

Listen to a small eBusiness owner talking about how he set up his business.

Optional exercise Listen and match the beginnings and ends of the sentences. (Answers below)

Anthony started making wooden toys	as a hobby.
He couldn't make the toys quickly enough	customised toys.
His son suggested	that he sold the toys online.
Anthony decided to make	the name tree2toy.com.
Anthony's sister suggested	to sell them in the shops.

I'd been making wooden toys for my family and friends for quite some time. It was just a hobby at first, but then it started to take over my life. So many people were asking me to make specific things, like a doll's house for a birthday present, that I began to wonder if I could make a living out of it. I approached some shops and department stores, but they weren't interested in stocking my toys unless I could guarantee a regular supply, and I just couldn't produce them quickly enough.

I think it was my son who first suggested I set up an internet shop. I hadn't a clue how to go about it, so I started by looking at existing sites selling handmade toys. There were some great sites by people doing a similar thing to me. I wondered if there was something not being provided that I could do, a niche market I could develop. I thought about what people usually asked me to make and I realised that a lot of people wanted a customised toy. They asked for their child's name painted on it, or wanted it painted particular colours. I hadn't seen anyone offering this kind of service.

The next step was to think of a name for my business. By then I had read quite a bit of advice about setting up internet companies, and I knew I would have to register a domain name. I got all my family involved, trying to think up a name that would be easy to remember. Every time we thought of a good one I searched for it on the internet and sure enough, someone had already got it. I was getting quite frustrated when my sister suggested tree2toy.com. I checked and to my amazement it hadn't been registered. I tried several searches on the internet – after all I didn't want to discover that another company had the same name – they could take legal action against me. Then I registered the domain name and I was ready to start designing my website.

Answers:

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