

The Time Is Now
Yes, you can build a million-dollar business while you're still in college.

By Nichole L. Torres

Entrepreneur.com

Updated: 9:00 a.m. AKT Aug 8, 2007

Can you turn your college business into a million-dollar enterprise? Abso-freakin-lutely. All you need is a great idea, excellent follow-through and, of course, a little help. "First, you have to have an idea that can be scaled that large," says Cameron Johnson, author of *You Call the Shots* and a veteran entrepreneur at age 22. "If [your market is limited to] your own campus, it's going to be very difficult to get to a million dollars in sales."

Come up with a business idea that can grow nationwide or even worldwide, says Johnson, whose most recent venture is [EasyFollowups.com](#), a company that helps small businesses connect with customers. Also, choose a business that's your passion, because you'll be eating, breathing and dreaming it for the foreseeable future. Finally, get past your fears of business startup--and realize that there's no better time to launch than college. "[Some people] are afraid to get started, or they don't know how to take the first step," says Johnson. "You've got to push those thoughts out the window."

Corey Kossack certainly wasn't afraid to launch Koss DVD, a DVD store on [eBay](#), as a college sophomore in January 2005. He started out buying packs of DVDs on [eBay](#) to sell off individually. He then contacted some of the largest DVD distributors so he could buy his inventory in bulk. He actually made one of his biggest deals from the study room in his dorm complex. Kossack, 23, recruited his mom to help with the back-office duties while he focused on growing the company and managing his studies.

It was a college mentor who encouraged Kossack to outsource his distribution in 2006--which helped his business skyrocket. "I negotiated with different suppliers so I could offer thousands of products out of distribution centers, instead of out of my mom's house," Kossack says. Increased efficiency in packaging and postage helped him manage the rapid growth. In fact, he even wrote a book, *eBay Millionaire or Bust*, detailing his cost-saving tricks. Now a student at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, a school specializing in entrepreneurship education, Kossack has sold over \$1 million in DVDs.

Mentors and partners are vital to starting a business with explosive sales, notes Brent Richardson, CEO of Grand Canyon University. "Get a couple of people around you who have some expertise," he says. "When you look at the guys who did big [business] in college, once they got the concept up, they hired guys who had run companies or been in business to help them carry out the [idea]."

In fact, you never know which contacts will help you launch your business. Adam Blake, 22, started his company, [Blake Venture Corp.](#), in 2004 with funding he secured through a fraternity brother. A student at [Texas Christian University](#) in Fort Worth, Texas, Blake saw the high demand for rental units in his area and started a property management business, which he has since turned into a real estate investment company. Employing every on-campus resource he could find, Blake even used faculty connections to bring him into contact with local real estate developers who gave him advice. "People respect and admire your youth and ambition," says Blake, whose company projects \$2.4 million in sales for 2007. "[They] are more than willing to consult [with you] on everything."

Copyright © 2007 Entrepreneur.com, Inc.