

Arrow IT Solutions

Background

Arrow IT solutions was established in 2009, to provide IT and network services to local businesses. The business offers a comprehensive service by managing all their client's IT needs within one contract. This includes infrastructure set up, server and back up services as well as on-site support as required by the client.

The business is based in Fort Dunlop, Birmingham and employs a contractor to provide services on a freelance basis.

Introduction to the Transformation for Growth Project

The owner had not previously sought support, as he had not reached a point where he thought it was necessary. The main issue facing the business was the need to make a decision about whether, and how, to expand, both in terms of recruiting and to meet their accommodation requirements.

The business owner received information about the Transformation for Growth project via Aston University. The information arrived at a serendipitous moment, as the offer to help grow the business coincided with his thoughts about expansion.

Activity within the Project

The owner had discussions with the Business Engagement Manager and a marketing specialist, looking at the business's strengths and weaknesses, based on where the business was going, and how to set out a path to go forward.

The owner was interested in establishing how to develop the businesses marketing strategy. Having an external, independent source of support who would 'play devil's advocate', as the Business Engagement Manager did, proved to be extremely useful: 'I need to stop doing it all on my own – it was very good to have [others] to advise me'.

Impacts

- The owner has a better appreciation of their own, and the businesses, strengths and weaknesses, how the market may evolve, and what needs to be changed to meet the market's shifting demand.
- The owner is now more aware that he needs to move into new areas, and needs to have greater structure and focus, and set clear targets.
- The owner was aware of business modelling tools, but is now actively using them after the Business Engagement Manager 'reintroduced' them. This has increased the clarity of strengths and weaknesses, price setting, and skill gaps.
- The project arranged a meeting with a tax and legal expert, which has encouraged him to think about getting external finance to enable his business growth.
- The owner now has ambitions to recruit 3-5 technical staff.

Summing up the impact

'It has highlighted I'm not as safe as I thought I was if I keep doing the same thing – a realisation that things might not be so rosy in three years if I don't change'.

Find out more

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Discuss co-applying for grants and ideas for impact