

Khawla HAMDI - “Impra Design”

Sidi Bouzid

There are journeys in life that inspire you, like that of Khawla, who has drawn on her strength of character and ability in furniture design to successfully launch her business.

In 2014, Khawla graduated in furniture design from ISAM in Sidi Bouzid, the city where she is from. For her final project, she focused her attention on producing decorative items. Passionate about this, she decided to turn her idea into a business.

“When I had this idea, nobody was producing decorative wooden items in Sidi Bouzid,” explains Khawla. “So I asked myself, why not become the first woman to produce decorative items in the region?”

From then on, everything quickly accelerated for Khawla. While others struggle to launch their companies, she seized opportunities and swiftly climbed the entrepreneurial ladder.

“I have never been unemployed. While waiting for my bank credit and preparing my production unit, I worked for my uncle in his printing press. This experience allowed me to train and prepare for my future business.”

In 2015, she obtained a credit of 50,000 Tunisian Dinars from the BTS (Tunisian Bank of Solidarity). With her own funds of 15,000 TND, this allowed her to acquire her first wood cutting machine and to officially launch her business in September of the same year.

While the preparations for her production unit were moving forward, Khawla invested in her managerial self-training. She took part in an HP LIFE face-to-face training in Sousse for 7 days,

provided by the Mashrou3i project organized by UNIDO and funded by USAID, the Italian Cooperation and the HP Foundation. Through this training, she learned how to better communicate with her customers, define her costs or calculate her margins.

Later, the Mashrou3i project also offered her the opportunity to present her company and her products during an interview broadcasted on regional radio, which helped her gain new customers.

Khawla’s journey mirrors her image, efficient and determined. With the experience, the will and the support of Mashrou3i, she is 100% involved in her business. “When I started I was not able to develop a finished product, I was only providing services which allowed me in the long term to acquire a good customer portfolio and sign contacts.”

Khawla was not mistaken in building these relationships. Through these first contracts she managed to save money little by little and purchase new machines that allowed her to develop her business.

“I feel really lucky; everything has moved quickly and without major obstacles. But I do not want to stop there, and I still want to expand my business and work on the finished products, and perhaps access foreign markets and export.”

At only 27, Khawla is now a role model for all women entrepreneurs in the region of Sidi Bouzid. At the head of IMPRA Design, employing 3 people at her side, Khawla hopes to go a long way and will definitively make her mark in Tunisia’s design sector.