

Small Business Spotlight:
Ziggy Linklater, Tara Doyle, KK Law | Co-Founders
Grand Uproar, Est. 2017

Life Story

Ziggy and Tara worked together on a creative team at a high-growth marketing firm. KK, a contract photographer, worked with them to create monthly content. As the company grew and was acquired, they became more siloed in their roles and realized that they missed the nimble creative collaboration that they had when the firm was smaller. So, they decided to combine forces to start a digital content studio, Grand Uproar.

What motivated you to start your own business, and do it as a partnership?

As our work became more repetitive, we started to feel constrained by it. Grand Uproar was born from the desire to be more creative and discover the freedom of being 'small' again. We all had big toolkits and wanted to be able to use all our skills. We are a dream team – KK comes with decades of photography experience, Tara has a big network and a background in art direction, and Ziggy is a multi-disciplinary designer and creator.

Why is it important for you to give back to the community through your business?

At the beginning of COVID-19, we saw small businesses around us struggling, so we decided to jump in and help. We started Save The Small, a marketing initiative to bring awareness to small businesses in our community. So many businesses pivoted on a dime, and we wanted to make it easier for customers to find them. It was really an initiative of small businesses supporting each other, as we are all in it together. We highlighted 15 businesses, and they have seen growth and success as a result.

How has networking played a role in the growth of your business?

Our network played a huge role in starting and growing our business. Because of our previous relationships, we were able to hit the ground running when we started and realized a profit in the second half of our first year. In marketing, there is a level of trust that needs to be established. Our network helped us carry that over from our previous experience into our new business.

How has your business been impacted by, and adapted to, COVID-19?

Like so many small businesses, the pandemic has impacted us a lot. As our clients saw declines in sales, they had less to spend on marketing. We took the approach of adapting and riding the tide with patience. We started doing photo and video shoots outdoors, or physically distanced wearing masks in our studio. We are working with what we have and always looking for innovative ways to help our clients.

What supports have you used during COVID-19 that you have found helpful?

Since we are small, we haven't had to rely on government programs. We have been supported by our families and our business community. Our broad business network supported us in doing the public

relations for Save The Small. We really leaned on each other for support, too. Transparency and honesty are core to any business. With the pandemic, it has become even more important to be honest with one another and look out for the team. That is really what being partners is all about.

What has been your biggest lesson learned about being an entrepreneur?

The biggest lesson is the importance of just launching your business. It is easy to over-think things, so our advice would be, don't wait to be perfect because perfect doesn't exist. Also, it is very important to stay open to critique and personal growth. If you aren't open to these, your business can become stagnant.

The Bottom Line:

- Grand Uproar will stay small, as they love being small and nimble. This enables them to be able to pivot fast and ride out events like global pandemics.
- Grand Uproar will grow in their work but not their size.