

Case Study



“The Rebirth of Renaissance Computers thanks to ActionCOACH”

Paul Wickens, co-owner of Renaissance Computer Services Ltd, turned to ActionCOACH when he realised the business was trading water, not moving forward. He could see it needed updating, but felt this would need outside help with a fresh approach.

Renaissance Computer Services provides IT support and software development to local and national businesses. It was launched in 1995 by David Pike, and Paul joined a year later. At this time, the business already had an established client base, but the partners wanted to push things forward and give it a new lease of life; they could see lots of things they should be doing, but didn't know where to start and didn't have the strategies to implement them.

“The business was ticking along nicely,” explains Paul, “but I could see there was scope for much much more.”

Things ticked along for several years until a member of staff recommended ActionCOACH and the partners met with their local coach. Paul continues, “We knew that we wanted to work with ActionCOACH, once he showed us how he works with businesses. His experience was second-to-none and hands on approach really appealed. I knew he would be helping me implement change rather than just telling David and me what to do.”

Their first area of focus was on what the company offers and how it charges, as Paul explains: “We support people's IT systems and before they had to pay one flat fee. Now, thanks to our coach we have changed this and offer three options; pay-as-you-go, a voucher system and a fixed level of work.” Offering a menu of payment terms has helped Renaissance win lots of interesting new business.

“We are now invoicing 25% more clients. It was such a simple change to make, but we needed our coach to put a strategy in place to implement it. As a direct result of changing our offering we have been converting more enquiries into meetings and more meetings into new orders”.

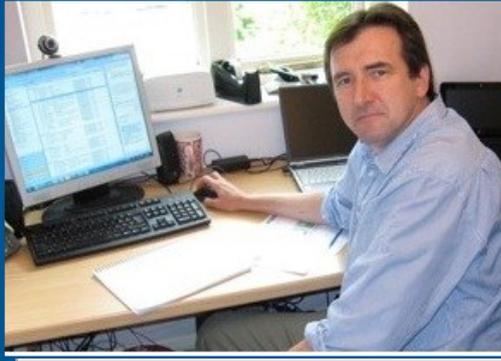
In addition, ActionCOACH encouraged Paul and David to look at competitors. Paul again, “We checked out our competitors' charges and the sort of service they offered and from this we realised we could up our fees and charge clients for expenses and travel. We hadn't done this before, and these costs rack-up as you can imagine!”

The second significant change was employing a Key Performance Indicator system (KPIs). This records the performance of the business on critical measures such as, new business enquiries, customer numbers, average order value and additional sales. With these key measurements, Paul can clearly evaluate the success of one particular job and whether employee time correlates with the payment coming in. Paul explains how this kind of evaluation helps:

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“It is great – the KPI has given me at least 6 or 7 key measures. I now monitor how many clients we have, their average spend, our resources utilization, plus our profit. For me the main advantage is being able to see if the money that we are reinvesting in the business is working and the best areas to concentrate to grow capacity and sales”.

Coaching sessions with their coach are always motivational and fun. He encourages me to work ON not in the business and we always achieve so

much more to move the business forward. I have seen these strategies work and the business grow. There is no way on this planet I would have removed myself from my business and calmly thought out a new marketing plan without the stick/ carrot / encouragement and advice of Action.

Their business coach helped Paul put together three different marketing techniques to gain new business, to wake-up dormant clients and to renew working friendships. Paul executed telemarketing - mail shots of literature and postcards, plus door-to-door sales - to push and generate new business leads.

“The response was fantastic,” explains Paul, “Before, we just relied on our website and yellow pages to bring in new business or retain clients. Now we have new strategies in place to keep Renaissance at the forefront of peoples' minds.”

Due to the KPIs Paul can see exactly how well the new marketing strategies are working and identify the strategies that work best with certain clients, making his targeting easier in the future.

“When we decided we wanted to work with ActionCOACH we hadn’t realised we gained ourselves an external boss. He has made us accountable for moving our business forward and we have put in place strategies we would have only just discussed before. He really has been true to the word, it has been all about Action!”

Their coach sets Paul and David weekly targets to achieve and so far they have met all of them. Paul adds: “I think having an outsider is very motivating. You have to report back, he’s our conscience – but in a really positive way – after all every change he has suggested has resulted in new business.”

Before ActionCOACH the business was turning over £480,000. Within 10 months it had risen to £600,000 and this year the firm is anticipating a turnover of £700,000. The company now has 9 staff, 100 business customers and profitability has improved by 100%.

“We couldn’t feel more positive about things,” says Paul, “Our coach is a bubbly, positive chap and quite frankly with the type of work we do – people usually only ring when they have an IT problem – he keeps us very positive.

“ActionCOACH’s philosophy to work on, rather than in, your business makes you look at the direction you are taking and plan for the future, and that’s a really exciting thing to be doing, as our future is looking great!”

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