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soil acoustics

Soil Acoustics

Sector: Environmental Services **Location:** Derbyshire Dales **Size:** Micro

About the business

Soil Acoustics was set up in 2024 by the directors of Baker Consultants, an established ecology consultancy, to bring to market a new agritech product, the Soil Acoustic Meter (SAM). This innovative device records the sounds of invertebrates moving and making noise within the topsoil. By measuring the amount and diversity of the sound made by worms, beetles, ants and other organisms, the biological health of the soil can be assessed.

The product has wide potential including use by arable or pastural farmers, agronomists, wine growers, food producers, land or estate managers and more, both in the UK and internationally. At its launch last year each SAM came with 12 months of data upload and analysis. After the first 12 months, customers move to a subscription model signing up to one of three levels of analysis provision. This subscription model provides another revenue stream for the business.

Soil Acoustics is based in Cromford, Derbyshire and is hoping to raise investment to expand its team and sales effort internationally.

Challenges faced

One of the founder directors, Saffron Johnston is responsible for business development at the new business. The website is up and running, and there has been healthy demand for

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the new product so far with over 60 orders and many more in the pipeline. However, though there has been some success at raising the profile through speaker engagements, and digital marketing, limited resources, mainly time constraints with also running another business, are proving a challenge for the fledgling operation.

On top of this, access to investment for hardware development has been a barrier to further and faster growth.

Solution - Support Given

Soil Acoustics has been working with the Accelerator project and East Midlands Chamber Business Adviser, Andrew Bunn to support its growth journey. The diagnostic highlighted current challenges around onboarding new customers and renewal subscriptions.

With guidance on the application from Andrew, Soil Acoustics successfully applied for a £2,000 Accelerator Growth Voucher which enabled it to fund specialist consultancy advice from Destination Digital. This fellow Derbyshire business was already familiar with Soil Acoustics and its market, having been involved in its launch phase.

Funding has meant the business has been able to automate its sales channel - Shopify - integrating it with the customer database and therefore cutting down the resource needed to process international orders and manage customer subscription renewals.

Impact - The Difference it's Made

The project has streamlined the sales and customer data process allowing the business to focus on market expansion. It can also launch the ongoing subscription service before the end of the financial year, allowing income streams to be automated.

A word from the business:

"This growth voucher enabled us to use another small Derbyshire business to provide a service that we were unable to do ourselves and speed up our route to market for this emerging technology. This will give us a competitive advantage over other potential competitors."

Saffron Johnston, Director

Accelerator has provided:

- 1 to 1 Advice
- Growth Voucher

Impact to business:

- New Processes
- Time Savings
- Route to long-term income stream

This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered by East Midlands Chamber.

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