



Resource Pack

POP CULTURE ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESOURCE PACK

for youth workers, trainers & educators



Erasmus+

This project has been
funded with support from
the European Commission

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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

As globalization continues to blur cultural boundaries, pop culture is a dynamic area where culture, business and technology meet. The EPIC project capitalizes on this, placing pop culture at the centre of an innovative and engaging approach to help young people develop their own entrepreneurial skills.

Fostering entrepreneurship in young people remains top of the EU agenda as a tool to combat high levels of youth unemployment and social exclusion. It is seen as a route to business creation, self-employment and financial empowerment, while an entrepreneurial mind-set facilitates problem solving, innovation and resilience across personal and professional spheres. As our economy and society undergo transformation, these qualities are important for all young people.

More young people now access entrepreneurship training in school or university. However, young people outside formal education, especially NEETs and those from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds, are the least likely to have access to entrepreneurship development programmes. Our project aims to increase the availability and quality of entrepreneurship education for young people from all backgrounds by developing resources that enable community based youth workers to increase their ability to offer entrepreneurship education and enterprise development organizations to adopt non-formal teaching strategies that better serve young people outside formal education.

Youth unemployment remains consistently high in many countries and this is only set to intensify in the post Covid 19 world. In the context of rapidly expanding opportunities for entrepreneurship within pop culture, it makes sense to enable young people, especially those most in need of alternative sources of education and employment, to capitalize on these opportunities. Our research suggests that few youth-serving organizations are capable of doing this. Youth work organizations excel at outreach and skills development, but partner research shows 76% don't currently teach entrepreneurship or only do so in a limited way. Young Enterprise Northern Ireland say

"while youth workers understand theoretical concepts, they lack expertise in how to instil an entrepreneurial mind-set in practice and outcomes are limited by their inability to capitalize on real time social, cultural and economic opportunities".

VET-based enterprise development organizations, on the other hand, dominate entrepreneurship education in our regions, but 68% in the UK's NI Enterprise Network lack a training model aimed specifically at young people outside formal education. Moreover, trainers are inexperienced in working with disadvantaged youth and success is equated to business creation rather than overall skills development.

These missing links are the reason that EPIC exists. It has been developed by a group of seven partners from across Europe to support trainers and youth workers to tap into one of the most dynamic areas of contemporary life and business, pop culture. With the vast expansion of the digital world, pop culture presents global opportunities for young entrepreneurs who can create a business in the remotest locations.

This resource pack is for trainers and youth workers. It is an introduction to some of the many new opportunities for pop culture businesses and an invitation to further explore this ever evolving world.

In this resource pack we hope to support innovative practice with:

- An overview of some key features of pop culture
- A background to combining youth work and entrepreneurial training
- Examples of pop culture entrepreneurial opportunities in some key sectors
- Regional opportunities and business support
- Some practical learning activities

In addition to this Resource Pack we are producing a Digital Tools Pack and a set of Open Educational Resources that can be used in informal settings with disengaged young people not in education, training or employment. The resources are designed for trainers and youth workers to use as a whole or to extract from to build a tailored programme.

The free modules cover:

- An introduction to pop culture and pop culture entrepreneurship
- Turning your passion into a business
- Identifying and researching a pop culture business ideas
- Developing a business plan
- Resourcing your idea – how to get the support you need
- Online and social media marketing for pop culture businesses

These resources are **freely available for download** on the Epic website

[EPIC website](#)

You will find more resources on the **EPIC Facebook** page

[EPIC on Facebook](#)

EPIC Partners



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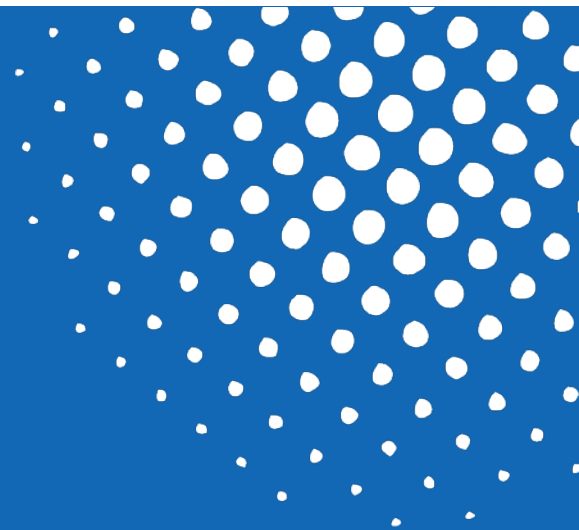
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01

WHAT IS POP
CULTURE?





WHAT IS POP CULTURE?

Cultural scholars trace the beginnings of pop culture to the industrial revolution, with large numbers of people moving from rural communities to new urban communities, forming new bonds and identities with co-workers. The term "popular culture" was coined in the mid-19th century, and it referred to the cultural traditions of ordinary people, in contrast to the "high culture" of the state and ruling classes.

The evolution of mass media throughout the 20th century created a powerful new channel for pop culture. At the same time pop culture began to reflect and serve a more consumption driven society. Popular culture merged with lifestyle, image culture, media culture, and culture created by manufacturers for mass consumption. Now it both reflects and influences people's everyday lives.

With this emerging complexity are different ways to define pop culture. One key commentator, John Storey, offers six different definitions in his textbook "Cultural Theory and Popular Culture".

Defining Pop Culture

However the fundamental definition remains as things that are accessible and appealing to a large number of ordinary people. Current examples are found in music, art, literature, fashion, dance, film, cyberculture, television, and radio. Despite the complexity of pop culture and its power to engage, it is still often considered to be a more superficial or lesser type of artistic expression. That perception can hamper its acceptance in mainstream training and education.



The power of pop culture to influence lives - Ted Talk



Thanks to its dominance in **traditional entertainment media, American pop culture has had a strong influence throughout the world.** American tv shows, Hollywood films, brands, shops, music, fashions, and slang have permeated European culture.

Most recently pop culture has been completely transformed by digital technology. In a digital world, pop cultures can evolve faster than ever, spreading through many channels on the internet to be consumed globally.

The global reach of new technology has also allowed a whole range of **regional pop cultures and subcultures** to take key elements, such as street art, or animation, adapting, combining and transforming them into new cultural patterns, with icons that go on to become part of pop culture heritage.



Anime Character Itachi Uchiha in the Naruto series created by Masashi Kishimoto.

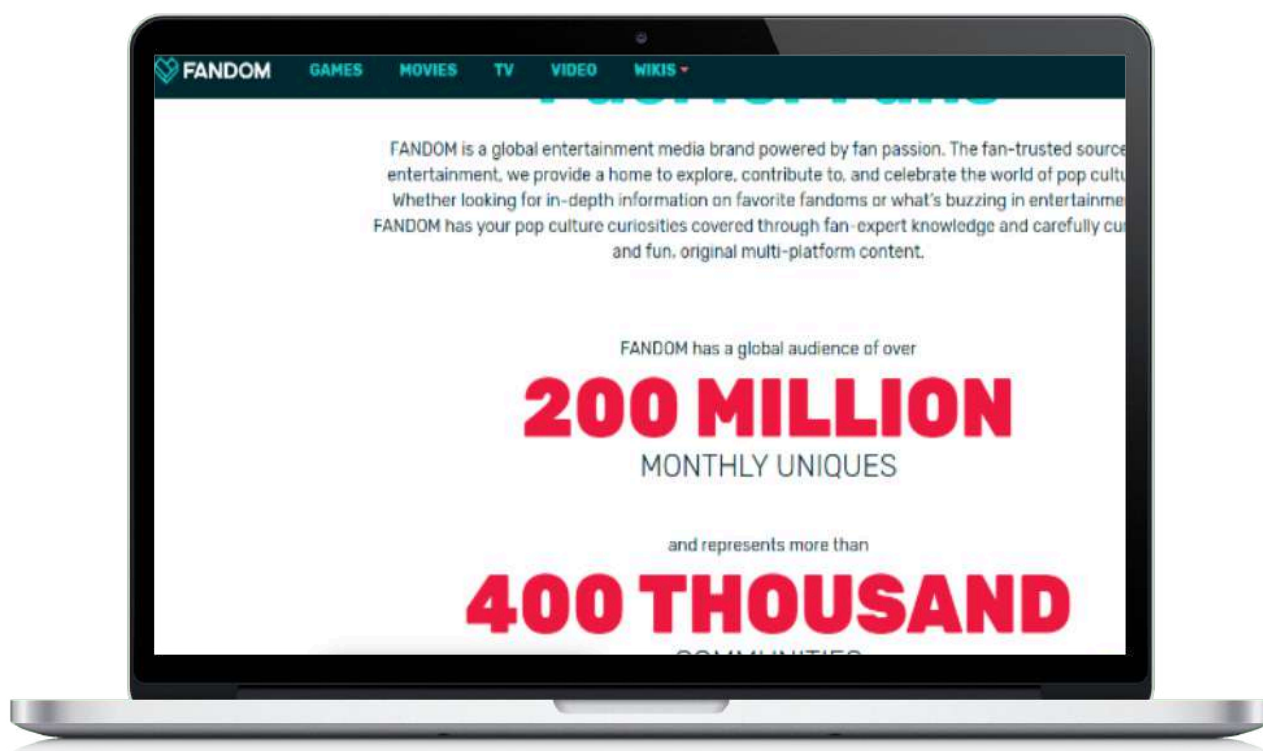
More traditional **“high culture”** by contrast has remained a more rigid set of products that tend to be for an elite market. It has been defined as the works of art, literature, scholarship and philosophy that are valued by the upper echelons or “educated” members of society.

Examples of high culture include fine art, opera, classical music, theatre, literature, architecture, and dining. Heritage is also the basis for culture, and the traditional heritage industry is often focused on buildings and static views of history that also have a niche, elite audience.

These traditional cultural industries have been slow to adapt to the digital world. However the boundaries between pop culture and elite culture have begun to overlap in different ways. For example recent tv series like Game of Thrones, where heritage locations have been used and transformed by pop cultural tourism. The pace of change has been accelerated by the restrictions of Covid 19. More innovative museums, galleries and orchestras have begun to create digital performances and experiences to reach wider audiences.

Pop culture's absorption of the digital world is transforming and challenging traditional ideas of community. It has immense power to form new communities and sub-cultures out of large and diverse groups of people. These communities are consuming content and products of all kinds. A whole new approach to marketing and business development treats these communities as co-creators with entrepreneurs.

Expert knowledge of these communities and sub cultures is a vast source for business innovation. It is also a deep well of inspiration and motivation for those who have struggled with mainstream education and training.



POP CULTURE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL

Youth Work and Informal Education are already recognised as a highly effective approach that can support the development of young people who are not in education, employment or training. Youth enterprise education covers a range of concepts from the target driven promotion of self-employment and business creation, through to a skills based focus on young people being 'enterprising' and entrepreneurial in their approach to life. EU studies on supporting youth enterprise have suggested that:

“In training programmes there should be a focus on developing entrepreneurial mind-sets, which means changing attitudes. The knowledge required to be an entrepreneur is not only related to professional practice in running a business, but also to skills and attitudes, and to metaqualities (for example to reflect on self-knowledge)”

Supporting Youth in Entrepreneurship - OECD

The attitudinal change and transferrable skills suggested include:

- A readiness to embark on new ventures.
- The ability to recognise opportunities and to plan, develop and implement plans of action.
- Developing an ability to reflect on experience and learn from failure

Key elements of a youth enterprise programme are

- Action learning - The means to practice entrepreneurship within a field where they have a good chance of success
- Mentorship and real examples from peers at a later stage of the entrepreneurial journey
- Stronger, more varied, formal and informal connections to knowledge networks, to the wider business community and to peer networks
- A phased approach, taking into account the age, growth stage, background and circumstances of the individuals.

These elements fit well with youth work principles, and also with good practice in the wider business training world. In practice, entrepreneurship is often seen as additional, rather than core learning within youth work, and supporting the longer term development of softer skills can be difficult within a target driven business development organisation.

We believe that exploring entrepreneurship around areas of popular youth culture can create powerful informal learning and personal development opportunities that will provide new gateways into the business world and into further education, training and employment. Popular youth culture has exploded in line with online interactive global platforms and it is developing new and dynamic entrepreneurial opportunities at a rate that requires an urgent and creative rethink by the Youth Work and Enterprise Training sectors.

The context of this rethink is also the fact that youth work, informal education and vocational training sectors at times can appear to young people to be solely interested in making existing opportunities fit, rather than helping them to create and access new opportunities within a wider global online community and context.

Youth work is all about inspiring self-belief and unlocking potential, not controlling agendas for learning or limiting achievement through lack of resources. To be effective youth workers must create and work within the changing environments where young people can thrive, combatting a growing sense of disconnection and despair in young people, especially those who are described as NEET. Getting young people to give it a go requires us to offer a new journey, which leads to a new outcome.

Research on the work of the Prince's Trust in the UK with highly disadvantaged young people has found that whether or not the process of promoting entrepreneurship leads to a successful new business opportunity for each young person, there is a significant positive impact on each individual's self-belief in their ability to be creative, learn and achieve. A study by the Leeds Business School on the Prince's Trust business start-up programme found that 68 per cent of the businesses studied were surviving. Where businesses had not survived, the young entrepreneurs felt they had gained a range of skills and built confidence and self-worth. 74 per cent of those whose business ceased trading reported that the experience of running their own business had been a positive one.

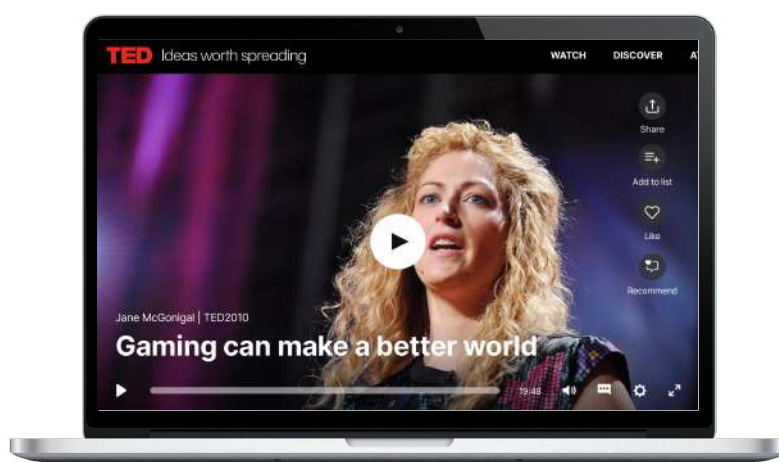
[An overview of enterprise within youth work](#)



The major benefits of integrating pop culture entrepreneurship into youth work and training are that:

- **entrepreneurship is a transversal skill of relevance to all young people because of the numerous ways it can be employed to further their goals**
- The learner is already engaged and committed to the pop culture subject matter and the educator can support them through a process of questioning, conversation and creating carefully planned experiential learning opportunities.
- Young people are seen as the experts within their area of the 'Popular Youth Culture' being explored, with obvious benefits for a group that has been branded as failures within a traditional, top down, education setting.
- It is easier to maintain engagement when young people become the drivers of the process around a theme that they are already passionate about.
- Delivery is interactive, engaging a range of learning styles.
- Activities can easily be shared and discussed with peers and existing communities of interest, reinforcing connections and confidence.
- Young people can more easily see the opportunities and how they can fit with them, creating a broader vision, with what they can believe to be achievable, meaningful goals.
- A positive experience of learning, sharing power with the educator can transform long term attitudes towards learning.

In today's hi-tech environment with links to worldwide communities of interest, which are pools of skills and inspiration, it is now more possible to connect individual interest, passion and skills to a business opportunity than ever before. Young people are connected through various mediums such as; trending music, computer gaming, current fashion as well as the latest cult movies and box sets.



With young people spending as much time by the age of 21 playing online as they do in school, the engagement is there to be built on. So are the skills they are learning of problem solving and collaboration to achieve goals, easily translatable into the business world.

The power of gaming culture as a motivational, collaborative tool

Leveraging pop culture as an educational tool



While young people have grown up in this world, many trainers and educators have not. We are all familiar with the more traditional entrepreneur, iconic figures that built businesses from the opportunities they saw around them, Bill Gates and Sir Richard Branson for example. However a new dynamic generation of entrepreneurs have emerged, in the digital world, building businesses as Gamers, influencers and content producers on many different digital platforms, Tik Tok being the most recent to thrive on a global scale.

In this context pop culture provides youth educators with a mass of motivational examples, case studies and activities which their students can relate to. It can be used to reinforce learning, with practical activities and plans. There is rich source of examples throughout Europe to use within lessons whether through TED talks, Youtube Videos and other books and resources. For example familiar musical artists from disadvantaged backgrounds are backed by a web of entrepreneurial interests to inspire young people.

Start up lessons from hip hop entrepreneurs

Four things Game of Thrones can teach you about business

8 tips for integrating pop culture in the classroom

We have highlighted some pop culture business themes in the following section that demonstrate some of the potential within pop culture for self guided learning and development of entrepreneurial ideas by young people. There are many more examples in the EPIC modules that you can adapt to enable you to create your own tailored learning programme for your youth group or training course.



02

KEY THEMES IN
POP CULTURE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

KEY THEMES IN POP CULTURE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Pop culture and technology are now completely intertwined. The total assimilation of technology into everyday life has massively expanded the opportunities for pop culture entrepreneurship. The internet has created new markets and low cost distribution channels, such as Ebay, etsy, Twitch, You Tube etc. The creation of social media has enhanced the speed and reach of pop culture. Viral video clips, social media influencers, YouTube stars, podcasters and esports are all recent additions to pop culture over the past decade.


All these elements have created a huge appetite for digital content. Businesses and careers are being created in these new media that would not have been imagined even five years ago, such is the pace of change. These are business opportunities that are more accessible than ever before.

One of the biggest You Tube stars is PewDiePie, with over 46 million subscribers. His journey started in his room with a webcam and one simple video, which he does to this day. Recent estimates of his earnings come up with a figure of \$2 million a month.

LetsPlay




In the real world, pop culture has been embedded in many traditional industries, such as events and tourism. The rise of “fandom” and mass events have opened up niche cultures into full scale markets for entrepreneurs.



CELEBRITY SUMMIT
THE BIGGEST CELEBRITY SUMMIT IN THE WORLD

Celebrity Summit is the place to see and meet the biggest stars from your favorite sci-fi and fantasy films, TV and animation. Get autographs and pose together for pro photos!


[LEARN MORE](#)



CELEBRITY EVENTS
COMING TO A CONVENTION NEAR YOU

Be sure to check out three of the largest venues at the con featuring celebrity Q&As, panels, special events (and even a few surprise visits) from the biggest stars at Denver Pop Culture Con.


[LEARN MORE](#)



ARTIST VALLEY
ONE OF THE LARGEST GATHERINGS FOR CREATIVE PEOPLE

With nearly 400 creators and exhibitors, this is the place to meet your favorite artists and writers, buy original art and prints, get signatures, and show your fan appreciation.

[LEARN MORE](#)



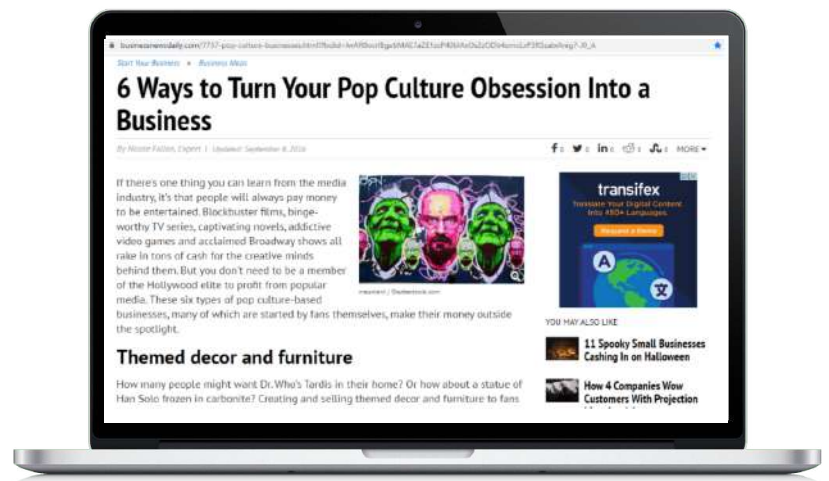
Home / Multimedia / Videos
Highlights from Denver Pop Culture Con 2019

Denver pop culture convention

Inside and outside the digital world, pop culture businesses now are as broad and as fluid as the culture they are based on. Across Europe key sectors include:

- Digital media - online content creation, virtual reality and augmented reality, marketing and design
- E sports – competing in tournaments, coaching, levelling up, streaming, commentating
- Merchandising, Niche Events and Art
- Music – performance, commentary, events
- Screen industry - creative design, content creation and technical support
- Pop culture tourism

[6 ways to turn your pop culture obsession into a business - Business News Daily](#)



The everchanging nature of youth cultures, along with the increasing openness of the digital world, places young entrepreneurs at the forefront of a new era of creativity and opportunity. One of the most interesting features of pop culture entrepreneurship for the educator is that young people are so well placed to recognise opportunities in this world. The speed of change also emphasises key business and life skills such as commitment, adaptability, and coping with failure.

DIGITAL MEDIA



The YouTube generation has an instinctive understanding of digital media and the financial rewards that the stars of YouTube and the various other media platforms can reap. Thanks to powerful mobile phones and apps like Tik Tok, they are also comfortable with the use of technology and software to create digital content. Basic editing software can now produce a highly sophisticated video, and these can be sold online in different ways.

The application of these skills to entertainment, marketing and communications opens up areas of opportunity with low entry costs. New words, such as “blogging”, “streaming”, and “podcasts” have become part of everyday speech. They represent an entirely new, completely accessible, approach to entertainment and communication, based on pop culture knowledge and skills, not on qualifications or experience in the traditional print and broadcast media.

[How to start a blog](#)

[Tips for starting a podcast](#)

[How to start a podcast](#)

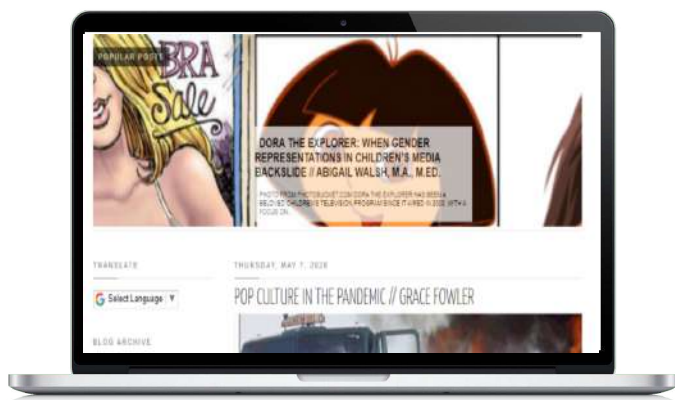
While digital media businesses like blogging may start simply, to be successful the blogger needs to develop a range of very transferrable business skills. Bloggers and You Tubers have to commit to the business to create a consistent product with a strong story that they can sustain over a number of years while their following grows. They constantly research their market through contact with their followers. On average, a typical YouTuber can expect to earn about \$2 per 1,000 views they get on their videos. This can drastically rise or drop depending on the reactions to the videos and the size of the channel. The savvy blogging entrepreneur backs this basic revenue up by developing a broader business, with their own website and sales of subscriptions, products of partners, or of their own products like ebooks.

Starting a blog as a business

Among today's most popular blogging platforms are



Becoming a You Tube pro



The growing range of digital platforms are an outlet for all sorts of pop culture knowledge and a wide set of creative skills, from curating, presenting, promotions, and content creation to the more technical coding skills.

Content creation can cover a wide range of topics, not just the ubiquitous fashion or luxury lifestyle blogs.

[FemPop Blog](#)

[Top 10 highest paid streamers](#)

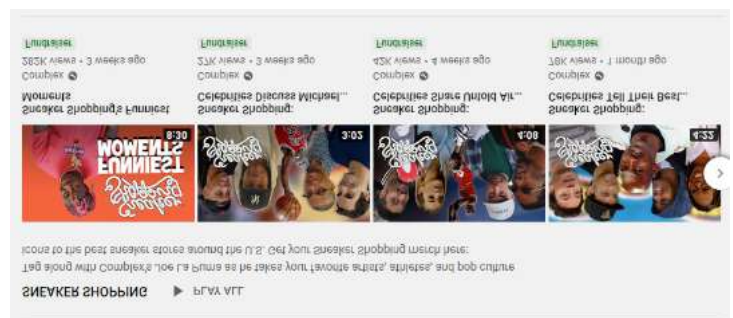
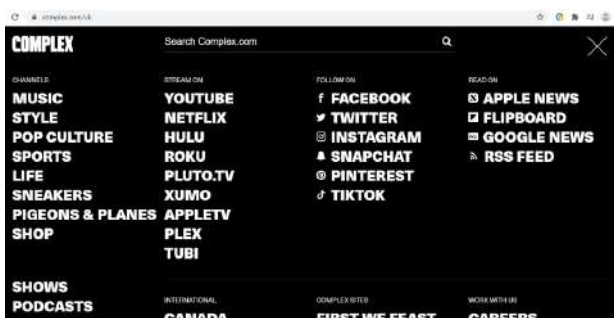
[Becoming a host at Comic Con](#)

As the number of influencers have grown the individual travel and lifestyle blogger has evolved into the cultural blogger and a new business model capitalizes on the move to online entertainment. Digital magazine style platforms contain a whole range of pop culture commentary and expertise, with openings for freelancers and entrepreneurs.

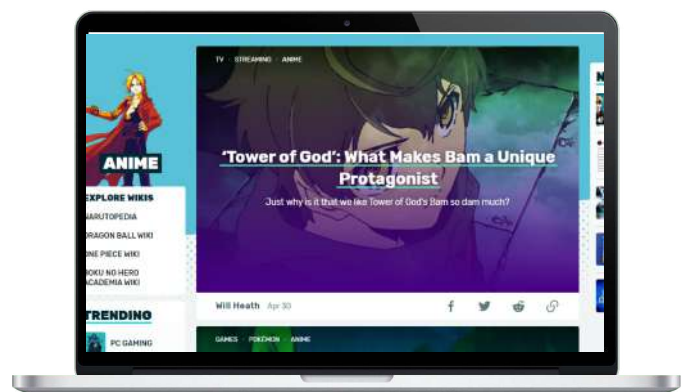


For example Complex Media is a company that –

uses pop culture and digital media to build a trusted brand. It curates and creates pop culture content and uses a broad range of channels. Through the power of its cultural content it has built an audience of 55 million viewers/customers a month, guiding their shopping habits and building a substantial revenue stream.



As the traditional print and broadcast media have adapted to the digital world, the concept of fandom has exploded and spawned whole new virtual communities with their own resources and platforms. Fans can start Wikis that contain volumes of information and discussion of their favourite shows or characters. With specialized, expert, pop culture content, these businesses can be built on a simple subscription basis.



Fandom – a platform for virtual fan communities

Other examples of new digital entertainment platforms include Hopster, with a growing catalogue of shows, songs, books and learning games for 2-6 year olds in a secure environment. Small independent media companies have taken advantage of these new platforms to grow their businesses in locations remote from the traditional media industries.

Hopster

Formed in 2010, Dog Ears is a children's media company based in the North West of Northern Ireland, creating original content which is streamed worldwide on Hopster. Their Saturday Club is a pre-school show all about empathy and is topping the ratings on Hopster. The companion app to the show is featured in the US and UK App Stores. Over the years the studio has taken on interns and trainees, increasing its number of staff to 17 in the animation studio.

Dog Ears



With technical advances in VR and AR equipment, and a reduction in the cost of equipment, gamification and VR are both set to explode into all areas of life and culture. The link with the tourism industry is obvious, with armchair travelers worldwide able to explore and immerse themselves in other cultures and their iconic locations. Recent travel restrictions make this a likely area of business growth in a world where frequent, cheap, travel is less sustainable.

AR overlays digital information on top of the real world with Pokemon Go characters for example infiltrating the real world and appearing in streets. Gaming industry insiders are waiting for the entrepreneur that can create the next great AR gaming idea, but gamification within a range of other industries, including health and education provide immense additional opportunities for the creative young entrepreneur.



Introducing 'Facebook Horizon,' a New Social VR World, Coming to Oculus Quest and the Rift Platform in 2020

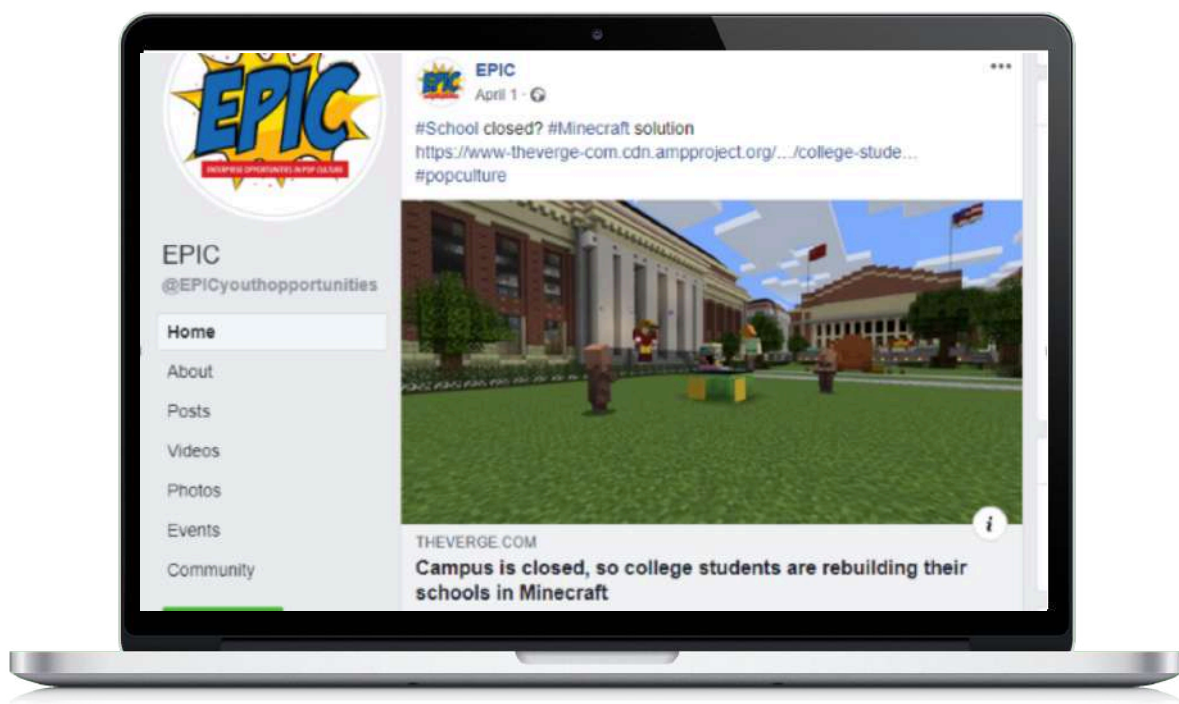
Today at OC6, we unveiled Facebook Horizon, a new social VR world coming to Oculus Quest and the Rift Platform in 2020. A culmination of...

[Learn More](#) >

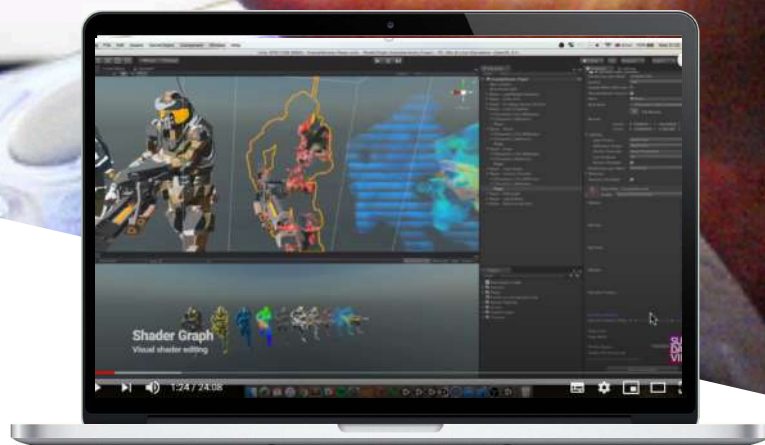
The music industry has also been transformed, with digital options like Plug DJ allowing young people to host a virtual club night for friends, creating an avatar, making a playlist and testing out a music career that would previously have required access to expensive club venues.

Plug Di

Many of the key trends in pop culture are dependent on, and thrive in, the digital world. Some of them are introduced below, but new ideas and opportunities are emerging constantly in this fluid world.



THE GAMING INDUSTRY



As a new generation has grown up with gaming consoles, they have invested a large amount of time becoming virtuosos. They have mastered gaming environments and built new virtual connections based on their passions. This has led to a massive and complex industry. The gaming industry is now more than twice as big as the film and music industries combined, with growth rates far in excess of traditional businesses. This growth has been supported by evolving technologies and trends, like mobile games and wireless, low energy consoles designed for emerging economies.

Statistics suggest that there are approximately 446 million gamers in Europe and 20 billion euro in sales. The UK gaming sector alone is worth £3.86 billion. The traditional image of massive games studios, with millions to spend on producing games for the big console companies is now changing as individuals and small indie companies can get together and create games without the massive costs that were previously a barrier to young entrepreneurs, particularly in the mobile gaming market.

“we have seen time and time again that a bunch of friends together in an office, a room, a garage, with an idea and a drive to make a game can make it globally.”

Simon Reed, Tutor

[Five steps to start making games](#)

“People just like you make games. You can come at it through art, drawing, animation, programming, design or music”

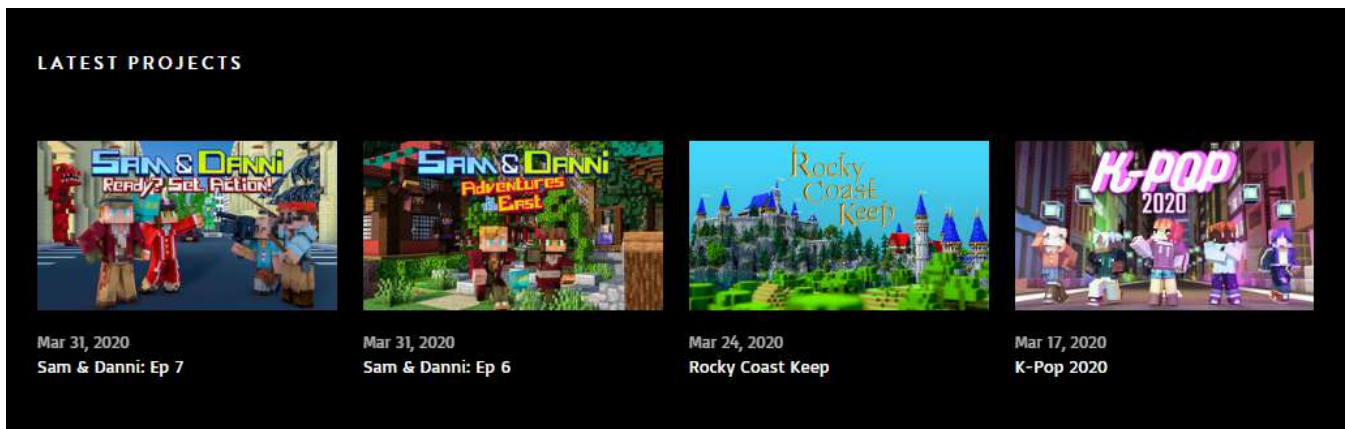
Tim Schafer, Double Fine Productions

Jordan Casey - An Irish teen entrepreneur in the digital world

New software for games development makes the market more accessible for passionate young people without programming skills.

Top 5 Game Engines for Beginners

The rise of interactive games, such as Minecraft in particular, rapidly opened up opportunities for creating virtual products, such as worlds, that could be traded.



Blockception

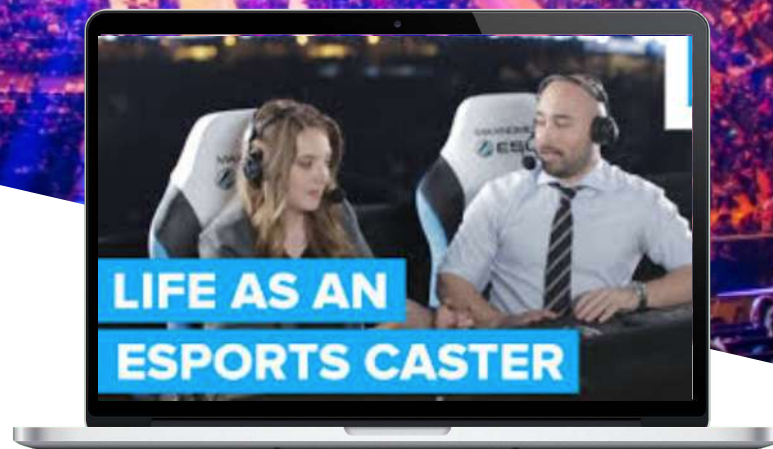
Blockception is a company that creates educational and entertaining content for “Minecraft”. Founded in 2015, the team grew steadily, producing detailed adventure maps and in game experiences, evolving into a successful business. The company now has a community-driven and passionate team of over 55 environment designers, writers, modellers, voice actors and programmers from across the globe. Gaming communities are being built by young entrepreneurs and run as businesses with revenue from advertising, promotions and subscriptions.

Wee Claire - Building a You Tube Channel

Gaming business opportunities are particularly powerful in that they arise organically out of the existing enthusiasms and everyday activities of a huge number of young people. They offer access to niche, low cost, opportunities for the creative thinker. They also have the advantage of not being confined to business or media clusters in large cities, any rural location with internet access can be the home of a new business. A rural startup is now also able to create fan communities, business partnerships and collaborate with experts from all over the globe.



ESPORTS



As an evolution from their own games playing, young people are watching video games tournaments and players in the same way that previous generations watched live and broadcast sports events. As a result business opportunities have moved far beyond the game buying market as young entrepreneurs have created low cost routes into online gaming opportunities, now known as esports.

The concept of esports is a worldwide phenomenon, growing fast in the last couple of years and already creating billions in revenue. As a young and very fluid industry, it is constantly building new communities and market opportunities. The image of esports and streaming among older adults can mask the real discipline and skills that performers develop, including business skills.

[From media laughingstock to media craze](#)

[Top 10 esports commentators](#)

[An inside look at esports commentating](#)

[Becoming a professional league of legends player at 18](#)

[7 things you need to consider before becoming a pro gamer](#)

Leagues, with virtual and physical tournaments, are fully fledged businesses. As are the teams that play in the leagues. Both teams and leagues draw revenue from prizes, advertising, sponsorship, promotions and ticket sales.

For example Fnatic is a global esports entertainment brand headquartered in London, focused on seeking out, levelling up and amplifying gamers and creators. They have a global audience of 55 million. In 2020 they will generate more than 100 million hours of entertainment content, with their team players being backup up by teams of content producers.



[Fanatic](#)

[How to start a professional esports team](#)

“People are starting to understand now that esports offer several career paths and several options for young people. There are not just the professional players out there that can earn five, six, even seven figures at the very top level - esports offer a variety of careers like traditional sports. There are commentary positions, coaching, sales and marketing, journalism - it’s a whole ecosystem and it is growing.”

Dominic Sacco British Esports Association.



Individual gamers can make use of platforms like Twitch, an online streaming service that allow them to broadcast themselves playing video games live.

It is used by amateurs and professionals to build gaming communities and subscription lists, attracting sponsorship, selling products and building viable businesses.

Top 10 highest paid streamers in the world

The top female Twitch streamer has 3,500,000 followers, earning millions in revenue for her performances, with a merchandising business on the side.

Pokimane

Streamers like Pokimane are dedicated entrepreneurs who can develop complex businesses across different platforms and sources of revenue. At lower levels of the esports business the investment in equipment can be relatively small compared to other traditional types of business. Allowing young people to explore the opportunities without great financial risks. This is particularly true of the ancillary business opportunities in online coaching or levelling up other players.

In response to the huge esports market more nimble mainstream education providers have just begun to offer esports as a subject.

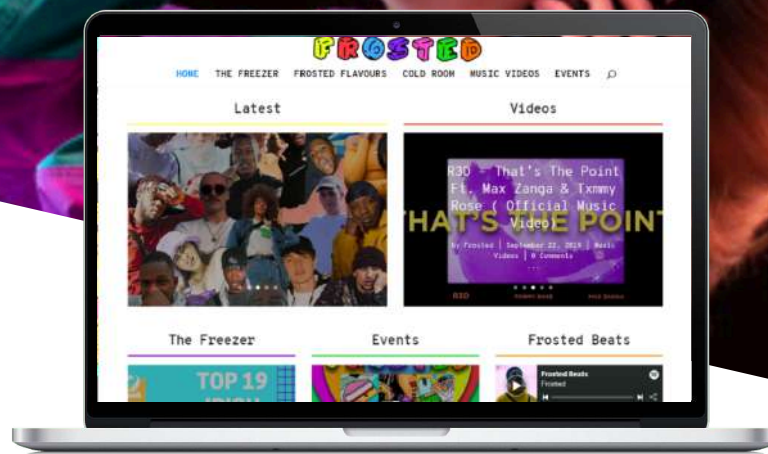
For example London's Roehampton university is offering an esports scholarship programme and some American universities are offering scholarships to build their own esports teams as they do their football teams.



THE CYBER COLLECTION BY POKIMANE

This collection is inspired by my favorite getaway: the online world. Lose yourself in some electric blues, sharp lines, and wearable neutrals. From your gaming chair to IRL, you'll be comfortable & stylish wherever you go. Enjoy ♡

MUSIC



Digital media and new technologies have opened up the music industry as never before for performers and music entrepreneurs. Music production and distribution have been transformed and become accessible from anywhere in the world.

The conventional studio album is in decline as options for people to create playlist have increased. A range of associated opportunities for creating music video, music journalism, music events and many others have followed for the motivated.

Frosted - An Irish urban music platform

Virtual reality festivals, silent discos, and on the simplest level the worldwide broadcast of concerts on the internet to homes or theatres are all new uses of digital media. Many are being adopted by the traditional cultural and heritage industries.

The benefits for those living outside traditional cultural hubs and with niche musical tastes are immense, as a worldwide audience can be found from a bedroom or a virtual environment. VR companies predict that “Virtual reality festivals and clubs aren’t 10 years down the line, they’re two years, when internet speed is good enough and VR headsets have been widely distributed,” Ersin Han Ersin, a designer at Marshmallow Laser Feast.

Musicians can build an audience by providing some free content to drive traffic to their own website, where they can set their own prices and take all of the profit.

Soundcloud

Hear what's trending for free in the SoundCloud community



Drowning
PSL



2020
Omar Kamal | عمر كمال



Life's A Mess Ft. Halsey
Juice WRLD



Conversations
Juice WRLD



YoungBoy Never Broke Ag..
Atlantic Records



Wishing Well
Juice WRLD



Blood On My Jeans
Juice WRLD



Come & Go Ft. Marshmello
Juice WRLD



Hate The Other Side Ft. Ma..
Juice WRLD



Prospect (feat. Lil Baby)
Jann Dior



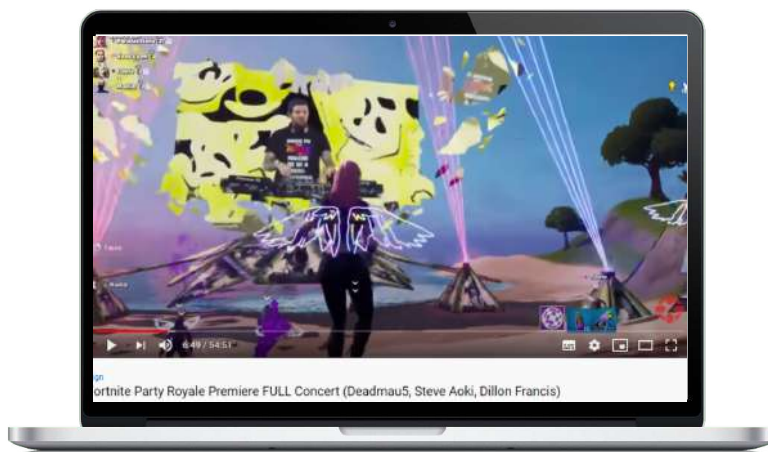
Tell Me U Luv Me (with Tri..
Juice WRLD



Titanic
Juice WRLD

A recent hip hop artist broadcasting a concert within the Fortnite Party Royale platform reached an audience of 15 million fans.

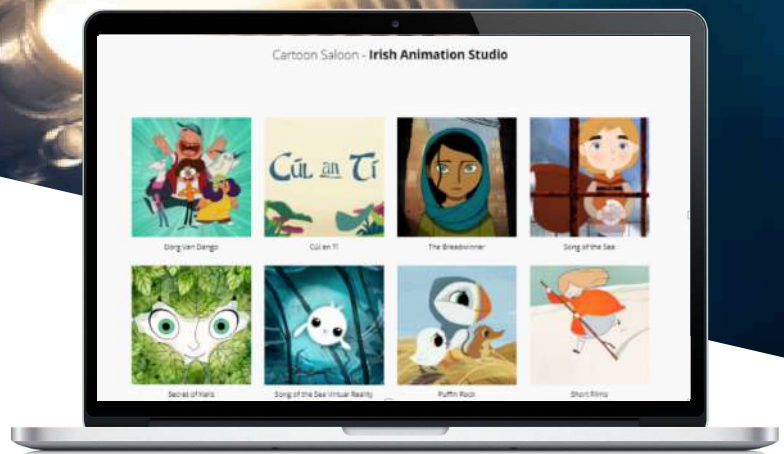
Party Royale Premier on You Tube



Audiences of this size will inevitably create new opportunities and entrepreneurs able to disrupt the status quo. Businesses producing hip hop dance costumes and streetwear are obvious spin off examples for artists and entrepreneurs.

Hip Hop entrepreneurs - beating the system

THE SCREEN INDUSTRY



New producers, such as Netflix and Amazon, and new technology have had a massive impact on the traditional screen industry. Productions for new channels have spread across Europe, bringing opportunities to rural areas as well as inspiring investment in production facilities outside the traditional media hubs such as London. For example The History Channel series shot on location in Ashford Studios in Ballyhenry in Co Wicklow had a €30m budget, employing over 500 Irish cast and crew, investing €20m in set design and studio facilities.

Film and TV shows you never would have known were shot in Ireland

A host of supporting craft and technical roles offer creative opportunities for young entrepreneurs either as freelancers or as small businesses. An awareness of this huge market has driven the emergence of local skill bases, with public and private investment in areas such as animation and digital design.

Cartoon Saloon - A pop culture entrepreneur's journey

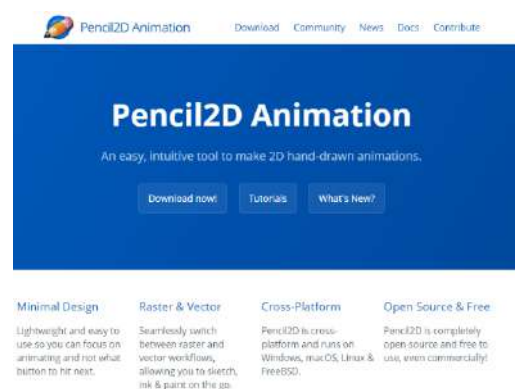
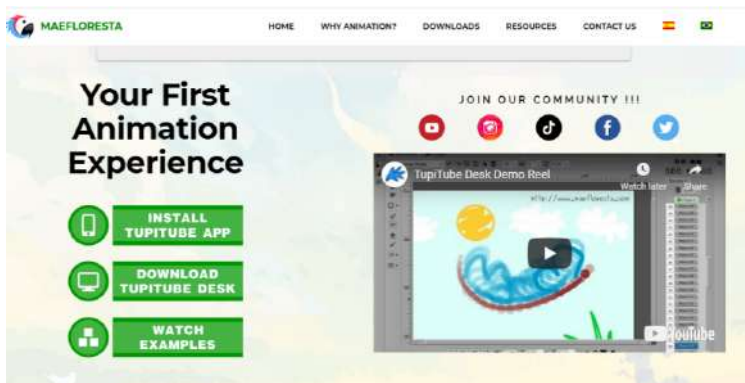
For example Sixteen South is independent studio in Northern Ireland focussed on creating and producing innovative, entertaining and meaningful content for kids throughout the world. Their shows are among the highest rating on all the major television networks, carried by Disney, PBS, Hulu, Nickelodeon, Netflix as well as on public broadcasters in most countries across the world. Their hit mixed animation series, Lily's Driftwood Bay, which airs in more than 100 countries; won the prestigious and coveted European Prix Jeunesse award whilst in production of its second series.

Sixteen South

Free, and low cost subscription, 2D and 3D animation software is available for different levels of skill. Allowing young people to explore their creative skills and create high quality content.



Pencil 2D Maefloresta





Pop art has a history going back to the 1950s of making art accessible and reflective of popular culture. The energy created in pop culture can be a source for a whole range of art and merchandise for a young entrepreneur with a feel for the sub culture they are targeting. Wherever there is a beloved book, TV show or film, there are artists and crafters ready to create and sell their own interpretations of its characters and universe.

Accessories, collectables, props are all open to creative interpretation and merchandising. Everything from mugs, clothes, games, furniture, stationery, trading cards, homeware, soft toys, handmade jewellery etc. Pop subcultures, such as horror fans, goths, anime, or hip hop, are all open to creative interpretation and merchandising.

[Pop culture themed skateboards](#)

[Hairy Baby](#)

[Setting up a t shirt business on a shoestring](#)

[Hysteria Machine](#)

[Anime Los Angeles](#)



Fine art skills and training are no longer a requirement for creative entrepreneurs. Digital art and design software is freely available and makes creative entrepreneurship much more accessible.

THE BROKE ARTIST'S GUIDE TO DIGITAL ART

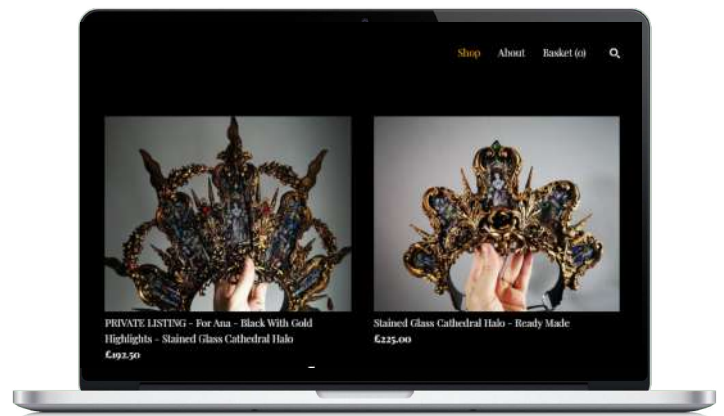


Traditional crafts are also a more accessible route for the creative geek.

Ajan Boeve - stained glass geek

Hysteria machine - Making a creative business out of a passion

The artist in a digital world has global horizons as an entrepreneur. With new marketing platforms and new tools for creativity, opportunities exist for artists, crafters and creative fans with niche tastes and knowledge. Top sellers often expand beyond their initial platform, creating their own brands and opening stores across the globe.



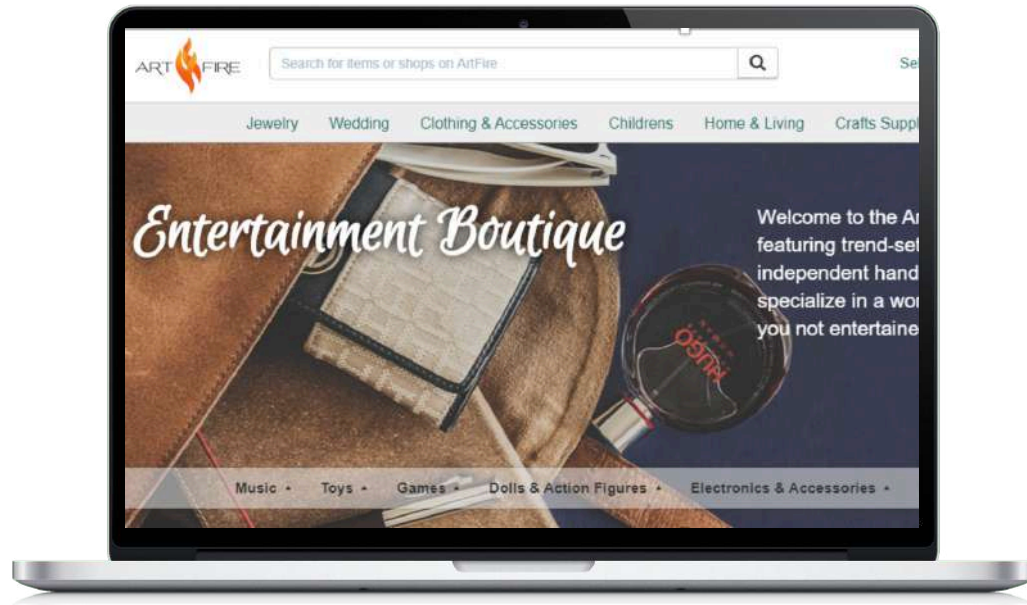
Etsy is one of the best known online shops for crafters and merchandisers, offering a lot of support for the first timers. But there are others that may suit more niche products and target markets.

Online marketplaces for crafty entrepreneurs

Etsy for Beginners

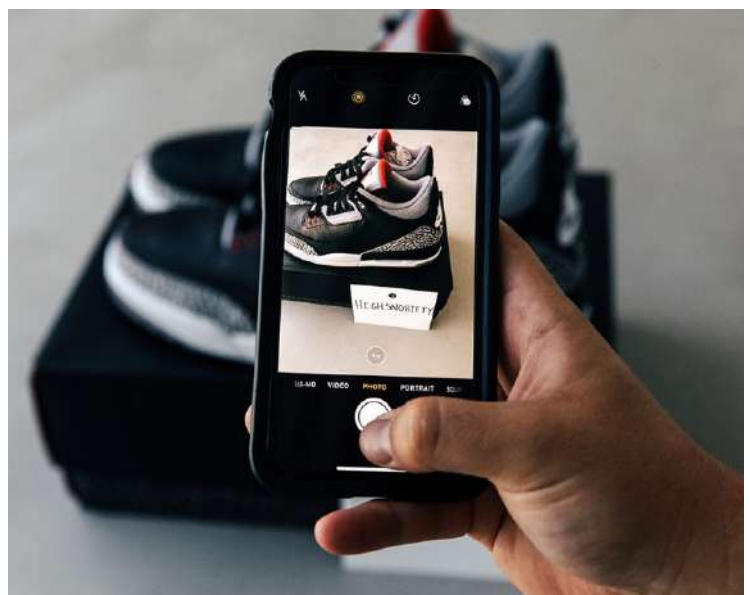
Not on the Highstreet

Artfire



For those without strong creative talent, but a good eye for emerging trends, collectables markets exist in all corners of pop culture.

[Beginners guide to selling collectable sneakers online](#)



COS PLAY



Cos play events, with their dedicated fan communities, open up a world of opportunity for creative merchandisers. The best way for fans to immerse themselves in their favourite fictional universe is to dress up as the characters themselves. Whether it's just for Halloween, or to attend fan events, people are willing to pay top dollar for authentic, tailor-made replicas of character outfits. At niche events small traders meet fans of Anime, horror, superheros, and other role playing subcultures that have built massive followings online.

[World Cosplay Summit](#)

[Cosplay events calendar](#)



Steampunk for example is a subgenre of science fiction that involves objects and fashion inspired by Victorian design and industrial steam-powered machinery.

It is a fixture at conventions in the UK and US and has its own fanbase requiring merchandise such as hats, goggles and fake weapons.

[Steam Punk in the UK](#)

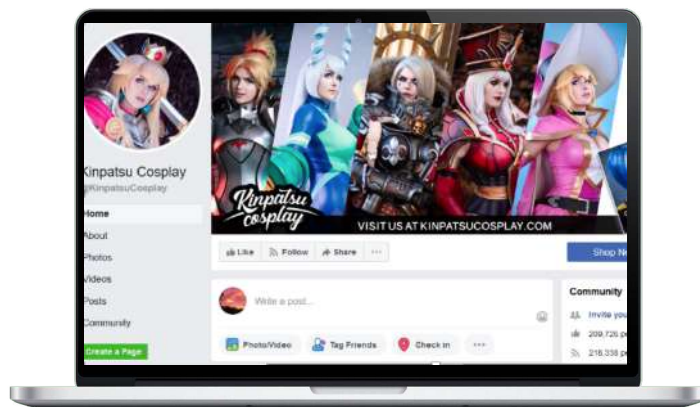
Online retailers are now offering made-to-order cosplay costumes, wigs and accessories based on everything from Disney films and comic books to anime and video games. Many of these items sell for upward of €100 or more if the item is a special commission request. They have built their businesses using Etsy, You Tube and the many other digital trading platforms now open to young entrepreneurs.

[Weird Ellie Cosplay](#)

[Game of Thrones jewellery on Etsy](#)

[Kinpatsu Cosplay](#)

[Fairytas - becoming a creature from another dimension](#)



FASHION

Traditional fashion brands such as Yves San Laurent or Armani have been predominantly elite products with huge budgets. Mass market retailers have also been big business, with major investment in shop fronts and manufacturing. However the combination of pop culture, social media and internet shopping has opened up the industry as never before. The rise of streetwear made fashion even more accessible, growing out of pop subcultures such as hip hop and skateboarding.

[22 streetwear brands](#)



Young entrepreneurs have stepped into the opportunity swiftly. Fifteen year old Gerald Devacci started a streetwear range with two friends and £10 in 2012. They designed the brand's first logo with Microsoft paint, printed their first t-shirt and sold it in school. They went on to set up a website and their designs were stocked by a local shop. After shooting their first video in 2016 they were picked up by TK Maxx and produced clothing for stores across the country.

The Devacci story

Started in 2015, by a self-confessed nerd, Hero Within is an online store dedicated to geek chic, creating everyday fashion for the sophisticated geek based on pop culture icons.

Geek Chic - Hero Within



For designers who are not keen in the manufacturing side of fashion there are ecommerce platforms that will take care of the process, manufacturing and shipping in small quantities. For example Teepublic is a Maltese company that allows artists to sell their designs to the public without having to get involved in manufacturing or marketing.

Teepublic - A marketplace for creators



For those with craft skills pop culture fashion opportunities are constantly evolving. For example the Peaky Blinder fashion phenomenon grew from a tv show in the UK that was subsequently streamed on Netflix to a worldwide audience. A gangster drama set in the 1920s, it has had a huge impact on mainstream men's fashion, and spilled into the digital merchandising world, influencing everything from shirts to accessories and, of course, the peaky blinder hat.

Peaky Blinders Merchandise on Etsy



COMIC ART

Comics are big business, sitting at the crossroads of business and art. The estimated size of the north American market in 2018 was \$1 trillion. One of the largest and best known pop culture experiences, is Comic Con San Diego. This is the meeting place of the global pop industry and the creative professions. It is where new talent is discovered and deals are done.

On a simple retail level, fans visit to meet artists, writers and performers and there are opportunities for merchandising and art that appeals to a variety of subcultures. The convention has recently grown to an attendance of 130,000 fans and industry players.



Comic Con San Diego

In this era of geek power, what was primarily an American cultural phenomenon has now been adopted around the world and comic book events take place all over Europe. In 2013 the first Polish official institution devoted to comic art opened – Lodz Comics Center - as a part of House of Literature in Lodz. It was inspired by the Belgian Comic Strip Center in Brussels.

Interview with the head of the Comics and Interactive Narratives Centre

Now the International Festival of Comics and Games in Lodz is the biggest comics event in Poland and Central-Eastern Europe. The festival is a place where comics & electronic interactive media creators and fans can meet. The 27th festival in the Atlas Arena was visited by over 20,000 people.

Lodz Festival of Comics and Games



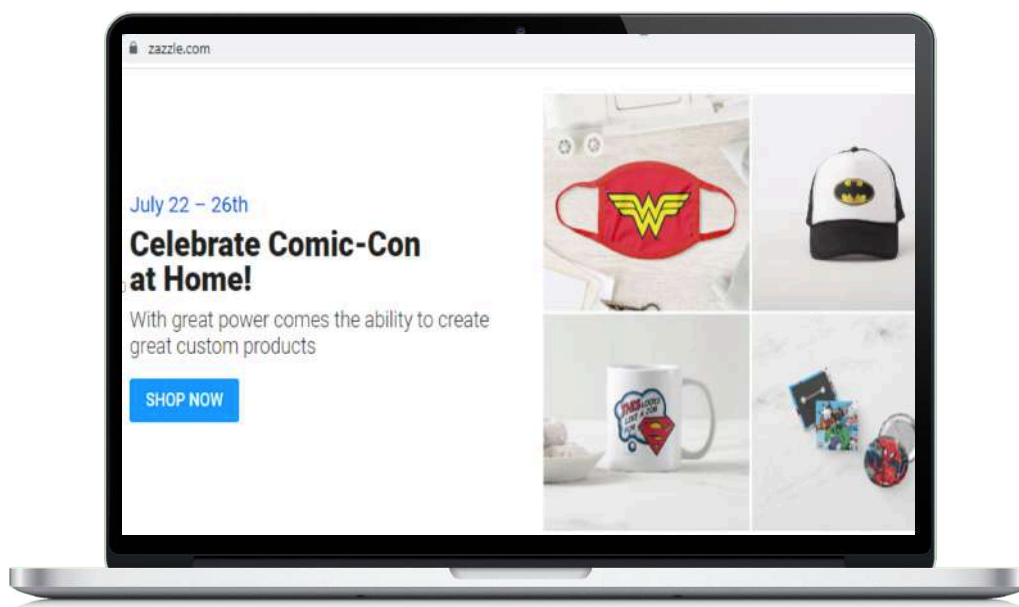
As in other areas of art, comic art as a business is becoming increasingly accessible. Distribution channels have moved far beyond the traditional printed comic. Self publishing platforms are expanding with the market.

For someone with a vision and a story to tell new software is out there to make the process of producing a comic much easier. This ability to create a more professional product without years of training has also opened up opportunities in mainstream media, marketing and communications as the world becomes more visual and interactive.



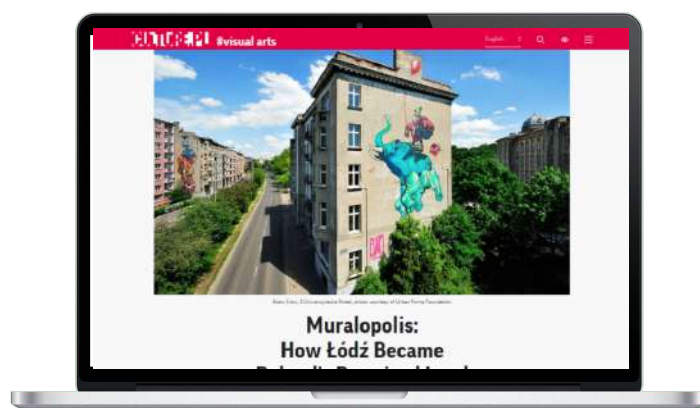
The industry is also fast evolving with a huge impetus coming from animated series on channels such as Netflix. With more diverse content, the focus is changing from the American superhero. Children's graphic novels and Japanese manga content are now the two biggest categories in the market. At the same time direct sales through comic book stores have been overtaken by online sales of printed comics and of digital comics. Young comic book entrepreneurs no longer have to have the capital to invest in bricks and mortar or printed copies.

[Creating and Publishing a digital comic](#)



STREET ART

Like many other pop culture phenomenon, the street art movement has now gone mainstream with the recognition of the power of street art to regenerate urban areas and economies. There are artists all over the world being commissioned to create iconic pieces of street art that have become part of the tourist industry, with walking tours of murals and artist's studios developed in Northern Ireland and a permanent exhibition of street art being created in Łódź, Poland.



Street Art in Lodz

This recognition has meant that advertisers in particular are now prepared to invest in large scale painted adverts, such as the iconic “Derry Girls” mural.



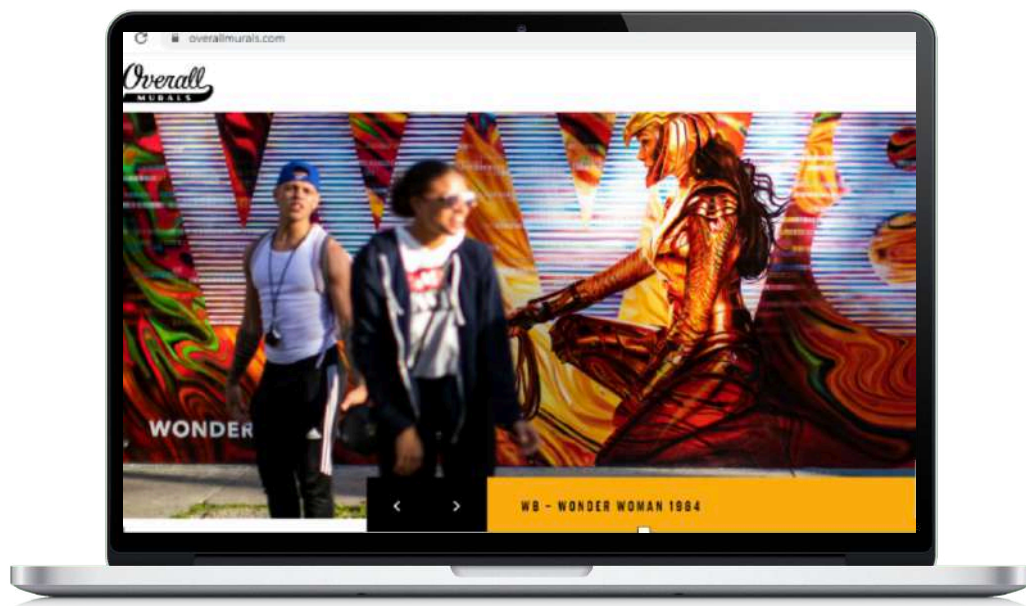
Making street art in New York Street art around the world

They are also prepared to commission a wider range of street artists, with the yarn bombers being a prime example. Yarn bombers use the traditional crafts of knitting and crochet to create art for public and private spaces.



How a street artist makes murals out of yarn

Street artists have also increasingly been adopted by the fine art markets. Crossing over and opening up new careers in high culture as well as moving into advertising and product design.





This is a huge and constantly evolving category of business, with opportunities for pop culture enthusiasts and geeks of all kinds.

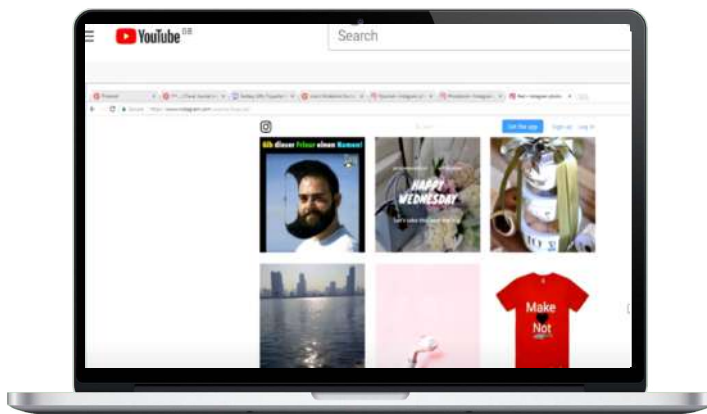
[106 online business ideas](#)

There are markets for physical and digital products. Platforms such as Shopify and Woo Commerce have made online sales of collectibles, art, and merchandise more simple and affordable. The success of an ecommerce store relies heavily on branding, focusing on a niche target market.

[Woo Commerce](#)

[Shopify](#)

[Researching e commerce markets](#)



With a niche e-commerce site, young pop culture entrepreneurs can reach customers looking for specific merchandise. Their cultural knowledge and focus can differentiate them and give them a market advantage, building a credible brand on their expertise.

[How to create a niche business](#)

To get a online business up and running they need a web hosting service with an integrated shopping cart feature or e-commerce software. To simplify the shipping process, they can work with vendors to ship products to customers on their behalf. Reducing the amount of inventory they need to keep onsite and making entry costs much lower. This is called drop shipping.

[Web hosting services](#)

I am a god-awful designer and can barely use Photoshop but a few hours on YouTube tutorials and I was able to create enough designs to start paying some bills.

Neil Lassen E-COMMERCE AND ONLINE MARKETING ENTREPRENEUR

[You Tube introduction to drop shipping](#)

[Tips on what to sell online](#)

Print on demand services offered by large ecommerce retailers like Amazon are another way to build a business with minimal investment in merchandise.

[How to build a print on demand business](#)

New approaches to retailing, along with new Ecommerce platforms also create opportunities for mobile sales in pop up shops and markets, ideal for young entrepreneurs to set up and get experience without having the expense and risk of premises.

[SumUp - mobile payments system for small businesses](#)

Digital products are a less obvious, but very accessible and profitable area within ecommerce. Digital products are anything which you can download online. There are no production or storage costs, marketing and time are the main expenses in this type of business. The ability to do a bit of research and create a professional looking product will take a young entrepreneur a long way.

Epublishing is a real option for the pop culture expert. It is very easy to start an emagazine or write and publish an ebook about your area of expertise, building a catalog and a brand with other fans. The low cost of publishing means that online authors do not need to make many sales to be in profit.

[Flipsnack emagazine software](#)

Subscription membership groups are another type of digital product that can naturally flow from a passion for some of the pop culture phenomenon in this pack, such as gaming culture, and music, but they are very diverse and often extremely niche opportunities.

[Setting up an membership site](#)



POP CULTURE TOURISM

According to Wikipedia pop-culture tourism is the act of traveling to locations featured in popular literature, film, music, or any other form of media. Traditional cultural tourism represents 40% of the global market. However pop culture tourism is evolving fast in its own right and links between the traditional heritage industry and pop culture are also growing.

Pop culture products, such as the Game of Thrones series, have breathed new life into heritage buildings and locations, making them into pop culture icons with a global market reach. This means the traditional heritage industry is now more accessible to young entrepreneurs, more understandable and more attractive as an option for a start-up.business.

Fans from across the world want to visit, experience and be photographed, at specific landmarks, places and buildings from scenes in their favourite TV shows and films. The recent impact of the “Lord of the Rings” on the New Zealand tourist industry was a 50 per cent increase in visitors. Spin offs for businesses in Europe include hobbit glamping.

Thanks to the Harry Potter films, King’s Cross railway station in London draws visitors who want to be photographed running into a wall. The College of Wizardry offers immersive Harry Potter role playing experiences at a 14th century castle in Poland.

[College of Wizardry](#)





The game of thrones phenomenon has created businesses in Malta, Croatia, Northern Ireland and anywhere else used as a location.

Dubrovnik was the main filming location in Croatia for King's Landing, a fictional city in Game of Thrones.

Game of Thrones Tours - Dubrovnik

Winterfell Tours - Northern Ireland

While themed bars, restaurants and activities have all been developed around popular film and tv series, guided tours, animation and interpretation of tourist sites are lower cost alternatives for young entrepreneurs.

OPTION 1 – WINTERFELL CASTLE & DEMESNE

Experience the real Westeros with a visit to the Winterfell movie set at Old Castle Ward a beautiful castle & 1000 acre sprawling demesne used for filming the epic adaption of George R.R. Martin's Game of Thrones novels in Northern Ireland.

Your private tour guide (who has acted in the show) will take you around Winterfell Castle & its vast demesne (so key film locations onsite including the penultimate very first episode scene location where Young Brandon Stark was shockingly pushed out the castle window) sharing fascinating stories about how the film sets were created onsite and some insider gossip about what the cast got up to behind-the-scenes. Your private tour guide will also show you exclusive behind-the-scenes video clips, notebooks and photographs from the actual filming days.

Key locations on this exclusive private Game of Thrones tour Ireland can include:

- Winterfell Castle courtyard (Includes Winterfell Archery Range Movie Set Experience)
- 'The Archway' from Kings Roberts Arrival to Winterfell Castle
- 'Castle Window' where Bran falls from window ledge
- 'Crooked Tree Branch' that overlooks Walder Freys Twins
- 'The Mystical Tree' under which Robb & Talissa secretly marry
- 'The Castle' that doubles as one of Walder Freys Twins
- 'The Tree' where Brienne confronts the Starkmen

OPTION 2 - WINTERFELL + KINGDOM OF MOURNE

This private Game of Thrones tour in Northern Ireland includes everything in standard Option 1 PLUS visits other recently used Season 8 locations close by Winterfell Castle & Demesne (Visit up to 30 key film locations)

– Your private Game of Thrones tour Ireland continues with a scenic drive in one of our executive vehicles through the dramatic County Down countryside whilst watching exclusive behind-the-scenes DVD clips and browsing photographs from the actual filming days as you travel.

Your driver guide (who has acted in the show) will show you the specially commissioned carved Game of Thrones Pub Doors along the way and the savagely beautiful wild landscapes in the Kingdom of Mourne Mountains that HBO used for filming. Interestingly, the majestic Kingdom of Mourne Mountains where also an inspiration to another famed fantasy epic, the Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis.

Key locations on this exclusive private Game of Thrones tour Ireland can include:

- 'The Track through Ireland's Oldest Scots Pine Forest' where 'Hold the Door' Hodor pushes disabled Bran along in Kart as they travel North of Winterfell
- 'The Mystical Mountain & Grasslands' used for the 'Horse Gate' approach to the sacred Dothraki city
- 'The Mountain Track' that is the 'Road to Meereen' - 'Can I drink myself to death on the road to Meereen?' (Tyrion)
- 'The Riverside Jetty' that HBO built especially for Tullys Funeral scene
- 'The Crater' deep in the Haunted Forest where the Nights Watch men meet the dreaded White Walkers - 'I Saw what I Saw...I Saw the White Walkers' (Will)

'Belfast Noir' is a new and innovative walking tour that explores Belfast's rich history in Film, TV and Literature. The tour guide is a local Crime Fiction writer introduces tourists to the bizarre and the 'noir' side of Belfast. The talk includes The Fall, Line of Duty, Odd Man Out, Game of Thrones, Colin Bateman and the local 'Ulster Noir' literature scene.

Belfast Noir Walking Tours



Tours also take visitors around Belfast's street art, providing the kind of cultural insight and local connection that tourists value.



These opportunities are not always the most obvious leaps of imagination. Even the devastation of nuclear disaster can be a draw for tourists. With vibrant music, art or other pop cultures to draw on, there are opportunities for young people to create and sell cultural experiences based on their own interests. European cultural tourists are looking for “authentic” experiences. They like to interact with locals and have active experiences.

The rise of etourism over the past ten years means that cultural tourists are also increasingly likely to research experiences and book online. As the travel industry faces major challenges over the next few years, there will be opportunities for entrepreneurs to connect with these tourists in innovative ways. While etourism has been defined in very functional terms, automating booking services and enabling journeys to be planned online, the markets for AR experiences for cultural tourists, or VR experiences for armchair tourists are relatively underdeveloped.



04

POP CULTURE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
NORTHERN IRELAND



POP CULTURE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NORTHERN IRELAND



The distinctive culture, landscape and heritage of Northern Ireland permeates everyday life and has found expression in the music, literature and street art of the region, as well as in a growing digital sector. Northern Ireland has a vibrant contemporary culture, including its music, film, TV and fashion. Businesses can benefit by simply being in the proximity of a cultural location, or they can also take a more proactive approach and use their particular pop culture experiences and knowledge to create global products.

Having two local tv and radio broadcasters directly linked into a national and international media industry has also given Northern Ireland a considerable advantage that balances its relative isolation on the edge of the UK and Europe. These connections with global pop culture, combined with a unique set of circumstances and outlook makes Northern Ireland well placed to create pop culture businesses. It has also benefitted from public investment in the screen industry and in the development of pop culture businesses such as digital animation and screen tourism.

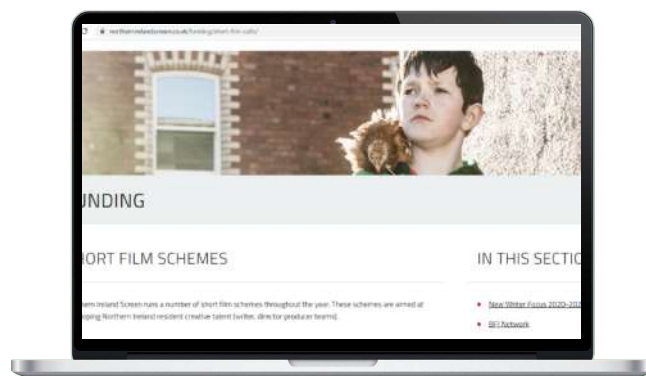
***With a relatively young population (53% under the age of 40),
and a high rate of internet usage, there are strong underlying reasons
for this region to have a distinctive voice within pop culture.***

THE SCREEN INDUSTRY

The recent success of the screen tourism industry in Northern Ireland is built on the growth of local creative skills and facilities that attract big productions to the region. The Game of Thrones production alone is estimated to have boosted the local economy by £210 million. A host of supporting craft and technical roles offer creative opportunities for young entrepreneurs either as freelancers or as small businesses. Investment in new sound stages, production studios and workshops has supported this expansion in creative industries and the emerging local skills bases in areas such as animation and digital design.

Awareness of the potential of creative industries for supporting new business has been growing in Northern Ireland and it has been identified as a key export for the region. There are development and educational bodies offering support, training and funding in the creative industries. This has led to the emergence of clusters of expertise and opportunity locally which would have previously been confined to the highly developed media industry in London.

The industry is supported by Northern Ireland Screen, which showcases local opportunities, local businesses and training and provides creative learning centres for disadvantaged young people, with creative academies focusing on areas such as animation and production design



Links: [Northern Ireland Screen](#) [Northern Ireland Screen funding](#)

CASE STUDY – FLICKERPIX

Also based in Holywood. Flickerpix has grown from a small windowless room in East Belfast, producing animated stings for local TV to a studio whose work has been celebrated and awarded on all five continents; responsible for bringing Zig and Zag back to television with a 26 part animated sitcom for RTEJnr and CBBC.

[Flickerpix](#)



CASE STUDY – PAPER OWL



Paper Owl Films was established in January 2012. Originally working in the Irish language, Paper Owl has a strong track record in producing a wide range of documentaries as well as commercial, corporate and children's content for film, TV and digital platforms. This includes Pablo, a charming pre-school animation series, the first to be made about a character on the autism spectrum.

[Paper Owl](http://www.paperowlfilms.com)

CASE STUDY – DOG EARS

Formed in 2010, Dog Ears is a children's media company creating original content centred on characters and stories – on paper, on tablets, devices and in living rooms. Over the years the studio has taken on interns and trainees, as well as increasing its number of staff to 17 in the animation studio. Their work is all about bringing stories to life across media and platforms, from publishing their first book starring Miss Rosie Red and releasing Ireland's first children's book app, to co-producing their second project, *Puffin Rock*, as an animated series with a full animation team in their Londonderry/Derry studio.

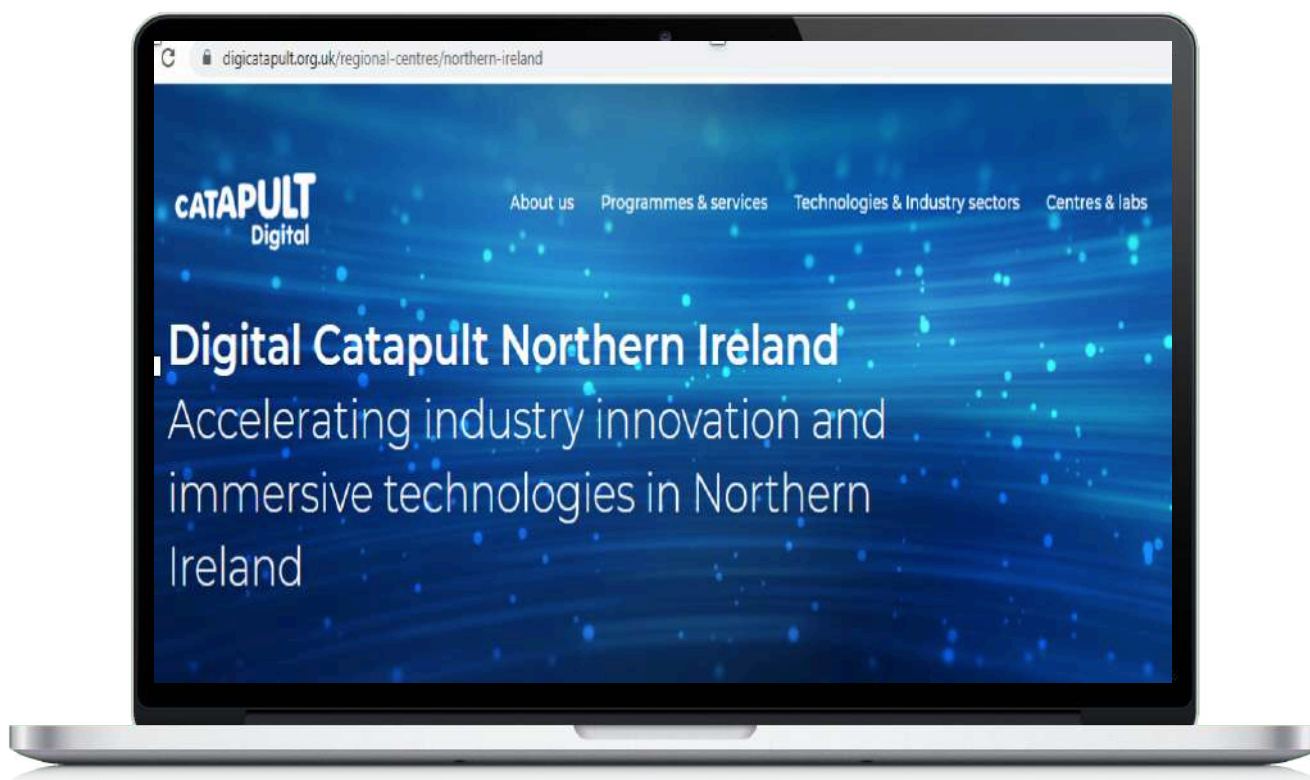
[Dog Ears](http://www.dogears.ie)



POP CULTURE AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Northern Ireland has a very strong IT sector and despite its size has outpaced all other UK regions in its investment in digital businesses. It has a high level of connectivity and is investing further in digital networks. As a result Northern Ireland is the first region in the EU to achieve 100% broadband connectivity, which will be a key factor in the viability of new digital businesses. The background to this investment in Northern Ireland is a strong local financial technology and cyber security sectors. Belfast is number 9 in the global digital economy league, ahead of Tokyo. The knock on effect for pop culture businesses are obvious, with a strong infrastructure and understanding of the potential of digital business that reflects a broader UK emphasis on the sector

[Digital Catapult NI.](#)

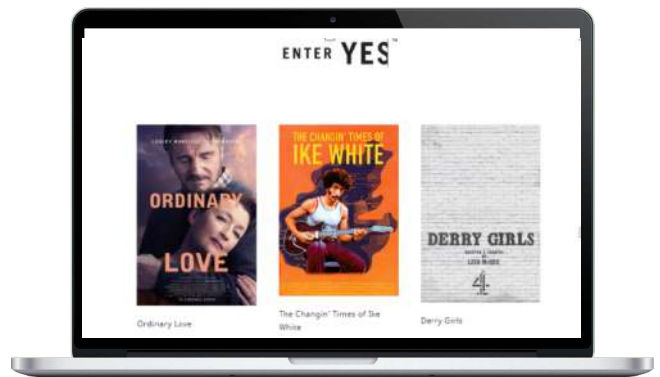


[Tourism NI invests in augmented reality](#)

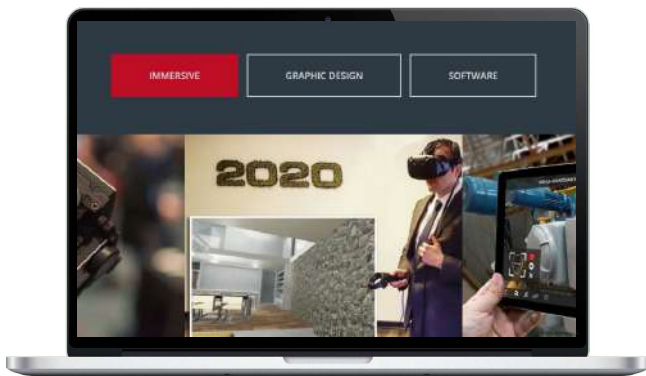
CASE STUDY - ENTER YES™

Pushes the boundaries of film, virtual reality, interactive image and animation to create award-winning content centred on the interpretation of emotion and creativity in digital media.

Enter Yes



CASE STUDY - EDGEWAYS



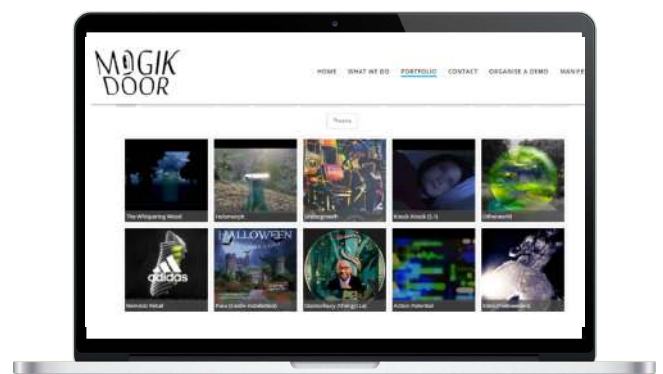
A two year old start up in Armagh that in its second year has expanded its services in immersive technologies, virtual reality, augmented reality, virtual tours, web and graphic design, offering VR architecture design, animation and 360 degree visualisation.

Edgways

CASE STUDY - MAGIK DOOR

Magik Door creates 3D sonic art installations for theatres, games, film, events, museums and gardens. They work with new formats such as Wavefield synthesis, Vbap, Dbap, Binaural sound, transaural and their services can bring to life the traditional heritage tourism market.

Magik Door

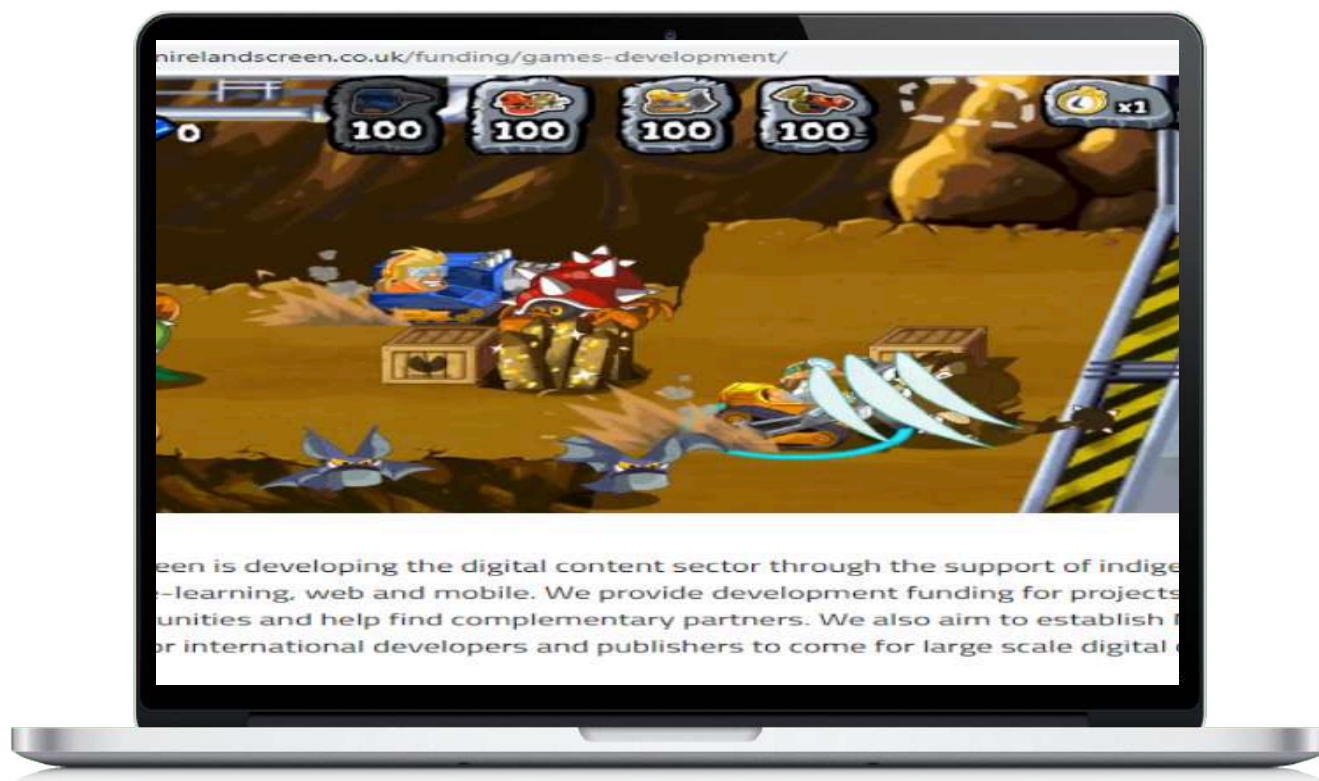


GAMING

The UK gaming sector is worth £3.86 billion. There are now 20-30 gaming companies in Northern Ireland. It is a rapidly changing scene with many niche opportunities and presents a massive new area for young entrepreneurs, with numerous subcultures and identities evolving around specific games such as Minecraft and World of Warcraft.

Northern Ireland Screen has taken a role in supporting local start up games studios. It acts as a hub for a variety of programmes aimed at developing new talent into industry leaders in the gaming and interactive content markets.

It has supported initiatives such as the Pixel Mill innovation Centre for game development teams from across Northern Ireland. The Mill is offering an incubation programme for UK and Ireland with industry mentorship, access to funding and links to local Universities. The Pixel Mill will also serve a larger role as a gaming community meeting place and a platform for local gaming initiatives.



CASE STUDY - ITALIC PIG

A studio based in Holywood, Co. Down, Italic Pig has just signed a seven figure deal with UK game publisher The Irregular Corporation for their latest game. Called Paleo Pines, it is a casual social/management sim where players can become dinosaur ranchers.

Italic Pig



CASE STUDY – BLACKSTAFF GAMES



Blackstaff Games is a studio of collaborative designers working across animation, interactive and games. They create relatable characters, vibrant worlds and engaging experiences. They specialize in high production value 2D content across a range of disciplines PC & Console Games, Children's Media & Animation, Educational Apps and Web Content.

Blackstaff Games

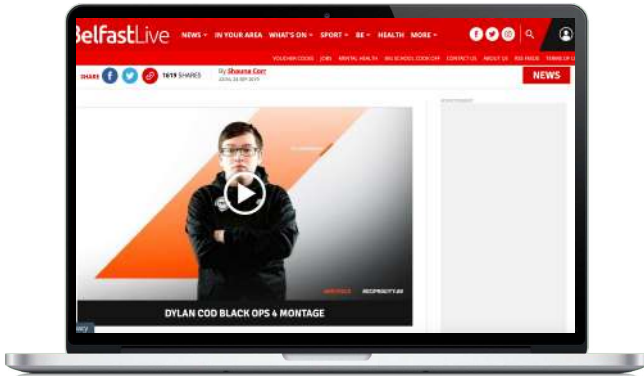
CASE STUDY - BLOCKCEPTION, NORTHERN IRELAND

Blockception is a company that strives to create immersive, educational and most importantly entertaining digital content and experiences for the popular game, and worldwide phenomenon, "Minecraft". Founded in 2015, the team grew steadily, producing detailed adventure maps and incredible in game experiences, evolving us into a successful business. Our company now boasts a community-driven and passionate team of over 55 environment designers, writers, modellers, voice actors and programmers from across the globe.

<https://www.blockception.com>



CASE STUDY - STREAMERS



Northern Ireland also has professional games streamers and esports competitors. A Northern Ireland lad whose mother once threw his games console in the bin is now playing Call of Duty professionally on the world esports circuit. Twenty year old Dylan Henderson has been signed by ReKTGlobal's London franchise of the 2020 Call of Duty World League.

[Signing up to the Call of Duty esports world league](#)

[Top Twitch Streamer in Northern Ireland](#)

Links:

[Pixel Mill](#)

[Games NI](#)

[Northern Ireland's top Twitch streamer](#)

[Games Ni Association for game developers](#)

ART AND MERCHANDISING

The phenomenal growth of online merchandising has made it possible for creative young people in a marginal economy like Northern Ireland to reach any part of the globe and develop a business based on niche products that could never survive in the local market alone.

The spread of pop culture icons and trends from elsewhere is also faster and creates local marketplaces for niche creative businesses that would not have been conceivable before the communication revolution of the last ten years.

Comic Con Ireland



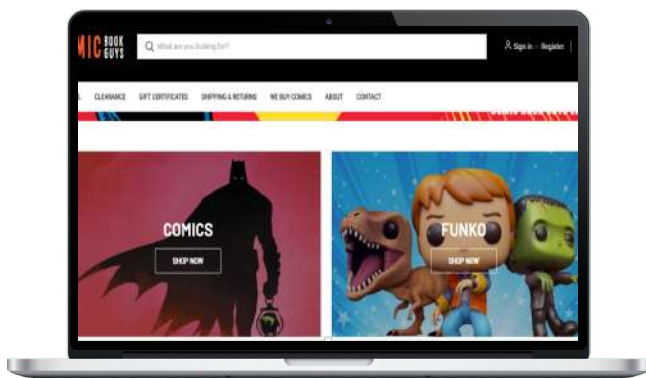
CASE STUDY – MOONDOGGYS CLOTHING

A premium streetwear brand influenced by the underground cultures of hip hop, extreme sports and graffiti. The founder first conceived of the idea at the age of 14 and recently launched the range online.

Moondoggys Clothing



CASE STUDY - COMIC BOOK GUYS, BELFAST



Comic Book Guys are Northern Ireland's largest independent comic book store. They are a one stop shop for all your comic needs including back issues - from golden to silver age, bronze to modern and everything in between! They also stock key comics, full arcs, new releases and CGC graded comics, movie memorabilia, toys and other collectables.

[Comic Book Guys](#)

CASE STUDY - RATTY TAT HATS

Based in County Down, the business produces one of a kind Steampunk and vintage hats.

[Rattytat hats](#)

Links

[Comic Con Ireland0](#)



MUSIC AND DANCE

Northern Ireland has a strong music offering, from traditional music in pubs and festivals, to more contemporary music which has taken centre stage at key events. There are also has a wide range of music venues from small intimate sites, to large facilities which can host major international acts. From Van Morrison to Snow Patrol.

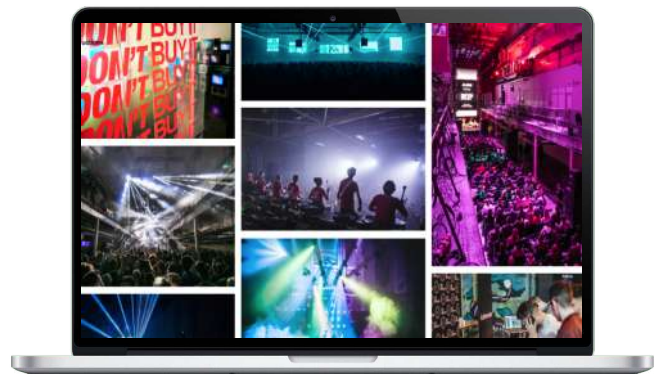
Young entrepreneurs have found different routes into this music market. They have capitalised on particular genres, such as Hip Hop, to build businesses in specialised event promotion. The hip hop subculture supports dance schools, competition events and clothing ranges, as well as the core music events, with opportunities in performing, sound engineering, mixing and events management.

Young entrepreneurs in Northern Ireland have also taken advantage of rapid developments in music technology that have opened up the market to small music production businesses and individual performers.

CASE STUDY – UP PRODUCTIONS & THE AVA FESTIVAL

Inspired by a trip to Glastonbury, Up Productions was founded in 2013 by Sarah McBriar as a creative production company. It is now delivering the AVA Festival in Belfast, a four day audio visual event and conference that has 4 million views on YouTube, providing a platform for local artists and musicians.

Sarah McBriar's entrepreneurial journey



CASE STUDY – VIBE ACADEMY



The business evolved from a summer scheme into a year round street dance academy with classes running in three locations, Belfast, Bangor and Lurgan, and a clothing line.

Vibe Academy

CASE STUDY – START TOGETHER STUDIOS

Formed by a group of musicians in 2007 they have developed two studios in Belfast and offer recording, mixing and production facilities, supporting new artists, engineers and producers.

Start Together Studio

Links

Sound Better Recording Studios



POP CULTURE AND SCREEN TOURISM

Pop culture tourism provides opportunities in all sectors of the industry, from event organisation and logistics, to accommodation, hospitality, transport, interpretation and merchandising. It easily crosses old boundaries between the traditional heritage industries of Northern Ireland and a larger, more contemporary market.

Examples of pop culture opportunities in traditional heritage settings

- Game of Thrones Tours
- Themed bars, tours of sets and locations
- Belfast Titanic hotel, Titanic museum, Harland and Wolff
- Tours of sporting venues
- New visitor centre at Giants Causeway

Northern Ireland has benefited massively from this pop culture trend, with tv and film shows with global reach based in locations here. Locations previously only visited by a handful of travelers have had an influx of screen tourists bringing opportunities for savvy entrepreneurs able to respond to fast moving phenomena. For example training and accreditation in tour guiding has been developed in the traditional heritage industry, and the “Blue Badge Guide” training offers low cost pathways for young people to create their own pop culture tourist services.

BLUE BADGE GUIDE TRAINING



Tourism NI estimates that about 120,000 Game of Thrones visitors came to Northern Ireland in 2016 to see where the battles between good and evil unfolded. Fans of Game of Thrones who visit Northern Ireland specifically to see the likes of the Kingsroad or Winterfell in person could be worth about £30 million (€34 million) a year to the local tourist economy, according to the latest statistics. The fantasy blockbuster, which has become one of the most watched television series in the world, has been hailed by tourism experts as “transformative” for screen tourism in Northern Ireland. Local entrepreneurs have responded to this opportunity with the creation of tours, experiences and events related to the show. In 2016 there were 900 full-time and 5,700 part-time jobs, helping businesses from coach tour suppliers to small jewellery firms commissioned to make crowns and pendants for the show.

Local studios in Banbridge were one of the locations used to shoot iconic scenes and there are plans to open a new Game of Thrones studio tour in Banbridge in 2020 based on the hugely successful Harry Potter studio tour near London.

This international phenomenon is also reflected in opportunities for local screen tourism, with cult tv shows such as “Derry Girls”, “Line of Duty” and “The Fall” creating screen tourism opportunities in areas where youth unemployment is high.

TITANIC BELFAST



An enduring popular interest in the tragic history of the Titanic was massively increased by the arrival into popular culture of the 1997 film, Titanic. This blend of popular culture and the historic link between Belfast’s shipyard and the Titanic became a catalyst for the regeneration of a derelict waterfront in Belfast, with the creation of the Titanic Quarter, Titanic Museum and Titanic Hotel. It created a vibrant night-time economy and numerous spin off businesses.

This mix of pop culture with more traditional Northern Ireland heritage tourism provides opportunities in all sectors of the leisure and tourism industry, from event organisation and logistics, to accommodation, hospitality, transport and tours and merchandising. In a world adapting to covid 19 and climate change, with travel opportunities potentially being more limited, it is likely that entrepreneurs able to go digital, linking with the emerging local digital skills base particularly AR and VR, to create more unusual, interactive experiences and more value for their customers will win out.

CASE STUDY - WINTERFELL TOURS

Based at Castle Ward Estate in County Down, where a number of scenes from the popular TV show Game of Thrones were filmed. The business took advantage of this by offering Game of Thrones themed experiences

Winterfell Tours



CASE STUDY – BELFAST HIDDEN TOURS



Popular literature, live music and live performances are all at the heart of a different and more immersive approach to cultural tourism that reflects.

Belfast Hidden Tours

Links

[Screen tourism - Tourism NI](#)

[Grow your game of thrones business](#)



SUPPORT FOR POP CULTURE ENTREPRENEURS IN NI

CREATIVE AND DIGITAL INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Greenshoots NI is a programme jointly developed by Northern Ireland Screen and Microsoft to support early stage start-up game studios with bringing new and exciting game titles to Microsoft and Xbox One, Windows PC and mobile platforms. Northern Ireland Screen acts as the regional hub for the **UK Games Talent** programme run by the UK Games Fund. The programme aims to develop new talent who will become future leaders in the gaming and interactive industry. Northern Ireland Screen mentors local teams that have been selected for the programme, holding regular development update meetings to provide feedback and advice on development.

The **eXP** scheme encourages innovation-minded interactive content developers based in Northern Ireland to defy conventional and traditional interactive experiences and search out new genres and ideas. The **Assembler Programme funds** the early stage development of up to 6 games with the aim of one of the selected projects going into production. Projects go through three stages of development where they receive constructive feedback from established publishers. Developers are funded to participate in delegations to major game conferences in the UK, Europe and US, helping companies to make new connections that will benefit their projects and get them published.

[Northern Ireland Screen](#)

[Arts Council NI](#) provides advice, support and funding to artists and art organisations across Northern Ireland.

[Craft Northern Ireland](#) provides advice, support and information to start ups and small firms in the craft and design sectors.

[Northern Ireland Design Alliance](#) runs events for start ups and small firms in the design sector.

Media and creative - [Creative Skillset in](#) Northern Ireland provides funding for training projects that improve creative skills.

[Xcelleratesm](#) is an accelerator programme that supports tech start ups to launch, develop and grow their businesses.

[Xcell Partners](#) provides investments to start ups and high-growth firms in the tech and digital sectors.

[Digital Circle](#) provides information about events and seminars for start ups and small firms in the digital sector.

TOURISM

[Hospitality Ulster](#) provides advice, support and information to firms in the hospitality and tourism sectors.

The [Industry Development Programme](#) provides advice, guidance and training to support the growth of the tourism sector in Northern Ireland.

[Tourism Northern Ireland](#) provides support, information and funding to start ups and small firms in the tourism sector.

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND TRAINING

[Advantage NI](#) runs a number of programmes that provide start-up support to people aged 16 to 30.

[The All-Island Innovation Programme](#) provides training to help firms across Ireland become more innovative.

[Catalyst](#) Inc provides advice, support, training and events to innovative and knowledge-based start ups and small firms.

[The Centre for Competitiveness](#) provides support, training and events to help small firms improve their competitiveness and productivity.

[Enterprise Northern Ireland](#) provides advice, support and training to start ups and small firms across Northern Ireland.

[Go for It](#) provides advice and support to help start ups and early-stage firms across Northern Ireland to develop a business plan.

[InnovateUs](#) provides support and training to help small firms across Northern Ireland to engage in innovative activities that support business growth.

[Enterprise Europe Network](#) in Northern Ireland connects small firms with partners across Europe to help them commercialise their ideas and access new markets for their products and services.

[Trade Accelerator Vouchers](#) provide grants of up to £1,000 to help small firms in Ireland access professional advice to assess the viability of cross-border business plans.

[InterTradeIreland](#) provides cross-border business advice, support and funding to start ups and small firms across Ireland.

[Invest NI](#) provides advice, support, training and funding to help start ups and small firms grow their businesses and develop new products, processes and services.

[Libraries NI](#) provides advice, information and access to a range of online resources for start-ups and small firms across Northern Ireland.

[NI Business Info](#) is an online resource that provides advice, guidance and information to start ups and small firms across Northern Ireland.

[NICVA](#) provides advice, support and training to help social enterprises in Northern Ireland start up and grow.

[The Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce](#) and Industry provides business advice, information, events and international trade services to firms across Northern Ireland.

[Northern Ireland Food & Drink Association](#) (NIFDA) provides support, information and events to firms in the food and drink sector.

[Prince's Trust](#) in Northern Ireland provides business start-up support to people aged 18 to 30.

[Social Enterprise NI](#) provides advice, support, training and events for new and established social enterprises.

[Spice](#) provides advice, support and training to start ups and small firms across Northern Ireland.

[Women in Business](#) runs networking events for business women across Northern Ireland.

[Young Enterprise Northern Ireland](#) runs enterprise programmes for people aged 25 and under who want to start their own business.

GRANTS, LOANS AND EQUITY FINANCE

[techstartNI](#) provides seed funding to start ups and early-stage firms in the tech sector.

[Innovation Vouchers](#) provide funding of up to £5,000 to support small firms to work with an expert from a university or research body to innovate, develop and grow their business.

[Invest NI](#) provides grants and loan funding of up to £50,000 to support the development of innovative new products and processes.

[The NI Small Business](#) Loan Fund provides loans of up to £15,000 to start ups and £50,000 to established firms across Northern Ireland.

[Ulster Community Investment Trust](#) (UCIT) provides loans from £25,000 to £500,000 to social enterprises across Northern Ireland.

[Co-Fund NI](#) provides investments from £150,000 to £1 million to start ups and high-growth firms.

[Enterprise Northern Ireland](#) provides loans of up to £25,000 to firms trading for less than 24 months.

[Fleximize](#) provides loans from £5,000 to £200,000 to start ups and small firms across Northern Ireland.

[The Growth Loan Fund](#) provides loans from £50,000 to £500,000 to established firms across Northern Ireland.

[Kernel Capital](#) provides investments of up to £2 million to firms in the technology, software and engineering sectors.

RURAL BUSINESS SUPPORT

[The College of Agriculture, Food & Rural Enterprise \(CAFRE\)](#) provides support and training to help start ups and small firms in the agriculture, food manufacturing and land-based industries to sustain and grow their businesses.

[The Farm Family Key Skills programme](#) runs short training courses to help family farms across Northern Ireland to improve their farm practices.

[Rural Support](#) provides support, financial advice and information to help improve the long-term sustainability of family farms across Northern Ireland.

05

PRACTICAL
LEARNING
ACTIVITIES



More examples of a range of practical learning activities are available in our open educational resources, downloadable from the website

CREATIVE ENTERPRISE ACTIVITY – THE REWARDS OF STARTING A BUSINESS

Method: Group or Individual Materials

Needed: Paper and pen

Duration: 20 mins

Why Do It?

It is designed to encourage a positive mind-set within the participants before continuing with the rest of the EPIC Pop Culture entrepreneurship guide

How to Do It

Task 1 Ask the participants to think about what they would enjoy about starting their own enterprise/business.

Task 2 5 mins Ask them to note down the rewards they would get from starting your own business.

Task 3 10 mins Ask them to note down the benefits of each factor on various aspects of their life i.e. personal, family, social etc

Task 4 5 mins Ask participants to share their answers – this will encourage a positive mind-set before continuing with the rest of the EPIC Guide to exploring pop culture enterprise.

IDEA GENERATION ACTIVITY

Using Pinterest

Inspiration boards

Individual Materials Needed:

Pinterest and smart phone/tablet/computer

Duration:

20 mins

What is it?

Pinterest is a social network which allows you to share and comment on visual material, which could be photographs, sketches, videos or web pages. Like a virtual scrapbook, but very public, you can collate the items that you love. There is no copyright in the world of Pinterest: you can attach images from other people's web pages, or re-pin content from other people's boards.

Why Do It?

This activity will encourage participants to think about the motivations behind starting a business. Sharing content from other people is actively encouraged - this is about the social activity of interaction and sharing and gaining

How to Do It –

Ask participants to create their own inspiration board where they pin images of what inspires and motivates them the most, from people and places to the sun bursting on a flower in their backyard.

SNAPCHAT ACTIVITY - MY ENTREPRENEURIAL IDENTITY

Group Materials Needed: Snapchat and smart phone

Duration: 30 mins

What is it?

Snapchat is a fun mobile app used to share brief "Snap" photos, videos, text, and drawings. These Snaps can be viewed for a few seconds before they are deleted forever. Snapchat is available for free for iPhone and Android.

Snapchat's stories feature lets you add new pictures and videos to your story. Then your followers can view the story any time for 24 hours. The stories feature is designed to let your followers catch up on what you have been doing for the last day all at once.

You must have a two-way following relationship to send pictures and videos to another user. Therefore, the stories feature is the best place for participants to share content with each other.

Note: You need to be over the age of thirteen to create a Snapchat account.

Why Do It?

It lets participants explore and express their entrepreneurial characteristics visually in a creative way.

How to Do It

Encourage participants to use creativity and share their thoughts, opinions and social commentary to express their entrepreneurial characteristics to the group via images and videos on Snapchat.

For example, participants could share photos of what they feel relates to their entrepreneurial characteristics i.e.

- Emojis i.e. a clock and a smiley face to indicate time management skills or a dog and a bone to indicate perseverance
- An image or video of a rubix cube to indicate problem-solving skills
- Images or videos of what/who inspires and motivates them
- Videos of themselves at rehearsals, creating artwork or composing music – showing their creativity
- Images that relate to their business

“CREATE A ME COMMERCIAL” ACTIVITY

Group Materials Needed: Access to computer capable of making video, internet access, Trello
Duration: 1 – 2 days

What is it?

In this exercise participants are asked to make a video using words and images that they think best describe them. Each member will then have a Trello Board opened where other members of the groups can post images, words and links that they think sum that person up. Each person will then be assigned another person in the group and will make a video using the images and words submitted by the rest of the group.

Why do it?

The purpose of the activity is to develop confidence among individual members. In many cases others often see people in a more positive light than the individual. By comparing the videos, individuals can gain more self-worth and confidence. The activity also encourages groups where individuals are unfamiliar to get to know each other.

How to do it?

This activity will work with individuals who are computer literate and are able to make videos or animated slides that work as video.

Over a period of time, participants are asked to gather words and images that they feel represents them. These can be images they have seen on line, in press media, photos etc. They then make a video using the images and words. The videos are not shown to the group at this stage.

The group then opens a Trello board for each member which is shared with the group so that over a period of time members can add photos, images etc that they feel represents other group members. After this part of the project is complete, each team member is given the name of another team member and they must make a video using the words and images for that team member. When all the videos are complete each individuals own video is shown followed by the video made by their peer.

TEL ACTIVITIES

This could be an interactive session including video clips, TEL, to enhance the lesson. Group work could be divided into houses to tie in with their favourite characters.

Use Netflix documentary Fyre The greatest Party That Never Happened to showcase what can go wrong in business without planning. The Defiant Ones is a documentary in the growth and building of DR Dre's music empire. Business shows such as Kitchen Nightmares, Dragons Den, Shark Tank show real world examples of businesses and develop knowledge of the skills and behaviours required to start a business.

Using a popular TV show they are familiar with Such as Game Of Thrones, can young people in Northern Ireland that love Game of Thrones come up with a new business idea that capitalises on the opportunities the show presents? Tourism, merchandise etc.

VIDEO & SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

- Group or individual Materials Needed: Smart phone and access to social media (YouTube or Vimeo)
- What is it? This exercise is designed as a competition where participants are asked to create a video on a certain topic and use the power of social media to get more views than rival teams.
- Why do It? This activity will help the young people to develop skills in creative video making as well as showing them how difficult it can be to compete and the need to do something different to stand out from the crowd.
- How to do it? The group will choose a topic of discussion that is relevant to the group e.g. the topic could be promoting an upcoming event that the group are doing.
- The group is then broken into smaller teams who are given the task of developing a video on their smart phones which will be broadcast on social and digital media channels (YouTube or Vimeo).
- The team with the most YouTube or Vimeo views wins a prize.

DIGITAL STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

Group or Individual Materials

Needed: Instagram and smart phone/tablet/computer

Duration: 45 mins

What is it?

Using Instagram as a show and tell platform for your creative business idea.

Instagram is the social network for us to visually share what is important to us and many people visit Instagram daily. We can use this popular free mobile app and social network to engage young people and get them to connect with our subject matter. With Instagram you can have unlimited image and video uploads, edit and filter images and videos, create 15 second videos, and also use it with your Android or IOS devices. You can tag others, use hashtags, geotag your uploads, and post to other social networks. Instagram has become another layer of sharing our world and telling our stories.

Why do it?

This would allow people to explore and express their creative business through a visual medium.

How to do it?

Participants can use the mobile devices to express their creative side of their enterprise to market their business i.e:

- Photos of their product
- Snippets of their performances
- Behind the scenes
- What motivates / inspires them

They can present their story visually, annotating it through their comments on each picture.