



*I wanted to create something that would not only benefit me but also my community.*



## Pappo Crafts Initiative

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**Find out more**  
[www.pappocrafts.ro](http://www.pappocrafts.ro)



## My Story

In early 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I lost my job in sales, which involved fieldwork and direct interaction with people. This was a difficult period, as I struggled to find a new direction. Realising that I wanted to create something that would not only benefit me but also my community, I decided to launch an initiative that would support local artisans. I gathered 11 artisans and, given the travel restrictions and social distancing measures, moved the business online. This led to the creation of an online platform promoting handmade products crafted by Roma artisans. Through the Roma Digital Boost programme, organised by the REDI Association, my team and I received training in social media, helping us develop online promotional skills. In 2020, the project started as [produsehandmade.ro](http://produsehandmade.ro), and by 2023, it was rebranded as Pappo Crafts with a new online platform.



## My Motivation

**Family of craftsmen:** Living in a small rural community, I grew up in a family of craftsmen working with wood and iron. My close connection to this craft made me deeply aware of the challenges artisans face today.

**Preserve and Promote:** Surrounded by skilled craftsmen capable of creating beautiful handmade objects, I felt motivated to find a way to preserve and promote these traditional crafts, especially for the younger generation.

**Income for Rural Communities:** I saw craftsmanship as a vital aspect of disadvantaged rural communities, which could provide local income and reduce the need for people to emigrate or seek jobs far from home.





## Challenges

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**Lack of Experience and Resources:** The journey came with numerous challenges. I had no prior experience in managing an online business, lacked financial resources, and did not have a registered company.

**Promotion and Distribution:** I was unfamiliar with how to promote products, what items to present, and which distribution channels to use. The learning curve was steep as I navigated these obstacles without formal training in business management or online commerce.



## Were interventions specifically for underrepresented entrepreneurs?

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The Roma Digital Boost programme specifically targeted underrepresented entrepreneurs, providing valuable support that helped his business grow.



## Accomplishments

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In Romania, many artisans still craft handmade products using locally sourced materials. These artisans are crucial to their communities, as they generate local income and have the potential to pass on valuable skills to younger generations. My initiative is designed to support and promote these artisans, helping them find new markets and generate additional revenue. This preserves both the craft itself and the livelihoods of the artisans.



## Describe the impact of these interventions?

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The pandemic played a positive role by pushing me out of my comfort zone, forcing me to start the business and bring artisans together. The Roma Digital Boost programme was essential in helping me understand the intricacies of online commerce and social media. This program greatly enhanced my ability to promote Pappo Crafts and the artisans involved, allowing the business to expand both in terms of products and reach.



## What interventions/support did you receive?

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In 2022, Pappo Crafts successfully collaborated with Carrefour to introduce a collection of 10 products into eight Carrefour stores as part of a pilot project. The collection consisted of household items made from wood, rush, and wicker. This collaboration was a success, and by 2024, the products were available in 16 Carrefour stores. Additionally, the Roma Digital Boost programme provided valuable training that helped Victor develop online promotional skills.





## Future Plans



I plan to continue growing my network of artisans, expanding the product portfolio, and finding new markets for the products. My vision includes further scaling the business and supporting more artisans from rural communities, ensuring that traditional crafts remain a viable and sustainable source of income



## What interventions or supports would help you achieve those plans and visions?

To realise my future plans, I believe better visibility at the national level, participation in conferences and events, and the development of new product collections adapted to contemporary needs would be crucial. I am also looking for new business partners and a better social media presence. Additionally, workshops with artisans and "how it's made" sessions could further engage the audience and expand the business.

Follow Victor's progress and visit his website [Pappo Crafts](#).



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