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## The Story of StyleRoom

Every great brand has a story. Sometimes it is something the brand develops afterwards with branding professionals but sometimes it comes naturally. That is the case in StyleRoom. StyleRoom wasn't originally made to make great money. There was no business plan, no profit calculations, no angel investors or start-up-coaches behind.

Instead there were four friends who wanted to create a friendly place, where normal people can share their interior design ideas and solutions. We let Johan Arvidson, one of the founders, tell, how everything began:

*"It started when I moved into a new apartment. The apartment needed a total makeover; floors, walls, kitchen. I took the old stuff away. That was the easy part.*

*Then I needed to figure out how I wanted my apartment to look like and I didn't have a clue. I bought all interior magazines I could find. I noticed that many nice homes in these magazines were designed by famous architects and the furniture was bought from abroad. I could dream about it but not to do it.*

*Then I wondered if all homes looked like that. Probably not, but how could I find out? I talked to my friends, Kristian (we've been close friends in 30 years), Mia and Martin. We got an idea about web community that would share photos about their own homes and give fresh but easy-to-make interior design ideas to each other.*

*My friends loved the idea and since we've all been in the web business for many years we started to develop a prototype by ourselves. We launched the first version without investing any marketing money. We had to use social media to get content and visitors. We posted to all our friends on FaceBook and begged them to upload home ph-*

*tos and make own albums. We mailed the bloggers and asked them to upload images and give us feedback. Google became soon our best friend. It liked the way we presented our site; we climbed in the Google listings.*

*In the beginning people could rate other peoples' home albums. That was a terrible mistake. We noticed that people were pretty offended if someone didn't like their homes. Your home is a mirror of who you are and if you get bad ratings, you really get mad. Overnight we removed the ratings and the amount of albums and traffic increased enormously.*

*One of the biggest right decisions in the beginning was that we developed so good web platform that we have been able to use it for years. We still have the same platform since we don't want a third party software. When we have a software in our own hands, we can easily change things if needed.*

*Everyone in our team worked without any kind of salary the first six years. All money earned has been re-invested in StyleRoom. We worked elsewhere in daytime, with StyleRoom in the evenings, nights and weekends. We did not have even an office.*

*If the purpose would have been to make a lot of money in the beginning none of us would have continued. We're doing this because of love. There have been no shortcuts except that we had all the knowledge in order to produce the service ourselves.*

*We have got many offers from companies wanting to buy StyleRoom or invest in it, but we have always said no. That happened until A-lehdet came around. We liked them because of their strong engagement.*

*Today StyleRoom is Europe's largest image database. We have four people in Sweden working on it on daily basis and the next step is to grow even more and launch in new exciting countries. First out is Finland and we're very, very excited.*

Johan Arvidson  
Co-founder  
StyleRoom

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