

# Case Study

## NinetyFive Creative Case Study



Our ActionCOACH has given us the tools we need to make it happen

NinetyFive Creative was started in 2009 by two friends Matt Lloyd and Ben Barnes who first met at college in 1995, hence the name of the company. They are a creative marketing agency who produce beautifully designed marketing materials for small and medium sized business.

They have had the same trials and tribulations as many start-up businesses. Although they are great designers they had little experience in recruiting staff, converting sales leads and running a growing business cost effectively. In short, they were brilliant at working in the business but needed some help to work on the business and drive it forwards.

So when they met a business coach from ActionCOACH at a breakfast club run by the local Chamber of Commerce they liked what he was saying. As Matt said “We got it straight away and could see the benefit of working with ActionCOACH. It was clear that it would be a sound investment for us.”

They have been working together now for around 8 months and in that time NinetyFive Creative have grown substantially with much of this growth being attributed to ActionCOACH’s help. Importantly ActionCOACH has been instrumental in the recruitment of staff, as Matt points out “they have saved us lots of money by ensuring we hire exactly the right people who fit with us and our business. In fact he has interviewed a couple of applicants with us and now we feel much more capable of getting the right person ourselves.” This has been aided by the introduction of DISC profiling which enables everyone in the company to understand each other better.

ActionCOACH has helped the company to run smoothly by systemising many aspects of the business “we now work much more effectively by having key processes in place from sales pipelines to production schedules. This means everyone knows what they need to do to get the job done and makes getting new staff up to speed much simpler.”

These new systems have enabled the team to deliver increased quality of service to clients. The clarity of peoples’ roles and responsibilities coupled with workflow systems means client jobs are completed more efficiently, on time and on budget. This results in happy clients and more retained business.

Additionally, driving new leads via marketing is vital to moving the business forwards and their ActionCOACH has introduced Matt and Ben to the ActionCOACH ‘10x10’ marketing model. This is a structured approach to developing and implementing marketing activity with a central focus on monitoring and measurement to define success, as Matt remarked “this is such a good model we now talk to our clients about implementing it themselves, anything that doesn’t work can be changed or dropped to ensure return on investment.”

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This focus on measurement isn't just for marketing but also across the whole business. Their ActionCOACH has introduced Matt and Ben to the ActionCOACH '5 ways' model of driving profitability "this ensures we are regularly monitoring the 5 key variables of the business from leads to margins to maximise the profit we generate."

One of the toughest challenges the business faces is successfully tendering for business "it's expensive to tender for work and before ActionCOACH we used to fail at more than we won". So this has been a key area where ActionCOACH has had a major impact. Three of the team members attended a SalesENRICHED course run by ActionCOACH with help from a local government grant, as Matt says "the course enabled us to assess whether a job was right for us to tender for in the first place and also how best to close the deal. It showed us how to gauge what buyers really want and then match our services to it. It's really helped all of us to be more effective."

Straight after being on the SalesENRICHED course they applied the principles to a large opportunity from The University Of Worcester. They were up against 5 other agencies and are really pleased to have won the work, "It's our biggest win to date and a major boost to the business, ActionCOACH's help has been invaluable in us winning it."

The numbers say it all, since working with ActionCOACH NinetyFive Creative have seen a 236% increase in profits and they project another 61% increase for 2011. When this is considered against a large increase in overheads with 3 new staff and all the other costs a rapidly growing business incurs Matt and Ben are feeling very positive about the future, "we've laid some great foundations with ActionCOACH's help and know we can really make it happen."

ActionCOACH has also helped Matt and Ben at a key point in the growth of their business by ensuring they stay true to their vision and services they can offer. So when they market themselves to other businesses they do so in a more creative way reflecting who they are, as Matt says "we organised a mince pie baking competition amongst local businesses, which was really well received. It's not about the hard sell but a fun way of showing potential clients that we are creative."

The most important thing that Matt feels ActionCOACH has brought to them is a structured approach and the systems they need to succeed, as Matt remarked "Ben and I have the passion, drive and energy, what ActionCOACH has given us is the tools we need to grow the business and take it to the next level."

Matt believes that their ActionCOACH has paid for themselves many times over "not only has he enabled us to get leads and convert more sales, he has shown us how to cost effectively run the company. On top of this his network of contacts has directly resulted in more business from his referrals. I now recommend ActionCOACH to many of my clients and would recommend ActionCOACH to anyone who wants to grow their business profitably."