

Brighouse High School - A Case Study

The Challenge

Gill Wright, Head of Business Studies & ICT, at Brighouse High School, was looking for a business-related activity for three students to undertake as part of the school's involvement in the Enterprise Pathfinder programme. She believed that The LocalBiz Project not only met the requirements, but would also be exciting and interesting.

The Students

The three students, Laura Driver, Ben Rushworth and Andrew May were all Year 13 students, planning to move on to university. They had a mix of skills. Ben in ICT, Laura with administrative skills, and Andrew in Marketing and Sales.

The Objective

To set up a local community database on www.brighouse.localbiz.co.uk:

- ❖ Introducing effective administrative arrangements to manage the website;
- ❖ Organising the promotion of the site with fliers, newspaper articles, cold-calling;
- ❖ Setting a target of gaining at least 50 organisations advertising on it.

The Plan

- ❖ Autumn Term: prepare Terms and Conditions and an application form; mailshot via a letter to parents
- ❖ Spring Term: Advertise and promote, get as close to 50 organisations as possible
- ❖ Summer Term: Achieve the target of 50; promote within Year 10 (they go on work experience when they return as Year 11); pass over to next year's team.

Unexpected Challenges

The mailshot to parents did not deliver the expected response. On reflection, they concluded that they should have run an awareness programme within the school first. Door-to-door sales in Brighouse town centre produced better results. However, telesales – not in their original plan – proved to be the best route.

They had a quality control problem early on. The application form contained an incorrect postcode for the school, and the posters contained an incorrect email address. Business processes were put in place to prevent a recurrence.

Contributions to Success

They worked well as a team, and held weekly review meetings to ensure that they kept the overall project under control. The team was especially strong, as each member had distinct skills, which were used to best advantage.

Outcome

In terms of learning outcomes, all the students felt that direct contact with local businesses had made them more confident when operating in the business world.

Laura felt that her administrative skills had been extended, learning how to lay out a professional business letter, being mindful of legal issues such as the Data Protection Act, and being introduced to the requirements of a simple contract.

Ben gained confidence in his ability to set up his own (web-designing) business, and improved his presentation skills. Part of the challenge included a presentation to HMI inspectors.

Andy improved his teamwork and communication skills, and came to understand the importance of time-keeping. He learnt that perseverance and endeavour pays off. He stated: "I have also learned what working in a modern day workplace would be like."

By the end of the Spring Term, they had 35 organisations advertising on the site, and were confidently expecting to raise that to 50 before the end of the Summer Term.



This team won the West Yorkshire British Computer Society competition for the best LocalBiz implementation in 2004.