



Grow and Tend

Welcome to Grow and Tend, your monthly dose of business growth advice, courtesy of Contract Finder Pro.



Heather Murray
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10-Second Intro

Morning everyone! We hope you're well.

Do you have big plans for your business but need more resources to achieve them?

It may be time to think about external investment. We cover all the do's and don't's of this big milestone below.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, you'll find interesting news for special effects studios and some big tenders up for grabs in IT and the trades. Let's get to it.



External investment: take your time.

Asking for external investment is a huge decision.

While potentially sacrificing some control over your company is not something to take lightly, investment could work wonders for your long-term strategy.

Beyond the obvious financial benefit, external investment also provides the opportunity for accelerated growth, increased validation and credibility of your business, and more diversified funding that can help balance your risk levels.

And on the note of diversity, you've got a wide array of external investment options at your fingertips.

Angel investment: Private individuals who invest in businesses in exchange for equity.

Venture capital funding: Specialist investment companies who offer higher investments than angels.

Business loans: A more traditional form of investment that has to be repaid monthly with interest.

Crowdfunding: Asking the public for smaller pieces of investment in exchange for exclusive information or early access.

Equity crowdfunding: An alternative form of crowdfunding where the public invests in exchange for shares in an early-stage company.

Sadly, there's no easy option for external funding – but remember that nothing ventured is nothing gained.

Each one of these routes will require a comprehensive business plan, a long-term strategy for your business and, most importantly, perseverance and belief in what you're doing.

Wondering if you're ready to take the huge step that is external investment? Here's a handy dandy checklist.

- You know where you want to take your business in the next five years.
- You've got a plan for how to achieve it.
- You know exactly how much money you need to do it.
- You completely understand your product and the market.
- You know which financing option will give you the best return...
- And you know the risks!
- You've spoken to a finance mentor about the next step.

If you can say 'yes' to all of these scenarios, then you and your business are probably ready. Go out and get that funding!



Trending AI News for SMEs


- Small businesses giving [private data to AI chatbots](#) is sounding the alarm on AI responsibility
- [A new Microsoft study reveals that](#) 79% of small business owners are interested in learning more about how to apply AI to their business


- Google has [launched a new course](#) to help small businesses train staff in AI skills
- The UK government is poised to invest £150m in [film and TV AI-special effects research](#)

Top New Tenders and Small Business Grants

[Framework for the Provision of Painting and Decorating Services](#)


South Wales Police

 £1,600,000

 Deadline: **30th August**

[Industrial Cleaning, Pest Control and Other Environmental Services](#)

South Lanarkshire Council

 £4,000,000

 Deadline: **1st September**

[Records Management System](#)

Northumbria Police

 £5,000,000-£8,000,000

 Deadline: **4th September**

[Digital Upskilling Grants via Good Growth](#)

Grants of between £500,000 and £2m available for digital upskilling providers, specifically in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

 Deadline: **9th October**

That's it for today. Have a good rest of your summer, and we'll see you again in September.

Lianne and the rest of the Contract Finder Pro team

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