

Business REPORT



eCiting times for Kidderminster firm

A Kidderminster-based internet marketing company has announced plans to increase its workforce and expand premises as the company's managing director plots further growth.

As eC Plus Ltd celebrated its fifth year of operation, Ray Manton revealed intentions to employ an additional three workers to capacitate demand for the firm's design and development service.

He also told Business Report that the company, which provides professional website design and client support, has taken on extra space in its Kidderminster offices, in order to allow for further expansion.

He explained that the additional office space will provide the company with improved facilities for visiting clients.

The eC Plus boss has big plans for the firm following five years of sustained growth, in which it has achieved an impressive portfolio of clients and solid reputation, both for bespoke web design and tangible results in website positioning.

Manton also revealed he has installed developer Gavin Cox to the position of director in order to prepare for further success.

He explained that the expansion was also part of a long-term strategy to adopt a "big company structure" and reinforce the firm's diversity: "We are now well established in the industry, but the plan is to continue growing."

"We will be taking on three new members of staff in the short term, strengthening both the development and design teams."

Manton also confirmed he plans to add a full time administrator to the team, which he hopes will provide him with more time to focus on developing the business.

Expansion

Manton believes the expansion represents the success of the firm's commitment to excellence in customer service.

The eC Plus boss accepts that people's trust in web design firms has been eroded by small operations that failed to focus on after sale care. However, thanks to high standards of operation, eC Plus has established excellent relations amongst clients and other firms in the region.

"Almost every week, we are visited by a client that has paid out lots of money to a web design company that has promised maximum exposure in search engines and failed to deliver," Manton said.

"In this industry, it is too easy to operate without any standards, which is why we have worked hard to achieve accreditation from the Small Business Service, Chamber and Business Link with listing on the National Register and Black Country."

Client care is a crucial factor in eC Plus's operation. The firm offers around-the-clock technical support, bespoke systems, which allow client's to



Gavin Cox, Ray Manton, Carole Manton and Dan Rogers

manage web content and regular performance reviews to ensure complete satisfaction.

Specialised

Manton believes that eC Plus's service is also enhanced due to its specialised nature: "We focus purely on website design and development."

"Many companies attempt to combine marketing and web design, which very rarely works, as internet marketing is very different to other forms of promotion."

"We wouldn't try to put a brochure together, but we can design and develop a website that looks impressive and attracts lots of visitors."

Similarly, unlike most marketing firms, the firm doesn't use 'off the shelf' packages, but provides bespoke systems, tailored to individual needs.

"Off the shelf products can't compete with our packages in terms of design. They also restrict growth, unlike ours, which can be altered to reflect the client's best interests."

He also pointed out the importance of "coding standards." Manton spent 12 months researching into internet marketing and believes that companies that don't keep up to date with legislation are letting their client's down.

"95 per cent of firms don't understand the founding principles of web design ... it is crucial to keep on top of changes in legislation and technology."

"For example, the changes in the Disability Discrimination Act, which came into place in 2004. Many firm's are still to comply with this legislation, but we made sure to be ready beforehand, providing advise and support to our clients."

Manton

Manton's multi-faceted business background has proven invaluable to eC Plus's success. Following 22 years in financial and business planning, he bol-

stered his commercial experience whilst working as European chairman of a software user group, before establishing eC Plus on 1st April 2000.

He is an active supporter of the local private sector, as a committed member of both the Wyre Forest's and Dudley and District's business clubs.

Such experience has proven invaluable to eC Plus clients, as he is able to offer business advice and has a vested interest in the success of the region's companies in general.

Future

Manton expects further success for eC Plus in the future and feels confident that the recent changes will facilitate this success.

He believes that by installing Gavin Cox as a director, the firm will be in a position to grow: "He will have a greater involvement in the company's direction".

"Gavin has been an integral part of the success thus far and I am sure that he will help improve standards."

Manton has set a target to double turnover in the 12 months following the expansion. However, the eC Plus boss was keen to point out that the focus on customer service and personal care will remain steadfast.

eC-Plus Internet Consultants can be contacted on 01562 861000, or email ray@ec-plus.net



Promoting EXCELLENCE