

Case Study



“Business flows
at Cascade”

Gerry Hodgson was chatting to a fellow business owner who had just taken a whole year off to go travelling the world. Gerry asked how it was possible to take such a break and still have a great business to come back to.

He found that the secret was ActionCOACH. Having a business coach had helped the business get into superb shape so that the owner didn't have to be there all the time.

“Every entrepreneur dreams of being in that position” says Gerry. So he immediately got in touch with ActionCOACH to see how they might work with his company.

“That was a year ago and I haven't looked back since,” he says.

Gerry set up Cascade3d in 2002. It develops management information software for the leisure and fitness sector.

“In essence we pull data out of computer systems and create extremely valuable management information for planning and marketing.”

This is ideal for member organisations who want to actively market themselves such as golf clubs, leisure centres and health clubs. For instance companies using Cascade's unique software can run campaigns for current, new and expiring members, direct debit payers, visitors and non-visitors. Campaigns can be triggered by members' usage and purchasing patterns. They can send personalised mailings via SMS text message, email or letter and even identify street areas of low uptake for door drop targeting.

This is a powerful offer and Cascade3d was doing OK when Gerry first met his Action Coach, however, since then she has helped the business explode.

“I knew our product was good and I wanted a tried and tested formula to build the Business,” says Gerry. “There were so many things to think about that with our growth plans. We needed to get it right first time and I wasn't sure where to start with that process.”

His Action Coach has helped Gerry step-by-step to look at every aspect of Cascade3d - the systems, financial controls, business delivery and the key performance indicators needed to manage and monitor the business.

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Gerry's Coach has worked with him to assess the skill sets within the business, what's there and what needs developing. This is really crucial in a growing company that has a small team. Added to this, she has helped Gerry with his own personal development and worked with his team to ensure they all work effectively together.

His coach has also been on hand to provide vital, tactical support and to act as a sounding board – for instance she has helped Gerry negotiate a critical contract with a major new customer.

“That external perspective is invaluable. It's very easy for a business owner to get embroiled in the day job and not look beyond it. My business coach has helped me develop the foresight, skills and impetus to work on my business rather than simply in it.”

Gerry meets with his coach every week and finds the discipline of these weekly meetings really powerful. During each session they review what has been achieved in the previous week and look at what needs to be done for the week ahead.

“These meetings really set my agenda for the next seven days. As a result everything that needs to be looked at is looked at, and everything that must be done, gets done,” adds Gerry. “Without that routine it is all too easy for you to get sidetracked and for things to drift.”

Thanks to his Action Coach, in the last 12 months Cascade's business has rocketed. It now works with all the key database suppliers, and supports 70 clients ranging from individual leisure centres to major contractors managing over 100 sites.

To achieve this growth Cascade3d has extended the number of partners it works with, increased the value of the business it does with each of them, extended its product range and services and increased the depth of its capability in the business intelligence and database marketing arena.

“Such rapid growth and activity could have created chaos,” says Gerry “but by putting in all of the solid groundwork - including focusing on our team - Action has helped us grow and become more efficient too.”

Despite the increase in staff numbers and associated costs, Cascade3d has generated an impressive positive cashflow well ahead of forecasts. Furthermore, Gerry expects to accelerate the growth of his business over the next year.

“My Action Coach has transformed the way we do absolutely everything and I wouldn't be without her – she will continue to play a significant role in our future plans.”

To see what ActionCOACH can do for your business call or email Colin

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