

Digit Music. Hardware, software and sounds for the modern music maker

As part of our quick founder questions series - or QFQs - we spoke to Owain Wilson, founder of Digit Music about creativity, charity, education and making music more accessible and inclusive.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Digit Music was founded by Si Tew and Owain Wilson, both UK music industry veterans, with the aim of getting as many people as possible playing a musical instrument, performing, and enjoying the benefits that music making has to offer.

Tell me about the business - what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

We make and sell gaming based music hardware, software (under development), sample libraries and music education and training services for digital music making. Our strap line is 'Music Made Easier' and the aim of the company is to make music making more accessible and inclusive for a broader range of people.

Most people are musical but only a few go on to actually be musically creative. We think the reason for this is because it's really difficult for a lot of people to get started. Traditional instruments, music notation, and

music hardware are aimed at the professional market so too complicated for a lot of people which stops them from getting going.

Also, music education taught in schools is generally delivered with traditional instruments, music genres and education approaches and so may not spark any interest from students as it does not relate to the types of music (the tech, talent, and trends) that they love outside of school.

We sell our music hardware, software, and sample libraries directly through our website and indirectly through online marketplaces, high street retailers and distributors to consumers, schools, charities, music services etc.

We sell our music education and skills and training services directly to schools, charities and music services etc through www.digitlearning.co.uk and by existing customer referral.

We have an omni-channel approach to marketing and connect with our customers through our own channels (social media, newsletters, meetups) and support outreach through partner channels (product demonstrations, webinars, social media content etc).

We have some exciting education partnerships in place (Derbyshire Music Service, Drake Music Scotland and Create Define Release) and more consumer facing with Melodics, BandLab (who are growing 2x faster than Apple Music with over 80 million users) and Bitwig GmbH who we have an OEM deal with for their music software Bitwig 8 Track.

How has the business evolved since its

launch? When was this?

The company was started in late 2020, but Si and I have known each other through our work in the music industry for around 20 years. Since 2020 we've grown from a team of two working out of our bedrooms to a team of 8 with a HQ in Derby, East Midlands.

Tell us about the working culture at Digit Music

Everyone that works at the company is a music nerd! Playing, making, listening to, and sharing music are at the core of what we do as people and the business. Having fun and being creative in your work is super important to us and so we hope that we're creating a space where that happens.

As a business we are level 2 disability confident employers working towards greater inclusion in the music and wider creative industries for those who are historically shut out. We want to show other businesses how we benefit from having a diverse workforce that reflects the customers and wider society that we want to represent.

How are you funded?

We generate revenue by selling our unique music hardware, CMPSR which is built with gaming technology, sample libraries (samples loops and sounds), and music education services (w/shops, performances) and skills & training, as well as government backing through Innovate UK. For those where cost is prohibitive our music education work is subsidised through Youth Music and Arts Council England.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

As we've learnt there are always new and evolving challenges when bringing a unique product to market. Finance is always an ever present and pressing challenge and reacting to the fast changing economic climate that we find ourselves in, for us is a non negotiable.

How does Digit Music answer an unmet need?

We feel the unmet need in playing an instrument and making music is that for a lot of people there is a huge gap between their musical ideas and what they create. By giving people an instrument that offers the shortest possible route between their ideas and what they actually play and hear means they are successful with music quickly and excited to make more music as they feel rewarded by what they're doing rather than frustrated or worse demoralised!

What's in store for the future?

More fundraising, growing the CMPSR community and awareness of Digit Music and more products in the pipeline.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Be agile and respond to changing circumstances. In our experience lots of things that you plan won't happen in the way that you thought they would, so roll with the punches as best you can. Also take people's advice wisely, everyone will have their opinion on what you should and shouldn't be doing. Everyone presents as an expert until experience shows they may not be .

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

Get up, drink some water (and throughout the day), then coffee. Take my dog for a walk and checklist in my head what's happening for the day. Then look at what email requests have come in and order them into...

1. Should be my priority for today/tomorrow/this week/next week etc and then
2. manage people's expectations, then
3. get on with my work.

Owain Wilson is the founder of *Digit Music*.