

# New Year, Fresh Career? Franchise Opportunity in the Burgeoning Female Sex Market with Sh! Women's Erotic Emporium

Submitted by: Sh! Women's Erotic Emporium

Tuesday, 13 December 2011

---

With “find a better job” on many folk’s New Year Resolutions list, a career-move being your own boss in the erotic industry maybe a canny move as well as a rewarding and fun proposition.

It appears the days of dark, porn-filled joints are numbered and women are taking over this traditionally male-orientated business, both behind and in front of the counter.

It started in 1992, with Sh! (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com>), the UK’s first boutique-style sex shop, which many industry insiders credit as the touch paper which started the real female revolution in the sex industry.

From humble beginnings (the first shop was established on only £700) Sh! (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com>) has attracted many accolades; ETO Most Innovative Store Award (<http://www.eroticttradeonly.com/news/article/?id=642>), Time Out Best 100 Shops in London (<http://www.timeout.com/london/shops/venue/2:27382/sh>) & WWS (<http://www.womensexandshopping.com>) Top 10 Best Erotic Retailers in the World.

Now in its 20th year, Sh! (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com>) is planning to open branches of its ‘Women’s Erotic Emporium’ across the UK to respond to a burgeoning market that is simply not being served.

Kathryn Hoyle, Managing Director, who founded Sh! after a trip to buy a vibrator (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Sex+Toys/Vibrators.htm>) had revealed an experience that was either “tacky, sleazy or 100% directed at men” comments; “Sh! kick started a long over due change in this industry, where half the population was being ignored. Our stores, and the women & couples who come to them, have forced the industry to sit up and takes note. This has resulted in better toy design, improved quality and more female-friendly shopping environments and websites. No-one does it quite so well as Sh! however and we want to introduce our unique vision to cities across the UK”

The female erotic market, already big business in Britain, is forecasted to grow exponentially. According to market analyst company, Hewson Group (<http://www.hewson.co.uk/papers/WSSanalyststreamv1.1.pdf>) , it is currently worth around £250m in the UK and may be worth over £1bn within 5 years.

Whilst the demand is huge, supply was deemed to be somewhat lacking; The Hewson research revealed that few businesses successfully cater to the female market and that "Sh! is closer to a model that the female shopper is happy with"

What makes Sh! (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com>) so in tune with today’s erotic market, when high-street chains fall less of the mark? Customers comments in the store visitors book are revealing: “the store is warm, friendly and approachable” “products are good quality and never tacky” “everything is displayed so it can be handled, felt, tasted, played with, tried on etc” “the all-female sales staff are sensitive sexperts – full of advice but never pushy, plus they serve you tea!”

The fact that Sh! is committed to creating a female-friendly space may also be key to the success of their concept; men are welcome but are asked to visit with a woman or, if alone, to shop on "Gents Nights". It seems that just like lingerie; women want a sanctuary in which to buy their sex toys (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Sex+Toys.htm>)

At odds with the general trend, the Hewson research revealed that nearly 80% of women would prefer to buy their erotic goods in a bricks and mortar store, rather than online.

For Hoyle, this comes as no surprise "Just like a pair of shoes, buying an intimate item such as a sex toy or lubricant is hugely personal and buying hands-on is the only way to be certain of making the right choice. Shopping in store is also a sexy, liberating and thrilling experience that shopping online just can't compete with"

So, what qualities do you need to start a new career serving the women of the UK with sex toys and other erotic accoutrements?

"Anyone who thinks it's a fast, easy way to make mega bucks need not apply" says Hoyle "Just like starting any business it will be hard work, especially at first, but from day one it will be rewarding"

"When a woman or a couple enters your shop a bag of nerves and leaves confidently swinging a bagful of goodies, you know you have done something wonderful"

#### Notes to Editors

Sh!Women's Erotic Emporium (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com>) was the very first shop of its kind to open for women, by women in 1992. The mission was simple: to create a safe, welcoming environment in which women can shop guilt-free for good quality playthings.

Everyone is offered a cup of tea when they come in and the knowledgeable and friendly Sh! Girlz aim to make information about sex accessible to all, old or young of whatever sexual persuasion, background or culture. They do welcome men, but as they come accompanied by a woman.

Sh! were the first to launch the 'Jessica Rabbit vibrator' ([http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Sex+Toys/Vibrators/Rabbit+Vibrators/All\\_in\\_1\\_Jessica\\_Rabbit\\_Vibe.html](http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Sex+Toys/Vibrators/Rabbit+Vibrators/All_in_1_Jessica_Rabbit_Vibe.html)) well before it debuted in 'Sex and The City', and the founder, Kathryn Hoyle has been a regular spokesperson promoting the ethos behind the store and the brand and has even been to 10 Downing Street to attend an Aids Awareness Event.

Sh! set up its very own research and development department and works with many NHS trusts offering

advice and help on women's health care, particularly at post-surgery dilation stage.

Sh! host plenty of different nights and events at their London stores ranging from erotic classes

(<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Erotic+Classes.htm>), erotic art

(<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/newsdesk/Sh%21+Store+Portobello/Portobello+Events/Erotic+Zodiacs+at+Sh%21+Portobello>) and photography exhibitions

(<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/newsdesk/Sh%21+Store+Hoxton/Store+Events/Rod+MacDonald+Erotic+Photography.html>),

erotic literary evenings

(<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/newsdesk/Sh%21+Store+Portobello/Portobello+Events/Girls+Get+Together+Erotic+Literary+Evenings>) and much more.

Sh! manufactures its own range of products in London, including silicone dildos

(<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Sex+Toys/Dildo+Delights/Sh%21+Silicone+Dildos.htm>), harnesses

(<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Sex+Toys/Strap-on+Harnesses.htm>) and bondage

(<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/Sensual+Pleasures/FetiSh%21.htm>)

To find out more about franchise opportunities at Sh! please contact [franchise@sh-womenstore.com](mailto:franchise@sh-womenstore.com) or call 0845 868 9599

To find out more about the events on offer at this amazing emporium visit the website

([www.sh-womenstore.com](http://www.sh-womenstore.com))

To speak to the shop manager regarding promotions, events, to interview Kathryn Hoyle or to simply find out more about our unique product range please contact:

[shop@sh-womenstore.com](mailto:shop@sh-womenstore.com) or phone 020 761305458

Sh! Women's Erotic Emporium:

57 Hoxton Square, London, N1 6HD (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/newsdesk/Sh%21+Store+Hoxton.htm>)

Unit 4, 253 Portobello Road, W11 1LR (<http://www.sh-womenstore.com/newsdesk/Sh%21+Store+Portobello.htm>)

Reference: Women Sex & Shopping: The Future Retail market in the UK

([http://www.hewson.co.uk/papers/retail/WSS\\_Table\\_of\\_Contents.pdf](http://www.hewson.co.uk/papers/retail/WSS_Table_of_Contents.pdf))

Contact: Nick Hewson

[nick@hewson.co.uk](mailto:nick@hewson.co.uk)

44 1603 864777