

Behind each challenge there's an opportunity

by Stefano Maiorana

Created an online business during the pandemic lockdown...

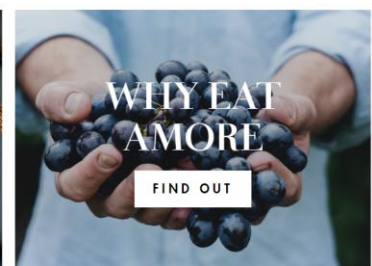
During the first lockdown (Mar 2020), to face the lack of purpose and motivation brought into my life by the pandemic and its implications, I decided to use the extra time on hand to explore the possibility of creating an online business. I was after some motivational activity that could keep me moving whilst everything else around me was on pause.

After exploring a few options, I decided to focus on something that has always appealed to me since the day I moved to London: bringing artisan Italian food products to the UK. I shared the idea with a friend, and his appreciation and interest gave me the strength and motivation that I needed to start putting into action what before was in my mind.

I decided that an eCommerce via drop shipping was the most suitable sales channel for the business I was exploring, and I reached out to potential suppliers to understand the company's feasibility. After three months of analysis and planning, together with that friend (we) I registered our company "Eat Amore Ltd", and two months later we put online our website: eatamore.co.uk.



I promoted the website with friends and ex-colleagues and created special discounts and promo codes to push sales. After one month of being live, we increased the product portfolio reaching more than 120 SKUs. We developed a marketing strategy, created social media platforms (FB, LinkedIn, IG), communications calendar and consumer engagement content (weekly newsletter, blogs, and Spotify channel).



Each month sales were double than the previous one, and in December, we sealed a partnership with an Italian wine importer. After this new partnership, we decided to open a new business branch. We'll be launching a new website, Eat Amore Cellar, where we'll be just selling wine (more than 200 SKUs) selected all over Italy and promoting this with a partnership with Amex.

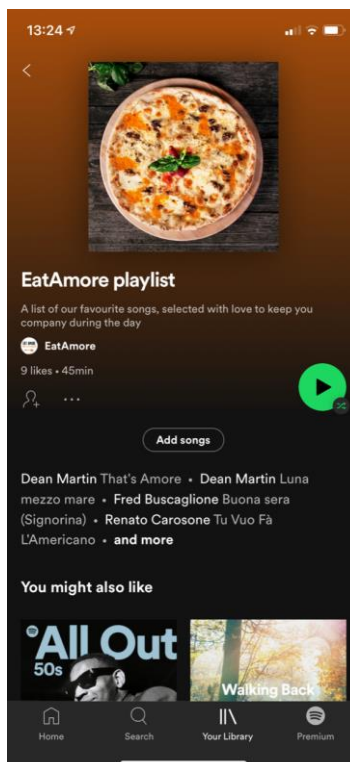
We also changed the business model (no more drop shipping) and moved all our stock into a warehouse in Redhill, UK. This improved our service and profitability, which was crucial to maintaining our business after Brexit. Despite a hard slow down after the second round of lockdown and all the complications post Brexit, we closed the first year of activity with a small positive balance.

During this time, we received several compliments from ex-colleagues, co-workers and friends, and

a good number of interesting requests for collaboration with both new and established businesses (Londonist, Delita, London food magazine, etc). Today eatamore.uk lists more than 100 products across categories such as olive oil, pasta, sauces, sweets, chutneys, etc., from several artisan suppliers from different Italian regions (Sicily, Liguria, Piedmont).



We have a customer's database that receives our weekly newsletter. We have [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) pages. We created a [Spotify channel](#) where you can listen to some Italian (but not only) classics to keep company during the different moments of the day (breakfast, aperitivo, after dinner, etc).



We were just two people building a whole new business from scratch. The learning curve was huge as none of us had any experience with the online business, plus the list of tasks to cover was endless (reaching suppliers, understanding operations, creating the website, studying the products categories, etc).

We dedicated all our spare time to this project: evening and nights, weekends, days off, and holidays. It was tiring but rewarding and very helpful as this kept us too busy to think of what covid was doing to the world. Also, each success achieved boosted our confidence not only in the project but also in our professional profile.

For any questions or to know more about the business journey contact Stefano Maiorana, Global Consumer Care Team Leader.