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Accelerator Case Study

Stirling James Risk Management Consultants

Screen shot of the top-level screen of the minimum viable product developed by Stirling James which is being turned into a customer ready, usable product, thanks to grant support.)

Sector: Health & Safety Consultancy **Location:** Amber Valley **Size:** Micro

About the business

Belper-based Stirling James Risk Management Consultants was set up in 2023 by Nathan Davies. The business works on public safety risks, together with landowners, government, NGOs, building companies, architects and designers. Their work involves redesigning public spaces, conducting risk assessments and creating management plans across the UK. The team also inspect places and audit management systems. There's three people working locally and a team of technical specialists spread around the UK.

Stirling James has specialist public safety knowledge and particular expertise in water safety, and its work supports the National Drowning Prevention Strategy, which aims to cut deaths by 50%.

Challenges faced

One of the greatest barriers to growth has been its ability to share its expertise and knowledge. It is essential for the business to minimise the time, money and efficiency lost while travelling around the UK.

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Another challenge for Stirling James has been delivering all the background tasks that are essential to run and grow the business. The marketing activities and software needed to grow and deliver the business requires specialist knowledge that it doesn't have in-house. These activities and tools are incredibly time-consuming and resource-heavy to create and must deliver measurable value for the company.

Stirling James has grown quickly but is in danger of realising a self-limiting problem of becoming restricted by its ability to deploy expertise where customers need it, and at a speed and price point that supports customer projects.

Owner, Nathan commented: "A new method of sharing our expertise and support is needed for the business to continue to grow to a size where it can effectively support the entirety of the UK market and then grow internationally."

Solution - Support Given

Stirling James has been supported by East Midlands Chamber Business Adviser, Cat Walls and the Accelerator programme. Cat provided guidance on the application for the Export Growth Accelerator grant and the business successfully received £8k. The funding has been fundamental in enabling Stirling James to take the minimum viable product they had developed as a proof of concept, into a market-ready and usable product.

With this grant the business has been able to develop a web-based app that will allow its customer base to self-assess and enable Stirling James to work more collaboratively.

This new system will help its customers conduct risk assessments and make decisions which they know will improve public safety. The new service will be significantly less expensive but will deliver a higher net profit margin. This specific piece of software will provide a service its customers need, want and will benefit from.

The Accelerator grant has enabled Stirling James to develop and ultimately launch this far faster than its initial organic plans. It makes them first to market with a higher value, faster and more accurate service than is currently available. Most importantly, the new service will help customers self-administer their risks, giving more accurate results, more quickly and with greater insight.

In addition to the high growth support, the business also successfully applied for an Accelerator Growth Voucher. This enabled it to conduct a review of the customer journey and customer needs, overcome technical issues and work within international data protection laws. This support through Greenhill Consulting has helped ensure that the finished product is genuinely scalable and capable of being used internationally, which is a real benefit for its long-term growth.

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Nathan added: “In addition to the grant support, the business advice and steering from Cat Walls has been immensely beneficial at every stage of the development of this new service. Initially Cat’s help has been fundamental in providing reassurance that the overall business plan was solid and realistic.

“Following these initial stages, the guidance and support she has provided regarding obtaining the expertise needed via the grant programme has been nothing short of amazing!”

Impact - The Difference it’s Made

The impact of the service is that Stirling James can move its offer from a service dependent on travel, into a faster, more flexible and convenient service for clients. The new service platform will allow clients to self-administer their issues and control risks. It will create a significantly greater amount of actionable data and insight, which will provide some real benefit to all users and the community at a local and national level, ultimately helping to save more lives.

The time taken to conduct an assessment and generate the results will reduce **from one day to one hour**. The results can be compared with others across the UK, including similar features, and are easy to understand.

Nathan commented that this was important for safety standards for all of us. It has a clear benefit for duty holders who will be able to demonstrate they are doing the right thing for the right reasons and not over protecting or stifling how we use our public space.

The new system will help customers conduct very high-quality risk assessments and help them make confident decisions to ensure public safety. It will cost the customer significantly less but will deliver a higher net profit margin to Stirling James.

Finally, the support means jobs are safeguarded within Striling James and there will be an increase in opportunities for its associates. This includes being able to reach more locations as well as tens of thousands of people per year.

The support means the business will save at least **nine months** of development time. In terms of its operations, each use of the new product could potentially save an average of 200 miles worth of travel, and many tonnes of carbon emissions every year.

In an update from Nathan, the new product is still being developed. It has already been tested by representatives from fire and rescue services, local councils, housing associations and numerous landowners.

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A word from the business:

"I can wholeheartedly recommend getting involved in the learning activities, networking and business support that East Midlands Chamber provides. The support from Cat and the team really has provided the lever which has the power to completely revolutionise our business."

Nathan Davies, Owner

Accelerator has provided:

- 1 to 1 Advice
- Export Accelerator
- Growth Voucher

Impact to business:

- Time Savings
- Increased Profit Margins
- New Market Entry
- Reduced Carbon Emissions
- Introduced New Technology
- Improved Efficiency and Processes

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

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