

Ladies who launched!

'I'm still dancing!'

Londoner Nikki Spencer, 56, hit upon the idea of creating a business from dressing up, going out and having a party with **I Haven't Stopped Dancing Yet!**

'Being featured in *Prima* was fantastic. I had lots of emails from people saying, "We need you in our area!" One person bought a copy for her friend in hospital and said, "When you get out, we're going here!" and they did! That was fab.

My business is still a family affair. My daughters and their friends help running the cloakroom or the door, and my partner Fergie comperes the nights. The HSDY crew members have all become good friends. It helps if you really like the people you work with!

As well as our London parties, we now do private bookings. We also held our first weekend summer festival. Called the VW Bug Jam, it's Europe's largest VW event held at Santa Pod Raceway in Northamptonshire. It was a fantastic night. We hope to do more festivals this year.

We've always given 10% of our profits to Cancer Research UK, but I decided I wanted to do more so joined CRUK's Machu Picchu Challenge in September 2016. It was very tough, trekking in the cold, wind and rain, but it was amazing.

NIKKI'S TIPS

- Chat to others. I now have a network of women who run small businesses near me and we ask each other advice.
- Talk to the start-up business adviser at your local council.

Combined with other events, I raised over £6,000.

My only regret is that I waited so long to start my business!

Haventstoppeddancingyet.co.uk

Nikki's now doing festivals



Rebecca has made biscuits for clients, such as Cath Kidston



'I've quadrupled my turnover!'

When we last met Rebecca Honeywell-Ward, 36, from Northamptonshire, in November 2015, she was looking to expand the iced biscuits business she'd launched with her sister, Rosie.

'Lots has changed in the past few years. Rosie has left the business to pursue her dream – supplying seasonal tray bakes to businesses on a subscription basis, allowing them to have delicious cake every Friday for the staff. I'm thrilled for her.

So I'm now in charge of Honeywell Bakes, even though I don't actually make the biscuits any more, and now work primarily on development.

We moved into our new bakery, a converted barn, last year. Taking the leap to move into premises is a big one, but it has moved the business forwards by miles. It has allowed us to take on bigger contracts – including biscuit designs for international clients such as Cath Kidston, Elizabeth Arden, Olay and Superdry. We saved up beforehand so we didn't need any loans to make big purchases, such as the oven and other equipment. We have such a

wonderful team – I now employ three people and have temp staff at peak times.

The business has become more design-led, offering on-trend collections of biscuits that are quite different to anything else available. We had a commission from the breast-cancer charity CoppaFee when we made lots of boob biscuits and we've developed a collection of fun, cute "pun" biscuits that have become extremely popular.

We've focused on growing our Instagram account and this is really starting to pay off, as we receive a lot of enquiries. After we first appeared in *Prima*, we had lots of people visit the site. Then, our turnover was £35,000. Now it's £150,000!

Honeywellbakes.com

REBECCA'S TIP

- Know your numbers. With a creative business, it's easy to ignore the figures, but the key to any business is profit, so numbers are crucial.