

Business success story: Oh My Giddy Aunt

By

[*Business Lounge editorial team*](#)

– November 26, 2013 **Posted in:** [Delivery](#)



In 2003, former teacher, children's author and charity director Nikki Johnston started Oh My Giddy Aunt, an online jewellery store specialising in personalised keepsakes. We find out how this successful online business has grown and thrived.

1. How did you come up with the concept of Oh My Giddy Aunt?

I've always had my nanna's ring, which was bought for her by my grandfather in 1933. It is engraved with their initials on the inside of its tiny band. It's the thing I would grab in a fire; it's irreplaceable.

When my nieces and nephews were born, I realised I wanted to give them gifts with significance, that they could treasure always. That desire gave me the idea of creating a range of gifts that were whimsical, but not throwaway.

The name comes from an old expression from the early 1900s used to indicate surprise, astonishment, admiration or amusement... exactly the responses Oh My Giddy Aunt creations and keepsakes hopefully evoke.

Did you know?

Payment gateway [SecurePay](#), a business of Australia Post, helps businesses to accept online card payments and avoid credit-card fraud.

2. Tell us a bit about your target customers.

A lot of my products are bought by grandmothers. Often they've been sent to the website by their daughters, who put in requests for presents for the grandkids. There are wish lists on the website, so that you can be very specific in your hints! Our customers are from all over Australia.

3. Oh My Giddy Aunt has been online for 10 years. What kind of growth have you seen?

I've seen amazing growth, both for my business and for online shopping in general. Ten years ago, if you did a search for "children's jewellery", my business would be one of a few search results, but now there are so many online retailers out there, you're marketing to make sure you're found, as well as popular.

I've also seen a lot of growth in people's confidence with shopping online, so while the number of businesses has grown, so has the number of customers.

I outsource work now, whereas I used to do everything myself – so that's been good! I also get a lot of repeat custom, and because of that, we've ridden through economic dips pretty well.

4. What products and milestones are the most popular?

Stamping and engraving are always popular. Signet rings are making a huge comeback – usually with an initial and a bluebird or heart.

We cover all the milestones: christenings, first birthdays, weddings, starting school, remembrance ... we've even just done P plates for someone – little nine-carat gold P plates for someone who just got their licence!

5. Are there any funny or memorable orders or inscriptions you can share with us?

Because the website can feel quite personal, people often think you know them, so one order just said: "Can you send to Ireland in a men's size?". Another customer was upset that she hadn't received a confirmation email about her order. When we looked into it, we realised she'd given us her email address at "Bigpong"!

6. How have you marketed Oh My Giddy Aunt?

I used to do a lot of print advertising but don't do much anymore, because the online marketing tends to work better.

We use Facebook marketing mainly, but with some activity on Pinterest, Google+ and Twitter. I also market on online directories like Kidspot, The Bub Hub and Beauty and Lace. I particularly love it when word-of-mouth marketing happens through online forums, although my customers have control over that rather than me! We also make sure we get picked up by the search engines easily.

7. You offer Regular and Express Post. Do many customers take up the express delivery option?

About one third of our customers use Express Post. People often leave things to the last minute, so at Christmas, Mother's Day and Valentine's Day, we get a lot of Express Post orders!

8. You also use SecurePay to secure your online credit-card transactions. Why did you choose this payment gateway?

Before we implemented the SecurePay payment gateway, we had one issue with a stolen card. It left me out of pocket, as I had to pay back the cardholder and I had also already sent out the product by the time we found out.

SecurePay was recommended by my web developer and it's fabulous. The web developer said SecurePay is the most efficient and secure way to go and, with the fraud guard, we certainly haven't had any problems.

9. What business highlights have you experienced?

Every new product makes me excited – I love coming up with new ideas and can't wait to share them. Hanging in here for 10 years has also been a business highlight. I've seen a lot of businesses come and go in those 10 years, so still being here is great, and I put that down to happy customers and staying true to my original vision.

10. What are your goals for Oh My Giddy Aunt?

Keeping the business unique is a huge goal. Also, keeping the balance between having bread-and-butter pieces that keep the cashflow going and making the special little one-off things that maybe aren't so profitable, but that I love doing.

11. Do you have any advice for other entrepreneurs?

Identify what it is that you have that is special and unique and stay true to that. Don't worry too much about what other people are doing, especially copycats – they come and go.

Useful tools and resources

- [Oh My Giddy Aunt](#) sells a variety of jewellery and personalised keepsakes for every occasion.
- [Click here](#) to download a PDF of an abridged version of this Oh My Giddy Aunt case study.

Disclaimer: This article is based on information provided by Nikki Johnston / Oh My Giddy Aunt and illustrates how one organisation has used SecurePay and Australia Post's delivery services. Many factors contributed to the results and benefits described. Australia Post does not guarantee comparable results elsewhere.