How can we prolong the life expectancy of a creative business and turn it into the success it sets out to be? This is something that the Government is exploring through its Creative Economy Programme, which we launched at the end of 2005.

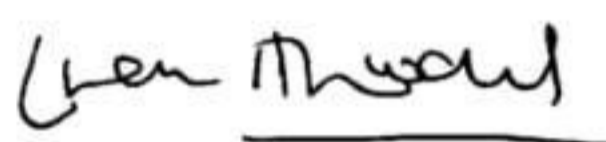
We have established working groups for each of the key themes of the programme, one of which is business support and access to finance. Creativity and business skills don't always go hand in hand – but both are needed to succeed in the 21st century. There are two schools of thought: that there are left sided brains and right sided brains and never the twain shall meet; or, that those working in the creative and cultural fields just don't do business because they've never had the training and support to do so.

What this dilemma demonstrates is that there is a management skills gap and we need to address this.

The 'T-Shirts and Suits' approach to management brings together creative thinking and business skills. As a publication, T-Shirts and Suits provides examples of how creative and business brains can merge to give birth to – and sustain – successful enterprises. The book illustrates how the best business ideas and concepts can be used in the context of creative enterprises.

David Parrish has used his knowledge and experience to articulate and illustrate essential business principles in a way which is appealing to creative entrepreneurs. As such, T-Shirts and Suits makes an important contribution to the management skills of creative entrepreneurs and consequently to the success of their enterprises.

I would like to congratulate David – and Merseyside ACME¹ – for bringing this business guide to the creative industries at large and to the individual businesses that will no doubt benefit from reading it.



Shaun Woodward MP

Introduction

This book is intended to be both inspiring and practical, to offer some great ideas for building creative businesses, yet at the same time warn that it's not easy. It is for start-ups and established enterprises, large and small. It aims to be readable as a whole and also useful to refer back to, section by section. Take from the book what's useful to you as and when it suits you and leave the rest for other people or for another day.

Most of what I have written in the following pages I have learned from my own mistakes. My best qualifications are not my academic and professional ones but those gained by having been there, done it, got it wrong and then sometimes got it right. I have been involved in running workers' co-operatives, social enterprises and businesses in the creative sector since well before the term 'creative industries' was invented. I've dealt with all the issues in this book in one way or another and I am still learning. Nowadays I wear a suit as well as a T-shirt.

My approach to consultancy and training is not to lecture but to facilitate – to offer some thoughts and experience to stimulate new ideas and empower others – then help people to find the individual solutions that suit their enterprise. It is in the same spirit that I have written this book. As you read this guide, bear in mind that nothing in it is absolute. Each idea needs to be adapted to your own circumstances and ethos; each is offered as a starting point rather than a conclusion. If you disagree with some of it, that's fine. If it prompts you to find a more effective solution, that's even better. The purpose of this book is not to tell you how to run your business but simply to provide some ideas and support.

My inspiration for this book comes from the hundreds of people I have worked with and advised in the Creative Industries over the years.

The Creative Industries turn creative talent into income streams for the owners of the intellectual property that this talent creates. Britain is now a leader in the Creative Industries and that's why the British Government is supporting this growing economy. Britain has a lot to offer the rest of the world and the British Council is promoting the ideas of the creative industries world-wide. UNESCO is also supporting the Cultural Industries in the developing world.

It's big business which needs both T-shirts and suits. *(For more information on the Creative Industries see Appendix 1.)*

Some of my most recent work has been with the Creative Advantage² project on Merseyside which supports a wide range of creative enterprises, both established and new. This book builds on the success of that work. Several of the points made in this guide are illustrated by examples of Merseyside businesses, but the themes are universal and I have also drawn on my work with CIDS,³ CIDA⁴ and other organisations as well as my international experience of consultancy and training in countries as diverse as China, South Africa and India.

I would like to hear from you with your comments on this book, other examples of best practice, and additional ideas that I can share through my consultancy assignments, training workshops and support projects with other creative entrepreneurs.

David Parrish, November 2005.
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