



FORGE

ROZINA LOUAFI &
DESIGN72

FORGE EDITION 3



Design72 is a digital design, brand and creative agency, based in the London Borough of Waltham Forest and founded by Rozina Louafi.

Run by a small team with over 15 years' experience, Design72 deliver tailor made content for high profile clients, such as ITN, BBC, Sky and Channel 4, as well as the charity sector.

Rozina is passionate about bringing stories and visions to life, delivering video content for social media campaigns or providing design consultancy. A unique fact about her business: the name actually refers to digital design; 72 is the dpi or 'dots per inch' (sometimes known as pixels per inch) which is the on-screen resolution for digital and broadcast standard.

KEY CHALLENGES & NEEDS

Before embarking on a business support journey, Rozina wanted to move her business into consultancy and improve her understanding on business models while learning about strategy. She felt she was lacking the confidence to start networking and to capitalise on this. Finally, she wanted to expand and create some jobs.

USE OF FORGE

Design72 exceeded the minimum of 12 hours of business support, reaching 16 hours in Forge Edition 3, by participating in a range of activities:

- 4 workshops (Defining Ambitions & Customer Discovery, Business Finance Literacy Part 1: Unit Economics, Implementation Capabilities, Business Finance 2: Metrics and Growth Planning)
- 2 Networking events: Marketing and Storytelling - 16 January 2020, and Sales, Market Research and IP -13 February 2020

Workshops

Rozina benefited from 4 workshops, and the last one on Business finance was held online due to the recently started lockdown in late March 2020.

She told us: “The workshops have been really insightful, and I have met some wonderful people who I would like to keep in touch with. The networking events were not so useful as my target demographic is very niche, but it's good to know there are print designers, film makers and photographers around the corner if I need their services”.

KEY BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Despite the fact that Rozina did not request to use 1 to 1 coaching, she scaled up her business and provided useful feedback about the impact the programme has had to help her to achieve her goals.

Following the first business workshops led by Paul Sturrock, Rozina identified her target market for the new consultation arm of her business (on creating design, brand and content) as the Muslim charity sector. She told us:

“I managed to identify and differentiate this from my current day job (motion graphic design) after Paul's guidance and workshops. This helped me create my website which was a work in progress to target my potential clients rather than for showcasing my motion skills. I simplified my website to get it completed and I'm so glad I did as a few potential clients have been directed to it, and they come away feeling I am an established and experienced professional set up rather than a newbie without credentials.

“After Covid lockdown started, I found myself without work. I was asked to help with a 20+ charity Covid campaign for MCF (like a Muslim DEC) but refused as I felt home schooling would be too demanding; but a small voice in my head (what Paul said about Karma) made me think again.

"I said yes to the campaign, but understanding my value, I negotiated a much more senior role (art director) and limited my availability (3 weeks). The video I produced created a buzz, and many more charities and orgs started to enquire about 'who made the video? how much did it cost' etc.

"I have been approached by Muslim Aid USA, Ramadan Radio and Zamma Fitness, all needing some promotional content for Ramadan which starts soon.

"I have turned down a couple of work offers, because I would not be able to do everything, and some are too short notice, but I kept my nerve. Lo and behold, people and organisations respected my decisions and said they will return with potentially higher value work. I am also gathering and recording the positive feedback from the MCF video, and will add that to my website homepage.

"I'm still not great at bookkeeping but I have learnt to value my skill, negotiate, and also, I have been more professional in presenting pitches and using my proper email address. Radio Ramadan couldn't afford me, but have invited me on one of their radio chat shows to talk about my creative life!".

Using the learning and advice provided on Forge, Design72 reported:

- increasing its monthly turnover by 25%
- increasing capacity to meet demand (hired 1 freelancer, namely Saood Salim)
- improving confidence in her skills and the future of the business
- securing more clients, commissions, contracts or partnerships
- improved skills and confidence, notably in the following in areas (0 for low levels of skill or confidence, up to 5 for high levels):
 - Negotiation and community engagement, up from 0 to 5
 - Setting vision, mission and values, up from 1 to 5
 - Pitching, up from 1 to 5
 - Team leadership, up from 1 to 4

See graph below for more.

