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Pocket-sized student deals

Fraser Duddy is bringing discounted food and beer to Sydney students.



The story so far...

On a post-uni trip to the UK for "work experience and boozing", Fraser noticed the Poms got a pretty good deal on student discounts for food and drinks.

Fraser decided he could make it so Aussie students could get continual discounts, rather than one-offs, throughout the year from local businesses.

His product, Pokit Pal, is a magnetic, pocket-sized booklet listing discounts students can use again and again at local food, bar and retail joints.

"It's their unlimited free discount medium that they flash at pubs and clubs, food franchises, wherever it might be, to redeem offers as many times as they want," says Fraser.

"Really it's like pulling together the supporting businesses from the community and [telling] the students and they can just go for their lives."

After a year researching the market and developing a prototype, funding to produce the booklet came from Fraser's family and friends.

"I've been very lucky that I have family and friends that were open to the idea. With families and friends you've really got people that believe in you rather than the product. Your product will work because you want it to work but you need people to believe in you and then leave you hands-free to get on with it," says Fraser.

"Once we had the investors it was pretty much go, go, go. We had great support from many businesses on the prototype, which was really effective."

Who: Fraser Duddy
Age: 27
Where: Sydney
Company: PokitPal
What they've done: Distributes a free student discount booklet

"Once we had the investors it was pretty much go, go, go. We had great support from many businesses on the prototype, which was really effective."

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Knowing your market



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Fraser talks about the visual branding of pokitpal

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For the all important market research Fraser enlisted final-year students in business studies from his alma mater, the University of Technology Sydney.

For a small fee, the students spent four months analysing the questions Fraser wanted answered and asking around 500 students what they would want to see in the finished product.

"I wouldn't have liked to rush into it. You really need to know what you're doing and I didn't want to do the project without the research," says Fraser.

Although selling comes naturally to Irish-born Fraser, like the market research, it required patience.

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"The selling period took a long time; you can't just go out and sell a medium in a month, especially a new medium. It took many meetings, I think it was over 150 meetings in the first year to sell it, so I met a lot of people."

Fraser initially distributed 130,000 Pokit Pal's directly to students and through TAFE, uni student centres and student-friendly local businesses.

"I knew when the suppliers met me for the first time they were shocked because they thought I was a 40-year-old man over the phone. But you have to sell yourself," he says.

"When you're younger I think it helps as well because people, especially Australians, give you a fair go."

Banners and signs helped push the brand to the student population, but Fraser says for students, what's on offer is most important.

"More so than the brand, it's the offer that the students actually deem to be the attractive thing. With Pokit Pal, for example, you could have one of the coolest bars in Sydney but if they're offering a \$6 drink, that's not as attractive to a student as a back street boozier offering a \$2.50 beer," he says.

Business graduate Fraser plans to take Pokit Pal to Newcastle in 2007, followed by Melbourne, Brisbane and then franchise the business to cover the rest of Australia.

He's also created a website offering lower priced advertising alternatives to pick up more businesses.

"Your local coffee shop might not have the budget to be in Pokit Pal, but on-line they'll have that opportunity. Plus it means students have a pool of discounts on-line to tell them where to go and use their Pokit Pal," he says.



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