

With Liledu you can rent curated toys and swap them as your child grows

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Laurynas Pamparas, founder of Liledu about circularity, why toys shouldn't end up in landfill and expansion into the British market.

Temps de lecture : minute

5 September 2024

What was the catalyst for launching Liledu?

In a word, fatherhood. While celebrating my son Leo's first birthday, I couldn't help but imagine how the toys he was gleefully unwrapping would eventually become clutter around our home as he outgrew them. Given enough time, those toys would probably end up in a landfill, and I didn't love that idea either. I figured I couldn't be the only parent thinking this or feeling guilty about throwing toys away. I launched Liledu because I knew there had to be a better way of giving our kids great toys – one that didn't involve more plastic in landfills and more mess around the house.

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

Liledu is a toy subscription service that provides play kits for every stage of children's development from birth to 24 months. Each play kit has four

to eight toys selected by early childhood education experts and inspired by Montessori methodology. Families receive a new kit each month, and send back the previous one. This means children get a new set of developmentally appropriate toys every month. Circularity is at the heart of what we do. Returned play kits are sanitised and sent out to new families each month. Every toy in a play kit is practical, durable, gender-neutral, and, in some instances, enjoyed by over 30 different families. We're combining play and learning in a way that's cost-effective and just easier for parents. As we see it, the goal is threefold: no more toy shopping and mess for parents, educational playtime for happy kids, and less plastic in the landfills for a healthier planet.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

We've definitely been growing. Since our founding in Lithuania in 2021 and expansion into the British market earlier this year, we've delivered more than 64,000 toys to families through our circular model. Our play kits become even better suited to individual development stages as we receive more parent feedback and continue working with early childhood education experts.

Tell us about the working culture at Liledu?

I'm a parent myself, and a huge reason why Liledu exists is to make parents' lives easier. This has as much of an effect on our working culture as it does the business itself. The majority of our team are parents, so we collectively understand the struggles and issues our customers face. We're serious about making sure our employees have time and space for their personal lives and their families. I don't care about exactly when or how many hours my employees are seated in front of their laptops. I care about results, and the best results tend to come from happy employees

who don't feel chained to their desks when they could be picking their kids up from school.

How are you funded?

We generate revenue from our customers, who pay a monthly subscription fee. We also successfully fundraised €500K from investors prior to our UK launch.

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

Our biggest challenge is to find toys which meet our criteria of developmentally appropriate, high-quality, and suitable for repeat-use while being super engaging. We're still regularly surprised to discover which toys in our play kits end up being the most loved by kids. Just because a toy is expert-approved doesn't mean kids will automatically engage with it, and if kids don't engage with a toy, it's simply not useful. Sometimes the toys that we have very high expectations of don't engage kids or hold up very well after several uses. This is why our entire business revolves around customer feedback. So far we've received thousands of comments on various play kits and toys, without which we wouldn't understand which toys actually do the work and fit perfectly for each developmental stage.

How does Liledu answer an unmet need?

We address the problems of toy waste in landfills and household clutter quite directly. Beyond that, the vast majority of parents aren't early childhood development experts, so toy shopping involves a lot of guesswork. Parents' lives are busy and stressful enough without this guesswork and the general hassle of toy shopping, and Liledu does away

with toy shopping altogether. The toys inside every curated Liledu play kit will never end up in the back of a dusty closet. They'll be picked up, cleaned, and delivered to a new family. We're taking on a multi-tiered problem with the circular economy, and hopefully making the earth and parents' lives better in the process.

What's in store for the future?

We want to expand to more markets throughout Europe. We want to keep honing our play kits and are beginning to explore diversifying our play kits for children with special educational needs. We're also looking to expand the age range of our play kits up to preschool.

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

Start testing as soon as you can and keep testing. Feedback is your friend. You never know what crazy idea will prove to be the one which changes everything.

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

One of my biggest rules is 'be consistent,' especially when it comes to my daily routine. On weekdays I spend time with my son each morning and go for a run a few times a week before heading into the office. I'm very deliberate about breaking up my day between complex individual tasks in the morning and team-oriented work and discussions in the afternoon. I pick my son up from school and we have family time until his bedtime. Since I think best in the evenings, I do a bit of brainstorming before bed, and then can pick up right where I left off the next day. I love what I do,

but family is important. Weekends are sacred and reserved for us spending time together.

Laurynas Pamparas is the founder of Liledu.



MADDYNEWS UK

The newsletter you need for all the latest from the startup ecosystem

[SIGN UP](#)

Article by Laurynas Pamparas