Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

BENTLEY DESIGNS LTD
CRM IS THE ROUTE TO SUCCESS

ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY
MULTI-CHANNEL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY, BENTLEY DESIGNS LTD, BASED IN WIGAN, ENTERED INTO A TWO-YEAR KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PARTNERSHIP (KTP) PROGRAMME WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON, WHICH AIMED TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGY AND AN EFFECTIVE MARKETING INFORMATION SYSTEM.

ABOUT THE SPONSORS
THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI) DRIVES THE AMBITION OF ‘PROSPERITY FOR ALL’ BY WORKING TO CREATE THE BEST ENVIRONMENT FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS IN THE UK. THE DTI HELPS PEOPLE AND COMPANIES BECOME MORE PRODUCTIVE BY PROMOTING ENTERPRISE, INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY.

FAST FACTS
- Anticipated £60,000 increase in annual sales resulting from KTP
- £20,000 increase in profit before tax resulting from KTP
- 50% improved operations
- 30% improved quality output at the company

“I can’t understimate the importance of the planning process: find an academic you can work with and commit time to it. This is not an insignificant investment, but it’s one that will ultimately pay off once a high calibre Associate has been sourced. The framework of KTP brought a discipline to the project I found particularly helpful as a measure - ensuring that tasks were progressed and objectives met, within timescales. In point of fact many of our targets, including financial growth measures, were achieved ahead of schedule - our Associate actually generated fee-income during the scheme.”

William Bentley, CEO, Bentley Designs Ltd

ABOUT THE PROJECT
At the start of the project the main activities were based around developing the company’s Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, specifically aiming to build research procedures. Prior to the KTP the company’s CRM software system had been heavily invested in terms of both money and time, but the company recognised that it was not being used to its full potential. It was the role of the Associate to introduce a disciplined use of the CRM system- principally as a tool that could manage client communication and incorporate time sheets, and be used as a compliment to the sales pipeline.
During the programme a number of relevant business procedure models became apparent; these were developed and used as marketing tools which in turn along with the CRM system and the client plans has seen an increase in client take up and an increase in margin.

RESULTS
Training and motivation sessions carried out in the company have improved the use of and quality of use of the CRM system. With regard to the second objective of the KTP, work carried out on client relationship management has produced strong relationships and gained additional sales from new and existing customers. Furthermore, as a result of the highly successful work that was carried out the company was able to identify a gap in the market for e-marketing services, encompassing marketing, e-marketing strategies and online advertising. This area of work is a new and sustainable growth area for the business, which, although only relatively early on in its inception has been taken up by existing clients and is generating strong returns.

The Associate

“I feel that the success of the project was very much down to the support and co-operation of all those involved. It was this support and encouragement that not only enabled the project to develop successfully but also facilitated my own personal development. I was able to gain experience in the workplace as well as achieve a post graduate diploma in Marketing through the Chartered Institute of Marketing. Having completed the project and remained working with the company it has been encouraging to see real results from the systems put in place.”

Victoria Graty, KTP Associate

This KTP employed Victoria Graty as KTP Associate. Prior to the KTP Victoria obtained an MSc (honours) in Business Studies with Marketing Management.

Throughout the course of the KTP Victoria managed changes in the project professionally and efficiently - namely the shift from delivering more ‘traditional marketing consultancy’ towards e-marketing activities. The experience she gained in managing these changes provided her with valuable experience, demonstrating to the company partner and the academic supervisor that she could step up to new challenges within a dynamic and competitive environment. Since some elements of e-marketing services were new to her, Victoria benefited from training courses offered to her as KTP Associate, developing her knowledge in this area of industry further.

RESULTS
- Increased professional and personal attributes
- Experience gained in e-marketing services
- Successfully implemented CRM system
- Opportunity to use initiative has increased confidence
- Gained Chartered Institute of Marketing Post Graduate Diploma in Marketing
- Offered permanent position of employment with Company after completion of project

The Academic Partner

“The success of this project was due to the vision and dogged determination of Will Bentley, CEO at Bentley Designs Ltd and his willingness to turn theoretical advice into commercial practice. Add to this the enthusiasm and capability of Victoria Graty, the Associate, who was able to take on the directives and develop them into added value activities within the company. The co-operation between the University of Bolton, Bentley Designs Ltd and the Associate enabled everyone to be innovative in approach, resulting in both an excellent project and experience for everyone involved.”

Professor Stan Oliver, KTP programme Lead Academic, the University of Bolton, Business School

This KTP project was delivered in partnership with the University of Bolton’s Department of Business, Logistics and Information Systems, with Professor Stan Oliver employed as Lead Academic.

BENEFITS
Academics and research staff at the University have benefited greatly from the experience of delivering this KTP. Many of the questions raised throughout the KTP were interesting problems which stimulated research input, and encouraged all involved to widen their activities and embrace those areas of the project which were focussed toward delivering outcomes. The net result was a collection of strong case studies, stimulating research workshops and high quality academic projects and assignments.

RESULTS
The experience gained from the KTP resulted in presentations and seminars to both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes; the introduction of case study material into teaching programmes and the KTP has directly influenced research activities which in turn affects curriculum development.