

Creating and Accessing New Markets



ERDF Funding
£293,000

Total Project Costs
£586,000



actions that have inspired
business change

Background

There is a belief that one of the major constraints on successful innovation is a weakness in marketing. Scottish companies that appear to have world beating innovations sometimes fail to capture a significant share of the global market because of poor marketing. Decision makers in many of our innovative technology businesses may lack a full understanding of marketing and the impact it can have on a business. This situation is compounded by the commonly held belief that marketing is only about communications and sales.

The Project

Four projects, delivered in partnership by Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Executive and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, sought to take an innovative approach to developing a better understanding of how, where and when marketing impacts on a business and what marketing skills are required at differing stages of the development of a business or product.

The projects involved those with marketing expertise from the private sector to establish how they would address the problem and then developed and supported pilot approaches designed to achieve a better understanding within SMEs of the marketing skills required to bring good ideas to market.

A workshop consisting of marketing professionals played a key role in these projects. It was held to generate initial ideas which were then developed into pilot approaches.

Impact

Four approaches were taken forward to address any marketing weaknesses within Scottish companies.

- > A research project was conducted to establish the role of marketing in ensuring Scottish business success and to define the marketing skills required to ensure successful innovation.
- > Three Scottish companies participated in a ground-breaking project with three multinationals to learn more about product and channel marketing techniques in the technology sector.
- > The Scottish Marketing Community website was created to help Scottish business tap into leading marketing advice covering a range of sectors, products and services. It was designed to promote good, effective marketing skills to Scottish business.

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The website publishes regular news and views on marketing and provides expert advice via online discussion forums and expert Q&A to help companies improve their marketing knowledge and skills. Registration as a site member is free - just visit the homepage on www.scottishmarketingcommunity.com.

It also includes a database of marketing suppliers which outlines contact details, core areas of their business, sector specific experience, and specialisms.

- > The website hosts the Get Marketing! interactive game developed and designed to raise awareness of the importance of marketing activities for Scottish SMEs. The game illustrates - using the engaging quality of computer games - the full range of elements of the marketing mix to allow SME owners and managers to make informed decisions that lead to bottom line business improvements.

By using Get Marketing! participants get to play the role of the Marketing Director of a small company. The objective is to set up a well thought out marketing strategy and then maximise sales demand over a simulated three year period. Those playing start off with a £1 million investment in the company but, of course, a badly implemented marketing plan can lead to disastrous outcomes and the cash can quickly run out.

Why not play the game by visiting the new Scottish Marketing Community website at www.scottishmarketingcommunity.co.uk

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