

The Placement Diaries: Week 8 - A Room of One's Own, Thinking About How Much I Should Spend in Order to Start the Business, and Still Being in a Dilemma

5th November 2021

I'm still trying to get my head around the fact that it's now November. Where has this year gone? The last time I checked, it was 2019, and I'm still trying to process 2020 as well as 2021. I guess the years go quicker when you get older, I suppose.

Anyway, I *finally* managed to get my own room and I couldn't be happier. I've got a whole room to myself, and it isn't one of those university dorm rooms that feel like prison cells since you're not allowed to customise or decorate anything (basically no self expression allowed) but still having to pay ridiculous amounts of rent for what it's worth (a narrow room that almost feels like a hallway, and a few notice boards shoved in the corner so that you can customise your room just a little bit), just to stay in there for a few months. At least in my room, it feels like a bedroom of my own, where I don't have to pay the rent and I get a decent view, as well as quite literally having the room to swing a cat about. It looks and feels all posh and modern, but I won't go into detail over it since I don't need to. I've also got a desk which is huge, and makes my laptop look tiny in comparison, so I'd probably buy a TV to act as a monitor and to put things in proportion a bit. Basically, the whole thing feels like an executive office (in a good way), and I am here for it.

I also made a spreadsheet listing different types of budgets of things that I'd need in order to start the business. First and foremost, I'd need a graphics tablet at the very least, because drawing things with just the laptop trackpad is hard. I've basically got different tiers of things that I'd get (in this case, the cheapest option, the medium option, the expensive option, the really expensive option, and the portable option), depending on how much money I've got, and how much I'd be willing to spend when I'm starting out, just so that I'm aware of how much things cost, along with how much I can realistically spend in order to get the ball rolling, so that I'm not spending my money on things that I don't need to get, because there's nothing worse than spending all of my money (especially on the expensive options) on things only to realise that I don't need them and they're just collecting dust in a drawer somewhere, so I think for now, I'd probably go for the cheapest option (around £200, where I'd just pay for the graphics tablet and use free software in order to do things, since I doubt most people wouldn't even notice or care about what tools are used; they'd just want to see the outcome), or the portable option (around £2000 in order to get an iPad, an Apple Pencil, and a keyboard to go with it, although I could have a cheaper version of the portable option

since getting the latest and greatest iPad Pro would probably be a bit overkill, and also because I'd need to spend extra money on getting different chargers and adapters since Apple are like that), and of course, adjust my options as and when the business starts to grow, because I don't want this to become an expensive hobby, also because Black Friday's coming up and I want to get a good deal where I can, whilst also trying my best to be mindful of the environment and only buying what I need in order to reduce e-waste.

I'm still in two minds about my two business ideas, since my illustration/graphic design business idea is a bit conventional and not the most groundbreaking or innovative thing ever (albeit overly done, not to mention that those markets are extremely saturated and competitive, to the point where I'd barely make a dent in that market, as well as ending up as another cog in a slightly fancier machine, which is something that I don't want to have since I already feel like I'm a cog in a machine at my current part time job that I've somehow managed to hold for 6 months now), but the most commercially viable option, since I know I'd get lots of work and clients if I put enough welly into it and have a full on marketing strategy in place, although my original business idea (experimental web design/creative coding) is fairly rare, fairly innovative (as long as I do it in a sustainable way, of course), but not really that commercially viable, as of now, so I guess I could exploit (for a lack of a better term) that gap in the market, and make people want things that they didn't know that they wanted or needed until they saw it, plus I'd be able to get away with using FOSS tools, and the market is fairly niche, so I'd say it's a win-win situation (I just need to brush up on my skills by actively creating something pretty much every day without burning myself out, but I'm not sure that's even possible). I guess I could always combine the two together, but I'm not sure how that would work out, since it's two very contrasting things.

Basically, I have to stop overthinking and I have to get it done at some point because I don't want to be in this situation in 6 months' time because this whole opportunity would have gone to waste by then, as well as having to make some important decisions, because at the moment, I sound like a broken record and I keep saying the same things over and over again without actually doing anything about it, so I have to break free from that, and just start creating things in order to get myself out of this dilemma.

So, that's it from this fairly quiet week (I spent a whole day assembling IKEA furniture, does that count?), mainly because next week is going to be intense since it will be the Business Bootcamp, and also because I've spent most of my time thinking, trying to avoid falling into the analysis paralysis trap again, so now is the time to actually start doing stuff and make the most of this opportunity.