

FLEXIBLE WORKING, EXPANDING PROFITS

Jarrang

Jarrang Ltd harnesses the power of email to deliver marketing communications that engage customers, build loyalty and generate sales for its clients. Set up in Cornwall in March 2003, Jarrang is a great example of a business that's made the most of the flexible-working potential of broadband technology since it became available in Cornwall in July 2005.

All Jarrang's staff now work flexibly, and both individual employees and the company itself have reaped major gains as a result. With several of its five specialists typically working from home at any one time, the company is even able to share its office in Falmouth with another business, massively reducing overheads.

Stafford Sumner, Jarrang's dynamic young MD, has no regrets about making the move from London: "I hated commuting, because it's just dead time. By cutting out the daily commute, I gain an additional three hours a day." He now comes into the office two to three times a week from his home in Helston.

John, Jarrang's finance specialist, works part-time four days a week but only actually comes into Falmouth once a week from his home on the unspoilt Lizard Peninsula. As a semi-retired banker, this suits him perfectly: "My most productive time is in the early morning," he explains, "after which I like to take my dog for a walk and work in

the garden!" It's an arrangement that also fits Jarrang down to the ground - in fact, it was this flexibility that enabled them to hire a man of John's calibre and experience.

For web developer Mark, remote working was already a familiar concept. In fact, he once spent six months travelling in New Zealand while continuing to work for British clients. These days, not having to punch the clock makes it easier for him and his journalist wife to juggle work and childcare duties.

Two of Jarrang's key staff are not even based in Cornwall. Their Marketing man lives in Hertfordshire, from where he used to commute into the firm's London office every day. Jarrang now rent meeting space by the hour in London and when they need it, or meet clients at their own offices. Which means that employees can travel in at off-peak times on cheaper tickets.

Theo, Jarrang's technical wiz, has moved to Southampton to study for a master's degree in electronic engineering, but continues to work for the company two days a week as well as being on call during busy periods. As part of his studies, he recently took a short sabbatical from Jarrang to complete a placement at a large corporation. It was useful experience, but one that made him all the more

appreciative of the flexibility he enjoys at Jarrang. "The daily 9-5 routine was a real drag compared to the way I'm used to working," he says.

While remote working has clearly brought big benefits, Stafford says that sometimes nothing beats a face-to-face meeting with clients. "The thing is, I make the most of the travel time to work on the move, using my laptop in wireless broadband hotspots."

Clearly, all of Jarrang's staff are benefiting personally from flexible working arrangements, but what about the company? Since moving to Cornwall, Jarrang has seen significant growth. While they've picked up numerous local clients, 70% of their business still comes from outside Cornwall and overseas, and the company is even planning to open a regional office in Sydney to tap into the Asia-Pacific markets. "It will allow us to turn around client projects faster than before by taking advantage of time-zone differences," Stafford explains. "Everything will be linked to our UK operation through services like VoIP."

Stafford is in no doubt that Jarrang's flexible work policies have helped motivate employees and give the company a real competitive edge - "a win-win situation for us all".

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