



Two great minds that think alike, two sets of talent and one shared creative vision; each of these design duos found their professional strength in partnership and now they're flying high. Pepper finds out how they've cracked the everyday challenges of working as a team.

Music Fanatics, DJs, Bloggers and Presenters.

Many people have passions, but not many people turn them into their business.

"We've always had a passion for entertaining," says Jordan Collyer, one half of social media duo, The Collyer Twins. While at university she tried her hand at TV presenting and as a sideline started a fashion and lifestyle blog. What kicked off as a hobby, based on a love of fashion and travel, quickly developed into a way of getting backstage at music festivals, where Jordan interviewed artists such as Paloma Faith and Wretch 32. When twin Loanne graduated, the platform doubled its staff as both sisters became contributors. The girls moved to London where they worked in social media for different marketing agencies – Jordan looked after the social media for Kate Spade.

They couldn't have had a better experience to learn the ropes for their new careers: "I was working in a social media agency managing 13-14 small to medium-sized businesses and all their social media accounts which was very hectic," says Loanne. "We just said to ourselves, let's throw everything at our own blog and see what happens. When we gave up our full-time jobs we took on management; they have really helped in terms of securing brand collaborations and we're super excited about our year ahead."

But having just bought a flat and with a mortgage to pay, Jordan is confident their fledgling business can not only satisfy the twins' interests but also pay the bills: "We're young and we're not afraid to make mistakes. We are our own brand and we can take responsibility for the mistakes we make. We don't have to answer to anyone except each other. I don't think we would be able to appreciate it as much if we hadn't come from a corporate working environment. Now it's such a blessing, we've turned our passions into our business – when you can do this and grow it in the way you want to, then you've nailed it."

Working in social media, the twins learnt some key skills to enable their online platforms to flourish. Keeping focused and driven is key, they say, but for Loanne the biggest thing is staying true to who you are. "It sounds so simple, but in this industry you can be pulled in so many different directions and not all

of them are good for your business in the long run." This attitude has allowed them to already attract collaborations from the likes of Puma, Converse and Tommy Hilfiger.

As the first generation to have had full time jobs in social media, the twins are part of a group that has been instrumental in shaping it, creating a playbook with no precedents. But Jordan isn't phased by the steep learning curve: "We aren't going by any rulebook at all. We've been lucky in that we've found a really good manager who has helped us with the business side of things while we focus on what we do best, which is creating fun content that resonates with our audience. We're learning everyday, and so are brands, that are trying to test the waters too. It's such an exciting industry, we're just so happy to be a part of it and hopefully shape it in some way."

Yet the modern phenomenon of creating personal fame via social media also has its downsides – exposure to the underbelly of the internet where trolling has become commonplace. There's only one way to deal with it according to Loanne: "I just tune it out. I try to focus on the positives and think about the potential in the future rather than dwell on negative comments. Constructive criticism on the other hand is welcome. In this industry not everyone is going to love what you do but you quickly learn what to listen to and what to ignore."

Despite the odd detractor, the experience is giving the twins freedom to experiment with as many creative outputs as they can imagine. "We've just started doing 'Twin Sarnies' which are so funny," says Jordan. "They're quick-fire Q&As where Loanne's I get really close up to each side of the interviewee's face – and launch multiple choice questions at them. The questions are completely random so the answers are really spontaneous. It's hilarious. We recently did one with the musician Example, which was a riot."

Loanne is also focused on taking the twins to live audiences: "DJing has also become a pretty big part of what we do and we absolutely love it. We recently did a gig at XYO which was amazing. It's just like being back on the stage. The energy you get back from a crowd is such a buzz." See them at a party near you. *

The Collyer Twins

