

Case Study



“*ActionCOACH helps Autobulbs see the light*”

Chris Stubbings, Director of Autobulbs Direct, says working with ActionCOACH has been a real eye-opener. It has also opened up new areas of business for his company, improved online sales and profitability. Furthermore that all important lifeblood of any business, cash flow, has improved by 50%. This is all in just six months.

Autobulbs Direct, an online business, specialises in car lighting products, wiper blades and other car accessories. Based in Southampton and employing a staff of twelve, with 5,000 square feet of warehouse space, it has been operating since 2003. Since then it has branched out and now has five other affiliate websites selling car related products.

However as the business has grown and got busier so has Chris Stubbings. This culminated in him feeling that he was working 24/7. The trouble was that he was working in the business, in the warehouse or the back office as often as not, rather than working *on* the business, and managing it as he needed to do. This all came to a head when the packer, the lowest paid but arguably one of the most crucial members of the team, went off sick with a hand injury. “It was a domino effect,” Chris explains. “Everything began to unravel.”

So when Chris met an Action Coach at a networking meeting just over six months ago, he knew he had found someone who could give him the direction he so badly needed.

So what changed?

“Everything!” Chris says. “On a practical level my Action Coach has shown me how to put proper and robust systems in place for all our processes and operations, from sales and admin through to packaging. These mean that the business runs smoothly even if the General Manager and I are absent. We had systems before, but they were very ad hoc.”

But perhaps even more important than the systemised approach, has been the discipline of having an agreed plan for the business, broken down into weeks, to ensure it all stays on track.

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“Being accountable to someone forces you to actually do what you plan to do rather than just talk about it,” Chris explains. “That’s one of the big reasons ActionCOACH are such good value for money. They help you plan where you want to go then show you how and what you need to do to get there, helping you on a week by week basis. Those weekly meetings with my Business Coach really concentrate the mind.”

The end result is that the business is much more efficient and Chris has more hours in the day to run it, to win new business and to look at new projects. “Time was my biggest enemy,” he comments, “but now I manage it far better.”

Online sales have increased by 20%, forecasts are that annual profits will rise by 10% to £100K, and as a result the cash flow facility through the bank and has improved by 50%.

The amount of new business has necessitated three new staff in the key areas of sales, IT and customer service, and even here ActionCOACH has smoothed the way.

“We have a proper recruitment process now,” says Chris. “Normally we just hired someone if we liked them, but now we follow a formal procedure involving answering machine interviews, group interviews and interviews by other members of staff, to ensure we have someone who is going to integrate and perform well. It takes no longer than the way we did it before, but whereas before we had a 30% chance of finding the right person, now I’d say it’s 80%.”

The business has been transformed since ActionCOACH became involved just six months ago and is now looking to make further major growth. With his extra time, and the systemised model in the business Chris is looking at expanding into specialised electronic car equipment, as well as domestic LED lighting. These are vast markets and will take the business to the next level.

“Our future looks very bright,” Chris concludes. “I can’t recommend ActionCOACH more highly, on every level.”

To see what ActionCOACH
can do for your business
call or email Carol

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