



Fraser Mair

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All hands to the sanitiser pump for young entrepreneur

A Northumbria graduate has turned a free hand sanitiser project into a

£100,000 per month business in just 12 weeks.

Fraser Mair, who graduated in 2019 from the University's Business with Marketing Management course, produced 15,000 bottles of free hand sanitiser during the COVID-19 lockdown and is now selling the product to companies that have placed large corporate orders.

The 24-year-old was concerned with the severe lack of sanitiser available for frontline workers and was appalled at reports of price gouging in the marketplace.

With the lockdown causing a dip in sales at his family's small gin distillery, production was switched to making a World Health Organisation (WHO) approved formula of virus-killing liquid from the surplus of high-strength alcohol now available.

The initiative was a huge success, with upwards of 15,000 free bottles of sanitiser being distributed to frontline workers and vulnerable people.

"We called it Leithal Santiser, after the old maritime town of Leith where the distillery is located," said Fraser.

"We were overwhelmed with requests. Most of our bottles went to frontline NHS staff, the police, ambulance and fire crews, care homes and elderly residents."

But as the UK re-emerged from lockdown, companies and organisations started placing large orders of sanitiser to ensure they would have adequate hand hygiene facilities in place to reopen safely. This generated almost £100,000 in sales last month, turning the charitable idea into a profitable business.

Those now buying the sanitiser commercially include councils, golf courses, pub chains and restaurants throughout the UK. Many have signed long-term deals, which means the new business is set to continue well into the future.

"I'm determined to keep our prices ethical," said Fraser. "For such an essential product, especially right now, it's outright wrong for any company to be pushing prices up."

"Teaching students about ethical business practices is a big part of the curriculum at Northumbria, and I'm ensuring this is put into practice in this new project."

A range of hand hygiene products are now available from the company's website, including touch-free hand sanitising stations that can clean more than 5,000 hands before needing to be refilled.

Fraser has re-connected with the University, with Northumbria's Graduate

Enterprise scheme providing support and guidance.

Graham Baty, Head of Student and Graduate Enterprise at Northumbria University, said: “The opportunity identified by Fraser to support businesses in the effort battling the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as opening up new market opportunities for the family business, is an excellent example of the entrepreneurial mind-set and that Northumbria looks to develop in all its students and graduates.”

For more information about Leithal hand sanitiser visit www.leithalsanitiser.co.uk

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