



From left: Michelle Gattenio, Erica Cerulo, Claire Mazur and Keely Thomas-Menter

"It's important to define roles and write them down. Everyone should know what their responsibilities are to avoid the ball getting dropped."
—Claire Mazur, cofounder



Thomas-Menter and Gattenio at their desk



Mazur and Cerulo at their desk

OF A KIND

Friends and business partners Claire Mazur and Erica Cerulo met more than a decade ago, while attending the University of Chicago. They followed different paths after graduation (Mazur pursuing a career and master's degree in arts administration, Cerulo taking editor gigs at magazines such as *Details* and *Lucky*), but in 2010, they combined their interests, starting *Of A Kind* (*ofakind.com*), a fashion-and-accessories e-tailer that brings limited-edition, independent designer goods to a wide audience.

THE IDEA: Mazur dreamed up OAK in the midst of applying for a job at affordable-art website 20x200 (*20x200.com*). "I was inspired by the way the company used the Internet to support [new] artists," she says. "There's a trend toward conscious

BUILD YOUR DREAM CAREER

Can't find your ideal gig? Maybe it's time to strike out on your own. Here's how local start-ups and entrepreneurs made it happen. Edited by **Sarah Bruning**

consumption; people want to know where the things they buy are coming from." The twosome thought customers might need some convincing to spend their cash on relatively unknown brands, which is where Cerulo's editorial experience came into play: "Storytelling goes a long way in making people feel connected [to the artist] and that they are investing in something that matters," she says.

SECURING THE FUNDING: The pair solicited friends and family around the time of their launch and raised \$100,000, which they stretched over approximately 18 months. "We've been lucky to bring in revenue since Day One," says Mazur. "We've been cash-flow positive for almost a year."

STAFFING UP: At first, Mazur and Cerulo posted on fashion-savvy colleges' job boards, but found the best candidates through listings on their brand's own blog. "It's really important that we find people who are engaged with *Of A Kind*, not people who just want to work at a start-up or want to work in fashion," says Cerulo. "In order to really succeed, we need to find people who connect specifically with what we're doing." The company now consists of the founders, an operations assistant and a recently hired production assistant. —Elizabeth Denton



RISING RETAIL STAR

Joe Einhorn
This 30-year-old aims to end the frustration of "saw it on Pinterest, want to buy it—damn, it's sold out" with **Fancy** (*fancy.com*), an online catalog that's entirely crowd-sourced and image-driven. The site also has a new monthly subscription service similar to Birchbox, but curated exclusively by A-listers, including Ashton Kutcher and Coco Rocha.

PHOTOGRAPHS: OF A KIND: RAYON RICHARDS; JOE EINHORN: DAVID PERRY



From left: Alessandra Henderson, Carter Cleveland and Stas Chyzhykova

ARTSY

For many people, the world of Abramovic and Koons can seem overwhelming and elitist, which is why lifelong art enthusiast Carter Cleveland—who developed an appreciation for galleries and museums during childhood trips with his art-writer father—set out to make it more accessible. Since launching in October 2012, his discovery tool, *Artsy* (*artsy.net*), has amassed an online collection of more than 50,000 artworks that users can explore, share, discuss and purchase with the help of personalized suggestions.

"You can meet the most famous people in the world just by hustling and having a product to show. I'd spend an hour crafting the perfect personal e-mail. You'd be amazed how many people say yes."
—Carter Cleveland, founder and CEO



Reference books at the Artsy office

THE IDEA: When Cleveland decided to search the Web for art to decorate his dorm room at Princeton, he noticed something was missing: "I thought, Why isn't there a website for all of the world's art?" He utilized his computer-science background to create a complex system of algorithms that identifies relationships and similarities among international artists and artworks, the way Pandora has done for music.

SECURING THE FUNDING: In the beginning, Cleveland received thousands of dollars from start-up competitions, as well as generous donations from friends and family. After developing an initial

product and team, he approached big investors and advisers, sending cold e-mails and even jumping out in front of them at conferences, a move he calls the "ninja pitch." His chutzpah paid off: *Artsy*'s long list of advisers includes tech entrepreneurs and CEOs, as well as such art-industry giants as Larry Gagosian.

STAFFING UP: Cleveland admits that recruiting is one of a CEO's hardest jobs. Rather than hire people for specific positions, he focuses on finding individuals who inspire him, believe in his vision and make him excited to come to work every day. —Sara Idacavage

THE ENTREPRENEUR'S TOOL KIT

Clarity
If you had five minutes with a leading expert in your field, what would you ask? This online community connects up-and-comers with successful business owners. You can scour a database of 14,000-plus pros—organized by topic, location, name or cost—and schedule a phone call with a mentor, whose per-minute rate is determined by his or her experience and notoriety. For example, Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban commands about \$167 per minute, while American Apparel marketing director Ryan Holiday charges \$10. *clarity.fm*

CoFoundersLab
Just as online daters rely on companies like OkCupid and JDate to find an ideal mate, business pros can turn to this site to find the work partner of their dreams. Profiles include a short bio, skills, contact information and what they're looking for in a potential cofounder, including time commitment and monetary investment. Standard profiles are free, but an upgraded membership puts your name at the top of search results and gives you unlimited

messages (three months \$60, six months \$108, one year \$120). *cofounderslab.com*

Square
CASH ONLY signs can send potential customers looking for the quickest exit instead of their wallets. But with this petite plug-in card reader, you can use your smartphone to accept credit cards anywhere, anytime. Sign up online to receive the approximately 1.5" x 1" white cube by mail. Download the free app, link your bank account and voilà, you're in business! You can even e-mail or text receipts to your customers. *squareup.com*; free

Basecamp
Small-business owners have to balance everything from staff assignments to client databases. Keep track of it all in one organized place with this Web-based project-management tool, which allows you to assign tasks, track team member progress, work on documents simultaneously, receive e-mail recaps of meetings and archive projects when you're finished. Bonus: You can give it a gratis spin for 60 days. *basecamp.com*; prices vary —Jen Michalski



Employees at the Artsy office

MORE ONLINE!
Read expanded profiles of the rising stars at *timeout.com/newyork*.

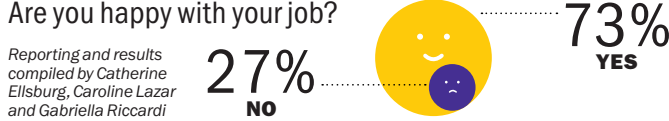
RISING ART STAR



Tze Chun
Chun founded online gallery **Uprise Art** (*upriseart.com*), which brings personal curation to the digital sphere. Each of the 600 members receives gratis access to limited-edition works and one-of-a-kind contemporary pieces (\$300–\$9,000) from 45 handpicked artists, plus an individual consultation with one of the company's curators. Purchases can be made in installments of as little as \$50 a month.

CAREER SURVEY

We asked 100 New Yorkers to share how they *really* feel about their jobs.



NEXT-LEVEL
OFFICE PERKS

Compiled by Brooke Bunce, Courtney Jacquin and Alexandra LaSala

TOTALLY BALLER

Unlimited sick and vacation days

ModCloth, Foursquare, Tumblr, Gilt Groupe

Nap rooms equipped with sleeping pods for nabbing some midday shut-eye

Yext

Puppytorium—a designated room where employees can house their dogs during the day and visit when they need a break

Chartbeat

FRICKIN' SWEET

Free concert tickets and in-office performances

Spotify

Free parking and transit reimbursements

Quirky

Free fitness classes

Rent the Runway, SoulCycle

PRETTY COOL

Free booze

Yelp, Thrillist

Free meals

Artsy, ZocDoc, Warby Parker, StumbleUpon

Free snacks

Shoptiques, Vimeo

LEGITMIX

In order to avoid copyright battles with record labels, DJs who sample other artists' work typically don't bother trying to sell their tracks. Legitmix (legitmix.com), an NYC-based start-up with a development office in Ottawa, is hoping to change that rule of thumb: Its program allows fans and producers to create or buy mash-ups that use sampled works he or she already owns, thus sharing profits with the sampled artists and their labels.

THE IDEA: It all started with a movie: Filmmaker Booker Sim, Legitmix's cofounder and chief marketing officer, was attempting to release his doc *Tragedy: The Story of Queensbridge*, which chronicles the lives of Nas, Mobb Deep, Marley Marl and other rappers from the housing project. "'L.A.L.A.' [a song that was instrumental in the film] contained a sample of a sample of a sample, so there's about 20 different people to get clearances from," says Sim. "That pretty much killed my movie in terms of putting it out with the original music." His friend Omid McDonald, Legitmix's cofounder and CEO, couldn't believe it: "I started thinking, Well, maybe there could be a software solution to this issue."

SECURING THE FUNDING: "It was relatively quick," notes McDonald, a software engineer. "Fortunately, I had success with my last company, Simbit Corporation [which backed up phone books on cell-phone SIM cards], so investors were already predisposed to looking at an idea. They were aware of the art form and the problems, and they liked the elegance of the solution—both from the technical and legal side."

BUILDING THE BRAND AND CUSTOMERS: "Our first big project was with Diplo. We put out a mixtape called *Mad Legit*—[the label] Mad Decent meets Legitmix—which got us press," says Sim. But that buzz fizzled, as "there wasn't much else to do" on the site besides get the mix. The team then shifted its focus to developing relationships with budding DJs and fine-tuning Legitmix Discovery, a store/remix search engine that launched earlier this summer.—*Tim Lowery*

"You have to have a true passion for it, because it isn't easy. It's almost like a religious crusade. You'll get a lot of push-back, but if you're really into the idea, go for it!" —Omid McDonald, cofounder and CEO

Legitmix cofounder and CEO Omid McDonald



From left: McDonald, Scott Melker and Booker Sim



RISEING TECH STAR

Michael Waxman

Frustrated by experiences in the NYC dating scene, the 26-year-old devised **Grouper** (joingrouper.com), a system that matches you and two pals with another trio of singles based on your Facebook profiles, then coordinates the meet-up. Total dates arranged—including one where Waxman met his girlfriend—number in the hundreds of thousands.

PHOTOGRAPHS: LEGITMIX; RAYON RICHARDS

COOL COWORKING SPACES

For the socially conscious: Green Spaces

An eco-friendly ethos pervades this office, from biodegradable inks in the printers to furniture made from recycled materials. Of the 100-plus members, 75 percent are focused on social and environmental change. There's a wait list for desks, but not for the open-plan laptop lounge. greenspacesny.com. Desk \$600/month, laptop lounge \$400/month. Day pass \$35.



For visual creatives: Con Artist

This underground joint functions as both art gallery and workspace for a collective of more than 120 painters, sculptors, photographers, designers and the like. Once voted in by the rest of the group (via e-mail application), members receive 24/7 access to equipment and facilities, including screen presses, a photo studio, power tools, computers and worktables, as well as the chance to exhibit a three-week solo show in the front gallery. conartistnyc.com. Collective \$50/year, workspace \$180/month.



For those who want elbow room: Ensemble

You (and up to 13 colleagues) can opt for a setup in the common area or a legit four-walled hideaway. An additional floor opens this month, adding 80 more spots. letsensemble.com. Open seating for 1–6 people \$450–\$2,200/month, private office for 4–14 people \$2,100–\$5,400/month.



For perks galore: WeWork

This company has six locations in NYC, and each one has a distinct design and vibe. More than 3,000 local members brainstorm over beer and coffee and get access to bonuses like discounts on health care and Zipcar rentals. Each branch hosts regular talks and panels, and helps match entrepreneurs with investors and advisers. Space is limited, but you can snag a spot at the Financial District location, which debuts Thu 1. [Locations.vary\(wework.com/ny\)](http://Locations.vary(wework.com/ny)); average individual membership \$450/month, average private office space \$700/month.



For cool kids: Secret Clubhouse

Founded by Tumblr's Rick Webb, this locale draws tenants focused on innovation in the tech and media fields; the close 35-desk quarters invite plenty of cross-pollination of ideas. In addition to round-the-clock access and an 800-square-foot lounge, SC provides each member with a dedicated locker. secretclubhou.se. \$500/month, day pass \$25.—*Jenna Scherer*



LOT18

From left: Arach Tchoupani, Jay Sung, Andrew Lowitz and Janine Lettieri



"Know going in that there are pros and cons to working at a start-up, mainly having to do with culture. Things like structure, policy and hierarchy tend to be dismissed as antiquated or outdated." —Andrew Lowitz, vice president of operations



When flash-sale sites started taking off in 2009, most focused their inventory on clothing and accessories. Kevin Fortuna, previously the CEO of search-engine marketing firm Quigo, and Philip James, founder of online wine community Snooth, saw a niche opportunity—selling high-quality, under-the-radar bottles of vino. In 2010, they debuted Lot18 (lot18.com), which has since transitioned into a more traditional retail operation that also includes a curated wine-of-the-month club.

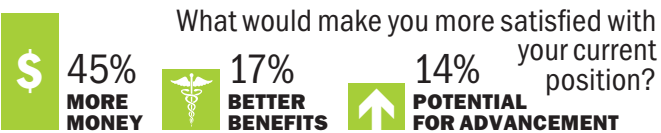
THE IDEA: To set their company apart from other wine-focused e-tailers (many of which had failed), Fortuna and James



RISEING FOOD STAR

Craig Kanarick

This June, Kanarick launched **Mouth** (mouth.com) with 600-plus artisanal foods, made by 150 indie makers hailing from more than 20 states. Gastronomes can score such exclusives as Marc Murphy's handcrafted caramels—along with themed monthly subscriptions and gift packages—while purveyors get to focus on their goods instead of trying to go national.



concentrated on providing access to smaller, lesser-known vineyards. They recruited Janine Lettieri, a sommelier who earned her stripes at Le Bernardin and the Waverly Inn, to serve as their imported-wine director. “I work with wineries around the world to find brands that are new to America and offer great financial value,” she says. “We also partner with wineries to craft new brands exclusively for us.”

STAFFING UP: Determining the right number of people has been somewhat of a roller-coaster ride for the operation, which began with a team of five and grew to around a hundred people by 2011. Over the past two years, execs realized that the high overhead costs associated with the original flash-sale premise meant Lot18 wouldn’t be sustainable in the long run. Earlier this year, two rounds of layoffs trimmed the company’s forces to 40 full-timers, plus a handful of contractors.

BUILDING THE BRAND AND CUSTOMERS: “For the first couple years, we appealed mostly to high-net-worth consumers, which is a small slice of the wine-drinking public,” says CEO Jay Sung. “We’ve expanded our product range to appeal to a broader spectrum of budgets and palates.” Along those lines, the brand relaunched Tasting Room, a subscription service in which clients sample and rate mini bottles, submitting tasting notes to Lot18 sommeliers, who then personalize a shipment. —Caren Oppenheim



Lot18 CEO Jay Sung



From left: Kaye Toal, Eli Pariser, Zane Selby and Lindsay Holst

UPWORTHY

We all know cheeky animal GIFs can spread rapidly across the Internet, but how can more weighty content find the same traction? News-aggregation site Upworthy (upworthy.com) aims to answer that question by curating and promoting stories that are both thought-provoking and immensely shareable. Launched in March 2012, the operation hit a record high of 30 million unique visitors this past May, thanks to multimedia pieces on LGBT issues, immigration, health care and more.

SECURING THE FUNDING: Cofounders Peter Koechley and Eli Pariser built a demo site in 2011, which they used to raise seed capital (a.k.a. starter money), before creating the public version and hiring staff. Their first backer was Facebook cofounder Chris Hughes, who’s now publisher and editor-in-chief of *The New Republic*.

“Let your personality shine a bit in your application. When I applied to this job, I had ‘Can rap along to Nicki Minaj songs’ in my special skills.” —Kaye Toal, community manager

MORE ONLINE!

Find out more about these cool companies at timeout.com/newyork.

His investment gave them the momentum to secure additional money to get off the ground.

STAFFING UP: Once they figured out what positions they needed to fill, Koechley and Pariser advertised the openings on social networks (Facebook, Twitter, GitHub), while reaching out directly to individuals in their respective circles. “We asked, ‘Who’s the greatest person you’ve ever worked with? What are they doing? Can we hire them?’” says Koechley. “We’ve found that approach to be pretty successful over time.” The company has grown to 22 employees, who can set their own schedules and live anywhere. “We want you to do the best work of your lives, but we don’t really care when, where or how you do it,” says Koechley. Despite having no physical office and almost two dozen full-timers across the country, the company does its best to re-create workplace dynamics with an emphasis on collaboration. “It’s nice to have a team that’s based on talent instead of location,” says Kaye Toal, community manager. “I’m sure there are situations [at other companies] where someone would be perfect for a position, but they’re outside of the country. That’s not a problem here.” —Nadia Chaudhury

RISEING CONTENT STARS

Alex Cavoulacos, Kathryn Minshew and Melissa McCreery

When 27-year-old Kathryn Minshew left consulting powerhouse McKinsey & Company in 2010, she wished there were a relatable job-hunt site that offered postings along with intel on company culture and savvy career advice. A year later, she unveiled **The Muse** (themuse.com), which now attracts 1 million job seekers a month with a combination of listings and tips for navigating modern employment (on thedailymuse.com).



PHOTOGRAPHS: LOT18: RAYON RICHARDS; THE MUSE: JOSEPH LIN

THINK YOU’RE READY TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS? ➔

Now that you’ve read about these pros’ paths, test your luck with the game on the next page, featuring advice from the founders of fitness empire SoulCycle.

START-UP CHUTES AND LADDERS

Try navigating the highs and lows of the entrepreneurial game—and get pro tips from SoulCycle cofounders Julie Rice and Elizabeth Cutler along the way. By **Sarah Bruning** Illustrations by **Nan Lawson**

RULES: CUT OUT YOUR PLAYER. ROLL A DIE TO MOVE FORWARD. FIRST PERSON TO THE END WINS.



THE ATHLETE

Loves working out, saw a hole in the fitness market, wants to launch the next craze



THE AESTHETE

On a mission to make the world a more beautiful place



THE TECHIE

Always thinking of a new app or online service, dreams in code

FINISH
Congratulations—you’ve made it to Entrepreneurland!

START
You’ve thought up a great idea, a company name and a logo.

1 You open your first location and it becomes incredibly popular.

2

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5 You amass a huge client base and attract celebrity fans.

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10 It’s way too expensive, and the landlord says no. Approving start-ups’ leases is risky for building owners since the default potential is high. If you can build a relationship with the management, it’ll up your chances.

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13 You don’t have the funds to hire the right people. For Rice and Cutler, good employees “have a positive, hands-on attitude, take ownership of their job and aren’t afraid to get dirty.”

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18 Your business grows into multiple outposts. SoulCycle launched in 2006 with one location, which Cutler found on Craigslist. The duo’s empire has expanded to 19 locations on the East and West Coasts.

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22 You find a little extra money in the budget.

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26 You secure a partnership with a bigger company to help with operations and costs. For SoulCycle, that meant linking up with Equinox’s real-estate team, which helped scout and secure locations for new studios.

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30 You realize this person is a terrible communicator. Cutler’s rules for a successful partnership: Have the same kind of work ethic, keep your egos in check, and be willing to talk often and openly.

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32 An angel investor backs out and you lose key financing.

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45 You find a tricked-out office space in a perfect location.

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47 You launch a product line, which brings in even more dough and builds brand recognition. Rice and Cutler used \$2,000 left over from their first opening to create a T-shirt with SoulCycle’s logo.

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50 You meet a potential business partner who seems to share your vision.