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**HAMILTON BRADSHAW**  
Investing in people with passion

## Word-of-mouth should help young design entrepreneur



James Caan

*Dear James*

How can I extend my graphic design business, Depiktion? I am 15 and get about five new clients a week. But I would like to make my business more of a success.

*Ejatu*

IT'S always exciting to hear someone as young as 15 running his or her own business when it appears to be successful. Signing up five clients a week is very impressive.

I looked at your FaceBook page. You seem to have a diverse range of work, and I think one of the first steps you should take is to launch your own website. Many clients, especially in this industry, will want to look at a portfolio and find out more about you and how you work.

Now you have established a network of clients I would suggest asking them to recommend you to others. Also ask for testimonials: you can add them to your website and share them with prospective clients.

Next, start thinking about getting some work experience at a graphic design, advertising or branding company. You could look at the larger firms as they may have formal work shadowing programmes in place. Alternatively, research graphic design companies in your area. Smaller companies may give you more opportunity to get stuck in.

My final piece of advice is to look at gaining further qualifications in

Graphic Design and Business. You are clearly ambitious, have a passion for design and a head for business so enhance this by continuing your studies to give yourself the edge.

Good luck. I hope your business continues to be a success.

■ *For the full article and news of James Caan's free app, go to standard.co.uk. James Caan's new book, Start Your Business in 7 Days, is out now*