The rise of a second-hand unicorn: Talking business strategy

1. Warm-up: The second-hand revolution

> Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Have you ever bought or sold second-hand clothes or items online? What was your experience?
2. What platforms or apps for buying and selling used goods are popular in your country?
3. Why do you think buying second-hand items has become so popular in recent years?

2. Key business vocabulary

> Match the business terms from the video with their correct definitions.

1. **Startup**	a. To grow or develop vigorously; to flourish.
2. **To dominate**	b. For each person; in relation to people taken individually.

3. **Iteration**	c. A newly established business, typically one that is small and financed by an individual or a small group.
4. **Viable**	d. A version of something, like a product, that is part of a sequence of versions.
5. **To capitalize on**	e. To have a commanding influence on; exercise control over.
6. **Per capita**	f. A complex network of connected businesses that work together and strengthen each other.
7. **To thrive**	g. Capable of working successfully; feasible.
8. **Ecosystem**	h. To take the chance to gain advantage from a situation or trend.

3. Video: The Vinted story

> Watch the video about the second-hand clothing platform Vinted and answer the questions below.

1. What makes Vinted's current business model different from competitors like eBay?
2. According to the video, what two major trends have helped the global resale market to boom?
3. What is a "pickup and drop off point" and what does its popularity suggest about Vinted's growth?
4. How does Vinted's locker-to-locker shipping model contribute to sustainability?
5. What is the company's long-term goal for its structure instead of just being a "vulnerable single vertical marketplace"?

Watch the video on YouTube

4. Phrases for describing business success

Complete the sentences below with the correct phrases from the word bank. You may need to change the verb form.

dominate the sector | economically viable | capitalize on the trends | a generational shift | achieve long-term goals | create a new market

1. With its innovative app, the company managed to ______________________ and became the leader in food delivery.
2. The rise of remote work is ______________________ in how people think about their careers and work-life balance.
3. Before launching, we need to ensure our business plan is ______________________ and can generate profit.
4. By making electric cars cool and accessible, Tesla didn't just compete; it helped to ______________________ for sustainable transport.
5. Our marketing team is looking for ways to ______________________ towards wellness and healthy living.
6. Every decision we make should help us ______________________ of becoming a global brand.

5. Grammar focus: Describing business trends

When discussing business, we often use specific tenses to describe performance and trends:

- Use the **Present Perfect** (has/have + past participle) to talk about actions or situations that started in the past and are still relevant now, or to describe recent changes.
  *Example: "The global resale market **has really boomed** in the last few years."*
- Use the **Present Continuous** (am/is/are + -ing) to talk about actions happening right now or current, ongoing trends.
  *Example: "We're still **showing** very strong growth."*

> Choose the correct verb tense (Present Perfect or Present Continuous) to complete each sentence.

1. Consumer interest in sustainability (grows / is growing) rapidly this year.
2. Since 2020, our company (opens / has opened) offices in three new countries.
3. Look at these figures! Our market share (increases / is increasing) every quarter.
4. Vinted (becomes / has become) one of the most successful startups in Europe over the past decade.
5. At the moment, we (develop / are developing) a new strategy to enter the US market.
6. The cost of living (rises / has risen) significantly, which affects consumer spending habits.

6. Discussion: Business model analysis

> Discuss the following questions with a partner. Use language from the lesson.

1. Vinted made it free for sellers and started charging buyers a fee. What are the pros and cons of this model compared to eBay's model of charging sellers? Which do you think is better for growth?
2. The video mentions the cost of living and sustainability as key drivers for Vinted's success. What other factors might be important for an e-commerce company today?

3. The CEO talks about building an "ecosystem of businesses" (marketplace, shipping, payments). Why is this a powerful strategy? Can you think of other companies that have a successful ecosystem?

7. Role-play: Pitch your startup

> Work in small groups. Imagine you are pitching a new e-commerce startup to potential investors. Prepare a short (2-minute) pitch. Your pitch should cover:

- **What you do:** What product or service does your startup offer?
- **Your unique model:** How will you make money? What makes you different from competitors?
- **Market trends:** What current trends (like sustainability, technology, etc.) are you **capitalizing on**?
- **Your vision:** What are your **long-term goals** for the company?

Try to use the vocabulary, phrases, and grammar from today's lesson to make your pitch convincing!