

## 4 tips for growing your passion project using AI from media powerhouse Her Campus Media



Throwback to 2009: When digital cameras were the norm (not nostalgia) and trends were only shared in national print magazines that essentially gave everyone the same algorithm. Wild, we know. When online magazines were just starting to pop up, Her Campus Media co-founders and then-students Windsor Western, Stephanie Kaplan Lewis, and Annie Wang noticed a huge gap in the media market — there were no magazines written specifically for women in college.

Seeing this opportunity sparked their idea to put the Harvard Women's Magazine online and scale it to more readers. Soon after, they expanded to campuses nationwide and it was renamed to how we know it today: HerCampus.com, an online magazine written by women, for women.

Just as they did 15 years ago, Windsor, Stephanie, and Annie continue to keep their pulse on innovative tech — like AI. “If we launched Her Campus in 2024, we would absolutely use AI to help us out,” Windsor said, explaining that the generative AI platform [Microsoft 365 Copilot](#) is a tool the HCM team uses for everything from writing emails to organizing data to crafting fun birthday messages. “Young entrepreneurs starting small businesses need to be learning about AI and how *they* can use it to help their brands grow.”

Whether you're a creative who could use a little help on the logistics side, or an analytical person looking for clever ways to market your passion project, odds are AI can help you grow your business. Keep reading for entrepreneurial tips to [use AI](#), directly from one of our founders.

*PS - Be sure to enter your info in the [Typeform](#) below for a chance to win money and have your small business featured on HC's social page with 141K followers! And check out [Copilot here!](#)*

### **Familiarize yourself with new technology**

With how quickly new tech tools are introduced, it can feel like technology whiplash trying to keep up. "Ten years ago, there were a lot of new social media platforms popping up," Windsor said. "We didn't use each platform to grow our business — because each new tool requires time and resources — but we did learn about them to see which ones could be a fit for us."

"It can feel overwhelming, but the number one thing I'll say is to continue to immerse yourself in the new technology and new media," Windsor said. "Make sure you understand it, learn what's new, and use your judgment to decide what will help serve you and your business goals."

### **Add Microsoft 365 Copilot to your small biz tool-kit**

You probably already have Microsoft 365 tools (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams — heard of 'em?), but generative AI tools like Copilot help you get way more out of those apps — from writing the perfect meeting recap email to creating a schedule to squeeze in your calls around your classes, all at the click of a button. Think of [Copilot](#) as your own personal assistant!

"As a business owner, you wear a lot of hats, and it's sometimes hard to juggle it all," Windsor said. "Things like Copilot were created to make our lives easier, so why not take advantage of it? It's easy to use and can help you be way more efficient as you grow your business."

### **Use the resources around you**

There's access to many easy-to-use, reliable resources to help you grow your business. And, being in college, you also have access to intelligent and motivated people, from professors to alumni, to fellow peers who, more likely than not, want to help you out.

"Even though our school didn't have a business major for undergrad, we still used all of the resources we had on campus to learn about business and entrepreneurship," Windsor said. The HCM founders attended on-campus events, networked with special guests and speakers, formed professional relationships with university staff, and joined clubs that aligned with their goals. When Harvard's annual business plan competition rolled around, the founders knew the contest could help them further develop their business plan and grow their idea — and their win helped propel HCM to what it is today!

### **Just start**

Whether it's heading to college for freshman year, running that first mile, or starting a business from your dorm room, beginnings are hard. Windsor's advice? *Just start.*

“Anyone can do it,” Windsor said. “You just have to have the passion, the tenacity, and the grit to keep going and to be willing to pivot when necessary.”

And if you don’t know where to start, try asking Copilot for help!