



Dragons' Den

Dragons' Den continues to offer entrepreneurs from across the country the chance to make their business dreams come true. If you're genuinely seeking investment for your business idea or invention, we'd like to hear from you.

In the most recent series, 15 entrepreneurs received offers of investment in the Den, and plenty more have gone on to find success even without the backing of the dragons.

Previously on Dragons' Den, **Imran Hakim** pitched his iTeddy, a teddy bear with an integrated multi-media player, securing an investment of £140,000 from Theo Paphitis and Peter Jones. With the Dragons' investment and expertise, the iTeddy became one of Argos' top three selling toys of Christmas 2007 and Imran has recently signed a multi-million pound deal with the UK's number 1 toy and game distributor.

Brixton based **Levi Roots** secured an investment of £50,000 for his secret recipe, Reggae Reggae Sauce. Just 3 ½ weeks after his appearance on the programme, his sauce launched in Sainsbury's stores nationwide - and with the help of Peter Jones and Richard Farleigh he now claims to have sold more than a million bottles of his hot sauce.

And only a few months ago, **Peter Moule** received an investment of £150,000 from James Caan and Duncan Bannatyne for his 'choc-box', a simple plastic housing that protects cable connections. Within weeks, the Dragons helped ramp up production from one million to three million units per year, enabling him to secure him a five-year deal with a multi-national distributor which has the resources to export to 150 countries.

Of course, not everyone secures investment in the Den, but plenty go on to find success. After a really tough time in front of the dragons, **Rob Law** went on to rapidly grow his company – he's now sold over 120,000 *Trunkis*. His 'luggage for little people' has won numerous awards and the product is available in over 30 countries worldwide.

The Dragons also chose not back **Anne Hempstock's** Chocolate Orange Cream Liqueur, *Cream Cutie*. Nevertheless, it's now available in 33 branches of Asda-Walmart in Scotland and she plans to launch a new drink in the range, '*Fruitie Cutie*' over the next few months.

The rules are simple: entrepreneurs can ask for any amount of investment in return for equity in their business. However, they must get the amount they ask for or they will walk away with nothing. The Dragons are prepared to listen to a pitch for any kind of business but they must be convinced that it will make money.

As demonstrated by the investments in the last four series, ideas, businesses and products that meet some or all of the following criteria stand a good chance of securing the Dragons' interest:

- The Unique Selling Point: a product that serves a need like nothing else.
- Scalability: something that can be up scaled to make real money.
- Route to Market: the clear way the product can be sold and marketed.
- Mutually Beneficial Arrangement: just what will the Dragons get out of it?
- Exit Strategy: a plan of how the entrepreneur/Dragon will exit and make money.

The BBC is currently searching for Britain's best entrepreneurs and will be auditioning throughout the coming months. We want to hear from anyone who thinks they've got what it takes to enter the Dragons' Den.

If you would like an application form please send an e-mail to dragonsden@bbc.co.uk, telephone 0871 200 3003 (Calls cost 10p per minute from a BT Landline, other operators and mobiles may be higher) or visit www.bbc.co.uk/dragonsden