



Business re-modelling | Business Planning | Logistics
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CASE STUDY

Working with Development in Social Enterprise

Disability Resource Centre

Addressing inequalities for disabled people

Key Facts

Mission: To provide a range of person centered information, advice and support services for disabled people and their support networks.

Business challenge: To review earning potential of DRC's portfolio of services and present robust business plans to re-model the organisation for financial sustainability.

Established: 1992

Legal structure: Registered charity and Company Ltd by Guarantee

www.disability.co.uk

"Dave has been based with us, at our offices, working with our people, like another member of staff. It's like having another manager on the team, pushing things forward, having access to his knowledge and expertise of the sector. The past few months have made me realise that there is a role for someone with Dave's skills and experience within DRC."

Louise McKiernan, Chief Executive
Disability Resource Centre

Adversely affected by spending cuts, Disability Resource Centre (DRC) knew it was time to work towards financial independence through greater trading activity.

In 2011, DRC secured transition funding to access expert advice and support to re-model the organisation for long-term sustainability, while remaining true to its mission of supporting disabled people to lead fulfilling lives.

Louise McKiernan, chief executive, commissioned Dave Lane of Development in Social Enterprise (DISE) to undertake an honest appraisal of its fee-paying accessibility services, but also research fresh ideas and new market opportunities that could generate significant income streams.

"Dave has delivered three business plans for us, grouping together smaller activities into coherent and distinct services, expanding our horizons outside of Birmingham. Our Board has been presented with the information they need to make informed decisions about how and where to invest our resources. He's also looked at how our health and wellbeing services can be promoted to new markets, and suggested alternative money-saving approaches to achieve our goals," says Louise.

DISE is now assisting DRC to implement and test ideas, training staff and managers, as the organisation moves towards becoming a social enterprise. Training in Customer Service, Marketing and Sales is being rolled out so that all staff can play their part in helping DRC reduce its requirement for grant funding.

An unexpected office move was also project managed by DISE, when DRC was asked to vacate its premises by December 2011. "We asked Dave to lead on the office re-location too, which was a huge job. With meticulous detail, he handled everything from liaising with our landlords, staff, external communication, suppliers and contractors, overseeing the physical move itself – making it all happen, smoothly.

"Dave is very professional, honest and has integrity. He's the type of consultant that gets stuck in, and, if he sees a problem, he'll deal with it. He always goes that extra mile, but understands the boundaries of his role as a consultant. His versatility and flexibility has been invaluable.

"The move has brought about new opportunities to generate income from meeting room hire, back office and virtual office solutions for smaller organisations, all of which Dave has worked up. The imminent launch of our new services, move to new premises and a marketing re-refresh are all bringing about an exciting period of change in our 20-year history."

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