



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Sewing

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the Sewing industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in July 2018. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback [here](#); we will use your comments to help improve our service.

What do I need to know about the Sewing market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ Interestingly younger consumers are slightly more likely than older consumers to be fans of sewing. Some **26% of Millennials have sewn in the last year** while the **same is apparent for 24% of Baby Boomers**. (Mintel, *Hobbies and Interests - UK*, February 2018).
- ◆ Computer hardware and specialist design software, along with the various different drafting tools and printing facilities for graphic and industrial design, wood and metal construction equipment for interior design and **sewing stations for fashion design, tend to depreciate quickly and need to be replaced and updated on a regular basis if operators wish to stay technologically up to date in this industry**. (IBISWorld, *Specialised Design Activities in the UK*, May 2018).
- ◆ This article by the British Heart Foundation revealed that approximately “**six in ten (59%) of people polled revealed they are unable to sew confidently or at all**, with over double the amount of men (33%) unable to sew compared to women (15%). A third (33%) of people reveal that they were never even taught to sew.” (British Heart Foundation, *BHF exposes UK sewing skills shortage to launch The Big Stitch campaign*, June 2017) (tinyurl.com/ybuxhzu9).
- ◆ This article looks at the rise in popularity of craft DIY such as cross-stitch, sewing and knitting. Julie Hassan, a senior buyer at Liberty in London, reported **double digit growth in the fabric and haberdashery departments this season**, leading to the store increasing its range by 25%. (The Guardian, *A stitch in time saves stress down the line*, April 2017) (tinyurl.com/k9q8fs1).
- ◆ This article looks at the return of home sewing and dressmaking, with **more than 1 million people having taken up sewing in the last 3 years**, according to the Craft & Hobby Trade Association. (The Guardian, *A stitch in time – new era for home sewing*, January 2017) (tinyurl.com/jaahkoj).
- ◆ The national organisations for this industry include [Craft Scotland](#), [Crafts Council](#), [Arts & Business Scotland](#) and the [Society of Designer Craftsmen](#).

Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ **Mintel – *Why the simple things are often the most beneficial*, July 2018.** Needle work may have traditionally been personified by older adults but this has changed. Under-35s are actually just as likely to have sewn as a hobby than over-65s, and are slightly more likely to have done so compared to 45-64s. If there are proven physical and mental benefits for older adults in needlework then it is highly likely that these will also be apparent in younger generations. It is feasible that these young adults are taking part in these long established pastimes as they provide a break from technology and everyday stress. Mintel's Slow It All Down Trend covers the rise in consumers seeking ways to take a break from the fast pace of life. Knitting and sewing are ideal ways to do this.
- ◆ **Mintel – *Hobbies and Interests - UK*, February 2018.** Men are more likely than women, at 21% versus 15%, to be interested in trying arts and crafts which is logical as fewer men have ever taken part. Interest in trying sewing in the future is fairly even and actually slightly higher in men at 14% and 12% of women. These types of pastimes are traditionally quite female-dominated so this interest from men highlights how male and female activities are slowly becoming less defined.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

A number of job profiles are available from the National Careers Service for occupations in the sewing industry:

- ◆ **Sewing Machinist** (tinyurl.com/mudblbj)
- ◆ **Tailor** (tinyurl.com/mvppm9p)
- ◆ **Dressmaker** (tinyurl.com/lcx6b49)
- ◆ **Clothing alteration hand** (tinyurl.com/ny5xv4v)
- ◆ **Sample machinist** (tinyurl.com/ka2k79r)

Internet searches for craft fairs in your area or across Scotland could provide valuable opportunities to network or sell your services or products:

- ◆ **UK Craft Fairs: Scotland** (tinyurl.com/pptpvwf)
- ◆ **International Craft and Hobby Fair: Glasgow** (tinyurl.com/ycpgk45y)
- ◆ **Stall & Craft Collective: Arts and Craft Fairs in Scotland** (tinyurl.com/jvr34qh)

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as Yell, Thomson Local or Google Maps
- ◆ Trade specialists like EuroPages (European directory), The Wholesaler or Free Index
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as Kompass

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the Companies House website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Retaining and Grow Your Customer Base](#) (tinyurl.com/c2fw4o4) will help you to identify who your customers are, how to use this information to sell more effectively and how to actively compete in your marketplace.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these website, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the National Records of Scotland (NRS). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the Census Area Profiles. Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ Understanding Scottish Places has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ Scottish Government Statistics provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ The Scottish Household Survey provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Account](#)" tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

Last updated: July 2018

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