

# Craft business Katy Sue Designs announces latest acquisition

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A growing North East craft business has announced its latest acquisition.

Katy Sue Designs, which is based in South Shields and has seen its products used on the Great British Bake Off, has acquired the UK's number one quilling supplier, JJ Quilling.

The deal comes after Katy Sue Designs saw significant growth in ecommerce revenues over the past two years and follows a number of other acquisitions in the crafting sector.

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JJ Quilling is a 40-year-old family owned business based in south London, which manufactures paper quilling supplies and kits. The only remaining UK manufacturer of speciality foil edged strips, it has an international customer base.

Sue Balfour, CEO of Katy Sue Designs, said: "We have been working on our own range of paper quilling products which are set to launch in early 2022 and searched for a UK supplier to add to our kit designs."

“We were surprised to find most of the supplies were a poor quality and had to be bought in China and so we were delighted to begin working with JJ as a UK supplier and ultimately to have the opportunity to acquire the JJ Quilling range and manufacturing capability. We intend to invest in more products and additional customer service capability to help the business reach its real potential.”

Diane and Tris Boden, the owners of JJ Quilling, said: “We had been considering retiring but wanted to make sure the business lived on and became part of a business with the same culture and ethos as we have.

“We approached Katy Sue and found Sue Balfour was the right person to take things forward, so we completed negotiations quickly and to our complete satisfaction. We are going to stay on for a period to ensure the business is fully integrated into its new home at Katy Sue.”

Katy Sue Designs has set ambitious growth plans in which it aims to become a £10m revenue business employing more than 100 staff within five years.

Having secured investment in late 2018, the business has seen sales growth of over 200% and is on an acquisition journey to build out the business, consolidating a highly fragmented UK craft market.

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