The Business Brief

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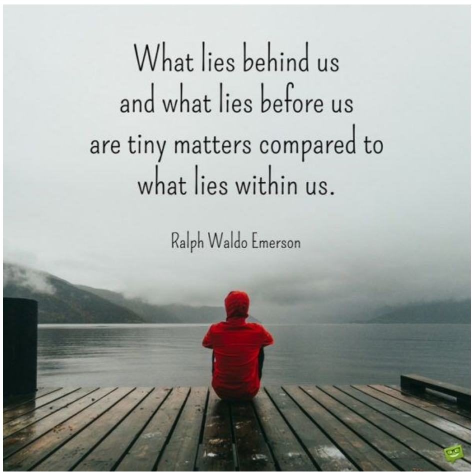
"How women's sport is rewriting the business playbook"

Amie - Shh! PR Limited

Inside this month's issue

Quote of the month



This month we have Amie-Leigh as guest editor.

Amie-Leigh as well as, coaching a local girls football team, is the founder of Shh!PR Limited.

Shh!PR are PR & Marketing Agency that specialise in helping women-led businesses rise above the noise and gain the media coverage they deserve.

As I write this, the Women's Euros are building towards the climax, with England putting everyone through the ringer during their last two matches, there's a real sense of momentum in the air

Stadiums are filling, screens are lighting up, and the spotlight is shining brighter than ever on women's sport. It feels like something bigger than a tournament. It feels like a turning point.

Because this isn't just about football. It's about recognition. It's about what happens when the world starts paying attention to talent that's long gone under-recognised.

And as the players take to the pitch, they're carrying with them not just the hopes of their nations, but the weight of a movement that's been steadily gathering pace – one that's set to reshape more than just sport.

In the past few years, the visibility of women's sport has surged and so too has the conversation around it. For too long, women's sport was treated as an afterthought. Now, it's becoming a space where innovation, investment and inspiration are thriving.

And here's the really exciting part: this isn't just a shift on the field, it's spilling over into business, culture and community in ways that are opening new and previously overlooked opportunities.

Continued on page 2...

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"How women's sport is rewriting the business playbook"

Continued from page 1...

From specialist sportswear designed with real athletes in mind, to investment platforms, media brands and fan experiences tailored for a new era — people are thinking differently. And opportunity is growing.

As entrepreneurs and business owners, moments like this invite us to think about where culture is shifting and how we show up in it.

It's a powerful reminder that business opportunity often lives at the edges, in the places the mainstream hasn't quite caught up to yet.

Whether you're building a product, a service or a brand, there's a lesson here. Pay attention to where culture is shifting.

What markets are emerging?

Whose stories are finally being told?

What are people hungry for that they haven't been offered yet?

And where might your skills, products or services fit into this changing landscape?

The landscape is still being shaped. There's room to create, to lead, to do things differently. Not everything has to look like the old playbook. In fact, the most exciting work usually doesn't.

But even if your work has nothing to do with sport, this moment can still serve as a spark. At its core, the rise of women's sport is about potential being recognised and rewarded.

It's about building structures around that potential so it's not just visible, but sustainable. And it's about doing business in a way that's both ambitious and inclusive.

In this edition of *The Business Brief*, we'll be diving into exactly that: how growing attention on women's sport is fuelling a new generation of businesses, ideas, and collaborations.

We'll explore what it means to build with purpose, to find opportunity in overlooked spaces, to create models that serve more people, more fully and shape the kind of business future we want to be part of.

Whether you're inspired by the roar of the crowd, the spirit of the players or simply the energy of something long overdue finally taking centre stage, this is a moment worth pausing for.

Here's to bold moves, fresh thinking, and showing up for what's next.

ALM

Amie - Leigh Minshall

Shh! PR Limited

hello@shhpr.co.uk

https://shhpr.co.uk/

Embrace the unknown

Embrace the unknown: why your small business thrives on new opportunities...

Running a small business means wearing many hats, but perhaps the most important one is that of an explorer. The most successful entrepreneurs aren't those who play it safe – they're the ones who dare to try something different. In today's rapidly evolving marketplace, standing still isn't just risky – it's potentially fatal for your business growth.

Every "No" gets you closer to "Yes"

Here's the thing about new opportunities: they're rarely guaranteed winners, and that's perfectly fine! Whether it's launching a new product line, partnering with an unexpected collaborator, exploring social media platforms you've never touched before, or even testing a completely different business model, each attempt teaches you something valuable about your market, your customers, or yourself.

The key is approaching these experiments with the right mindset. Instead of viewing unsuccessful ventures as failures, see them as market research that you couldn't have bought at any price. Each attempt provides insights into customer preferences, market timing, and your own business capabilities.

Take Sarah, who tried selling her handmade candles at a local farmers' market. Sales were modest, but she discovered customers loved her seasonal scents and kept asking about home delivery. This feedback led her to develop a successful subscription box service she'd never considered before – now her primary revenue stream.

Small experiments, big discoveries

The beauty of being a small business is your agility. Unlike large corporations bogged down by committees and red tape, you can test ideas quickly and affordably. Try that new marketing channel for a month. Attend that networking event outside your usual circle. Offer that service you've been pondering. Partner with that local business you admire.

Start small, measure results, and scale what works. This approach minimises risk while maximising learning opportunities.

Growth lives outside your comfort zone

Every successful business owner has a collection of "failed" experiments, but they also have stories of unexpected wins that transformed their companies. The restaurant owner who started offering cooking classes during lockdown. The florist who pivoted to wedding planning services.

Your next breakthrough might be hiding behind the very opportunity you're hesitant to pursue. Stay curious, stay open, and remember – in business, the biggest risk is often not taking any risks at all.

Innovation doesn't always mean reinventing the wheel

Let's clear something up straight away. New doesn't always mean shiny, risky, or wildly different. Sometimes, new is simply seeing what's already in front of you with a fresh pair of eyes. And when it comes to product development, that mindset can be game-changing.

Because let's be honest, most of us aren't short on ideas. We've got scraps of notes, scribbles in the margins, voice notes from half-asleep eureka moments. The real magic isn't in dreaming up the next big thing from scratch.

It's in knowing which ideas to nurture, which opportunities are worth chasing, and how to breathe new life into the work you've already done.

Opportunity doesn't knock. It whispers.

New opportunities rarely arrive with a neon sign saying, "This is it!" They show up in patterns. In repeated questions from clients. In those little moments where someone says, "I wish you offered…" or "You know what I'd love?"

That's where your next product might be hiding.

So, start listening. Not just to what people say they want, but to what they're struggling with. Look at your most popular services, your best-performing content, the work that feels easiest (but gets the biggest reactions). That's your goldmine.

Because recognising a good opportunity isn't about being lucky. It's about being observant. Curious. Willing to let go of what you thought people needed and tuning into what they actually do.

You don't have to start from zero

If the idea of creating something new makes your shoulders tense up, let's reframe that. You don't need to build a product from the ground up every time. In fact, one of the smartest, most efficient ways to grow your business is by repurposing what's already working.

That workshop you delivered once to great feedback?

Turn it into a digital download. That blog post that got shared a hundred times?

Could be the start of a paid guide. That one-off service that left your client raving? Package it and sell it again (and again).

What you've done before is a test run. Proof that there's demand, that the idea has legs. Why waste that?

Adapting existing offers isn't cheating, it's savvy. It means you're building with what you already know your audience wants, rather than gambling on something brand new. That's not playing it safe. That's playing it smart.

Solve real problems (not just what looks impressive)

Here's a truth that's easy to forget. The best products aren't always the flashiest ones. They're the ones that solve actual problems.

That means the goal isn't to outshine the competition with more bells and whistles. It's to understand your customer so well that your product feels like it was made just for them.

So, before you design, build, or launch anything, ask yourself:

- What keeps my ideal client stuck?
- What do they complain about, avoid, or wish was easier?
- What do they *think* they need — and what do they actually need?

If you can create something that bridges that gap, you're not just launching a product. You're creating relief. Transformation.

Innovation doesn't always mean reinventing the wheel

A sense of, "finally, this is what I've been looking for."

That kind of connection? That's what turns browsers into buyers. And buyers into fans.

Progress beats perfection

One of the biggest killers of innovation? Waiting for perfect.

Waiting until the design is flawless. Until every module is mapped out. Until you feel 110% sure it'll sell. But by the time "perfect" arrives (if it ever does), the moment might have passed.

Instead, aim for version one. A minimum viable product. A beta round. Something real, simple, and helpful that you can build on.

You don't need all the bells and whistles on day one. You need traction. Feedback. A sign that you're on the right track.

And here's the beautiful part: your audience wants to be part of the process. They want to be included, asked, listened to. When you let them shape the final product, it becomes something they feel invested in.

Stay rooted in what makes you, *you*

With all this talk of pivoting, creating, adapting — don't lose sight of your core. The stuff that makes your work *yours*.

It's easy to get swept up in trends, to chase what everyone else is doing. But the most magnetic products come from a place of alignment. From knowing your strengths, your values, your voice, and letting those shine through everything you create.

Ask yourself:

• What do I *really* want to be known for?

• How do I want people to feel after using this?

• Is this idea in line with the business I'm building?

Because yes, innovation matters. But integrity matters more.

Experiment often. Adjust quickly. Keep going.

New product development isn't a one-time thing. It's a practice. A rhythm. A cycle of trying, learning, tweaking, and trying again.

And the people who grow fastest? They're the ones who don't wait for permission. They experiment. Test. Fail and start again. They understand that not every idea will be a hit, but every try teaches them something useful.

So don't let a quiet launch or slow start knock your confidence. Let it sharpen your instincts. Fuel your next iteration. Remind you that progress is always better than perfection.

You already have more than you think.

Chances are that your next great product isn't hiding in a fancy strategy or a blank whiteboard. It's in the work you've already done. The clients you've already helped. The problems you already know how to solve.

Your job now? Tune in. Tidy it up. Package it. And put it out into the world. Not as something totally new, but as something only *you* could've made.

Because innovation doesn't always look like invention. Sometimes, it looks like finally seeing the value in what's been right there all along.

Why personal development isn't a luxury

Why personal development isn't a luxury - it's your business's secret weapon

As a business owner, you're juggling countless responsibilities every single day. From managing staff and chasing invoices to firefighting operational challenges and planning for growth, it can feel like there simply aren't enough hours in the day.

When faced with this relentless pressure, the idea of carving out time for your own personal development might seem like an indulgent luxury you simply can't afford.

But here's the thing - this mindset could be costing you more than you realise. Far from being wasted time, investing in your personal development is one of the smartest business decisions you can make. It's about staying sharp, adaptable, and ready to spot the opportunities that others miss.

The reality of running a business today

The business landscape has never moved faster. Digital transformation, changing consumer expectations, and evolving regulations create a constantly shifting environment. What worked brilliantly for your business five years ago might be holding you back today. The skills and knowledge that got you here won't necessarily take you where you need to go next.

Personal development isn't just about learning new technical skills - it's about developing the mindset and capabilities that allow you to navigate uncertainty with confidence and spot opportunities before your competitors do.

Breaking the 'No Time' myth

"I'd love to focus on development, but I just don't have the time." This creates a dangerous cycle - the busier you are, the more you need the clarity and fresh thinking that comes from personal development. Without it, you risk becoming trapped in reactive mode, constantly firefighting rather than building the business you truly want.

The solution isn't finding more time - it's making better use of the time you have. Even 30 minutes a week spent on purposeful learning can yield significant returns. Think of it as preventive maintenance for your most important business asset: you.

How personal development transforms your business vision

When you invest in your own growth, you begin to see your business through fresh eyes. That industry conference might introduce you to a new revenue stream. The leadership book could transform how you motivate your team. The digital marketing course might unlock growth you never thought possible.

Personal development expands your thinking, helping you question assumptions and approach problems from new angles. This expanded perspective is invaluable for identifying opportunities others overlook.

Consider the business owners who pivoted successfully during the pandemic. Many had developed the adaptability and market awareness that allowed them to spot opportunities in crisis - capabilities developed through continuous learning.

Practical ways to invest in yourself

Personal development doesn't require massive time commitments

Why personal development isn't a luxury

or expensive programmes. Here are practical approaches for busy business owners:

Micro-learning can be incredibly effective. Listen to business podcasts during your commute, read industry articles with your morning coffee, or watch relevant videos during lunch breaks. These small moments add up to significant learning.

Networking events and industry meetups serve dual purposes - building valuable relationships while staying current with trends. The conversations often provide insights you can't get from books alone.

Online courses and webinars offer flexibility around your schedule. Many platforms provide bite-sized modules you can complete at your own pace, focusing on areas relevant to your business challenges.

Mentoring relationships provide fresh perspectives and accountability. Whether mentoring others or being mentored yourself, these relationships accelerate development.

Strategic reading remains cost-effective development. Choose books and publications that challenge your thinking or address specific business challenges you're facing.

The competitive advantage of continuous learning

Your ability to learn and adapt has become a key competitive advantage. Businesses that thrive are typically led by owners who embrace continuous learning and aren't afraid to challenge their own thinking.

This isn't about chasing every trend - it's about developing the judgment to distinguish between genuine opportunities and distractions. It's about building confidence to make bold decisions based on solid understanding rather than gut feeling alone.

When you commit to personal development, you're investing in your business's future, building the capabilities needed to navigate uncertainty and lead with confidence.

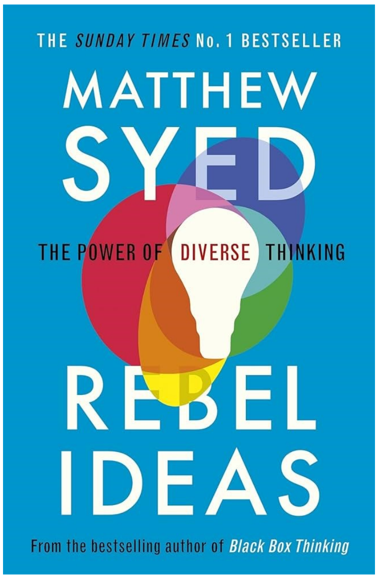
Making it happen

The most successful business owners treat personal development as a non-negotiable part of their routine, just like checking emails or reviewing finances. They understand that time invested in learning pays dividends in better decision-making, increased confidence, and the ability to seize opportunities others miss.

Start small, but start today. Whether it's one business book per month, a quarterly industry event, or 30 minutes weekly for online learning, consistency is key. Your future self and your business will thank you for it.

In a world where change is the only constant, your ability to grow and adapt isn't just an advantage - it's essential for survival and success.

Sharpening the saw...



Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking by Matthew Syed

Why this bold, brilliant book should be on every business owner's reading list

If you're running your own business, you probably know what it's like to do everything — from sales to strategy to sweeping up.

In the middle of all that, it's easy to fall back on familiar routines and trusted ways of thinking.

But what if your next big idea didn't come from you? What if it came from someone who sees the world — and your business — completely differently?

That's the big, exciting question Matthew Syed explores in *Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking*.

This fast-paced, eye-opening read makes a compelling case for why **cognitive diversity** — different ways of thinking, solving problems, and interpreting the world — is one of the most underused tools in business today.

For owner-managed businesses, where decisions are often made quickly and instinctively, Syed's insights are both relevant and refreshing.

He shows how bringing in fresh perspectives — even ones that challenge your own — can spark smarter solutions, uncover hidden blind spots, and create more resilient businesses.

Drawing on case studies from tech, sports, and even aviation disasters, he illustrates why the best ideas often come from the edges, not the centre.

This book doesn't just preach diversity — it explains why it works, and how you can actively build it into your team, your decision-making, and even your product development.

Whether you're a solo founder or leading a small team, *Rebel Ideas* will encourage you to look outside your bubble and rethink how you grow.

Bottom line? If you want to lead with fresh thinking and stay ahead of the curve, this book delivers a welcome push in the right direction.

Worth a read? Absolutely. Especially if you're ready to do business a little differently.