

Case Study



“*Beating the Recession with ActionCOACH*”

Entrepreneur Tim Jeffs has two businesses, Jenova and Wacnet, have not just survived but thrived during the current recession thanks in no small part to ActionCoach.

Jenova specialises in promotional merchandise, with a difference. Rather than offering the standard fare of pens and mouse mats, it develops creative products that reflect the customer's brand and need. For instance, Jenova recently developed an interactive book for Italian restaurant chain Bella Italia, which introduced children to the Italian language whilst waiting for their meal to be served. Wacnet is a courier and logistics business supporting companies trading between the UK, Hong Kong and China.

Jenova, based in Henley-on-Thames, was established sixteen years ago by MD Tim Jeffs, who then developed Wacnet. Though the businesses became well established, neither of them was growing as they should. Even though Tim was working seven days a week and hadn't taken a proper holiday for years. "We just couldn't progress to the next level," he said. "and staff turnover was high, which didn't help."

So when he got a call from Alan Verrinder about ActionCoach just over 18 months ago, he decided to give it a try. Alan worked with Tim for a couple of months, until cash flow problems forced Tim to put ActionCoach on hold. "What was interesting was that we immediately noticed a difference," he said. "I was slipping back into my old ways and the businesses were suffering as a result."

So even though budgets were tight, Tim found the funds to reinstate meetings with Alan, realising it was a worthwhile and indeed necessary investment.

"ActionCoach is all about spending time working on the business rather than in the business," Tim says. "And it's amazing what a difference that makes, and how easy it is to do it, if you have someone to steer you in the right direction and keep you on track. The ActionCoach programme offers a very clear vision, but changes are made in what I can only describe as small and digestible chunks."

As well as putting systems in place so that the business runs smoothly, everyone knows what they are doing and there are proper processes for managing sales, profit and loss accounts and cash flow, Alan also showed Tim how to understand and improve sales conversion rates and pounds per sale, turning a £1k customer into £5k.

"I didn't even know what our conversion rate was," Tim says.

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Part of ActionCoach's programme involves putting together profiles on each member of staff, which Tim Jeffs found 'hugely helpful' completely altering the atmosphere in the office.

'It's a full analysis which takes into account individual personalities, their business ethics, their goals and even looks at how they react to different colours. It has given me a much better idea about how to coach and motivate my staff. I used to give them no direction but now I let the sales guys identify and solve their own problems and everyone has their own personal goals - a new extension, new car, or holiday. It's all about them.'

And this ethos has also changed Tim's personal life, radically.

'The ActionCoach programme is full of practical advice you can use every day. I never went on holiday or did anything for me, because I was always spinning too many plates, but since I've been with ActionCoach I've been able to take time out to climb mountains. I've learned to sail round the Greek islands, gone mountain biking with my children and taken them away one at a time. Life is brilliant! I can go away now without the phone going constantly and knowing I'm not going to come back to a complete mess.'

He's now taken on a general manager who is also being coached by Alan. 'I like the ActionCoach philosophy so much and want my businesses to run that way, because it works.'

It certainly has worked for Jenova and Wacnet.

'We've seen so many other merchandising and logistics companies go under during the recession,' Tim enthuses, 'but we've grown so much that we've more than doubled combined staff for the two businesses - from six to thirteen. Wacnet's turnover has doubled too, from £700K to £1.4 million, and Jenova is on target to increase from £450K this financial year to £800K in the next. It's the first time we've made a profit on both companies.'

And ever on the lookout for a new enterprise, Tim has been busy developing an exciting and original new business model, which is about to launch in three months with venture capital - the first time Tim has ever gone down this route.

'I'd never have had the time to develop the business plan, get partners on board and secure funding without Alan and ActionCoach!'

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

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