

# Hair Host LLP

Hair Host is a fast-growing salon based in Buckingham, near Milton Keynes. The salon was opened in September 2015 by Rebecca Blade with support from her parents, Julian and Janet Presant-Collins.

From a young age, Rebecca always wanted to be a hairdresser and have her own salon. After working for Toni & Guy for 10 years, gaining vital experience in the industry, she felt it was time to pursue her lifelong ambition.

## Hair Host LLP case study

### **Setting up the business**

Rebecca's parents were able to provide financial backing and help to run the business. While they are responsible for bookkeeping and marketing activities, Rebecca runs the salon day to day.

Speaking about why she wanted to own her own business, Rebecca explained:

I wanted to build a brand that was my vision, rather than someone else's.

My vision for the salon is for it to feel like my living room and have a welcoming atmosphere. Clients can find it intimidating walking into a salon the first time and I don't want people to feel that here.

They registered as a limited liability partnership (LLP) in March 2015. Rebecca and her parents are all designated members and co-own the business.

Speaking about why they decided to register as an LLP, Julian explained:

We sat down with an accountant and explained our set up and who needed to draw a day to day income from the business. On their advice we decided the best route was setting up as an LLP as it gave us more flexibility than say a limited company would.

Although the 3 of us own it jointly, an LLP allows us to allocate some or all of the profits to just one of the partners, supporting Rebecca's needs as salon director.

### **Building a brand**

When planning to open the salon, location was an important factor to consider. They knew that they needed an area with high footfall in order to build a client base. They saw potential in an empty old card shop and moved

quickly to put together a business plan and apply for a business loan so they could buy and renovate the premises.

Raising awareness of the salon and getting customers through the door were some of the most challenging aspects of starting the business. Julian explained:

The biggest challenge for us was getting going. When we opened, we didn't have any customers as we weren't a known brand.

For the first few months it was a bit frightening. We had to work very hard to build our brand, get established and get people in through the door.

Over the past 4 years, the salon has grown into a successful business with a client base of over 2,500. As well as seeing the potential in using social media to promote the business, they also feel it's important to integrate themselves into the local community. They've got good relationships with other businesses and frequently donate vouchers and raffle prizes to local schools and charities.

## **A family feel and caring culture**

Rebecca believes that the team working at the salon has also played a big part in its success. By looking after them and creating a supportive environment, they've been able to put together a team that shares her vision.

Rebecca explains:

Having a strong team is really important and we've been lucky in securing the right team here. They're very dedicated and experienced, and committed to what we're doing.

We don't have zero hour contracts and we try to provide a healthcare package. By creating a caring culture and keeping them motivated and happy, it means that the customers are happy. That's all that really matters.

Looking to the future, they may look to open another salon in time. In preparation for this, they want to develop their staff further and start new apprenticeship schemes to build their team.

By owning her own business, Rebecca has been able to open up her own opportunities, such as taking part in London Fashion Week. She's also been able to have more control over her own work-life balance. Reflecting on the journey so far, Rebecca's proud of the salon's success:

I personally wouldn't do anything differently. There's been challenges that we've faced but you overcome them and learn from them.

Everything's a lesson. I'm really proud that I've been able to build a brand I believe in.

For Julian, it's creating a business which has a strong family feel:

I think for me the best thing about owning Hair Host is to see how rewarding it can be to bring people into the business and develop them.

It's been great for us as a family, we are a family business at the end of the day, and nice to see that my daughter has been able to realise her dream.