

Broadband helps John and Hywel give power to light

■ Business and People



Power to Light produces a range of 'advanced power controls' for lighting on film and TV locations. It was set up as limited company in May 2003 and took a business unit in North Manchester.

The directors are John Parkinson and Hywel Nicholas, both of whom work in the business and there is one employee working on assembly.

John has more than 20 years experience in the business and set up p-2-l after buying the rights to a new product he wanted to develop. Hywel's background is in IT and he joined the business after being brought in to put together the business plan

The products provide a stable power source as using the mains direct would cause the lights to vary in intensity. The lamps that are matched to the units are up to 6 kilowatts in power. This is specialist equipment for a worldwide market and p-2-l sells principally to two companies who brand the units as original equipment.

Units have a 5-10 year life and buyers look around when they wear out. Sales also tend to follow the activity level in the industry and the relative costs of filming around the World. So, if it suddenly becomes attractive to make films in a particular country, as a result of new tax breaks for example, demand will follow.

■ Getting on to Broadband

P-2-l had an Internet connection and the company web site built in December 2003. The Web is important as they are selling into a worldwide market and there is now more technical information on the site so that customers can be referred to it. It is good that Broadband is always on and it is good for marketing, making it easy to get information and images to agents and customers. The Internet is used for ordering spare parts.

■ Learning Online

Both directors thought the marketing course was very good and appreciated the convenience of online delivery. The project came at a tight time for the company as it coincided with a wish to get into direct sales. As Hywel says, "these are specialised products that are sold into a niche market and if we want to sell direct, we will have to become customer oriented as the business develops." The course has helped them to think about word of mouth recommendations and that it would be good to have a major customer endorsement.

■ *'The project came at a tight time for the company as it coincided with a wish to get into direct sales.'*

Marketing

"Customers will look for sources of products when they want something and not at other times", says Hywel, "So timeliness is important and being able to make them aware of us so they'll remember us at buying time. The Web can help here, if they can always search and find us."

They have used the marketing plan as a tool and they are planning more promotional activity. They have already done some e-mail mail shots and the intention is to build more of a Web presence; the directors are aware of the potential of a site to give a powerful presence to a small business and to be permanently available and discoverable by searches.

For e-commerce, the large units are too costly and prices are negotiated. It might be easier to sell smaller items over the Web at fixed prices

The Future

John is thinking hard about the USA, a market that needs a different approach. He has vast experience but needs to establish relationships with US companies. These units are not an everyday purchase and they are expensive so it is not just a matter of identifying possible customers; you need to establish relationships. They also tend to be big organisations and they are not easy to penetrate. He would therefore be interested in using Broadband to make international phone calls and would welcome help from any agency offering more advice on how to exploit Broadband

P-2-I is sharing a stand with one of the agents at the IBC Exhibition in Amsterdam in September – this is a huge event showing the latest products and ideas in broadcasting and media with over 1000 companies exhibiting.

A successful project, "Improving Marketing Effectiveness of SMEs using Broadband"

With a £150,000 grant from Northwest Development Agency (NWDA), Multimedia Marketing.Com Ltd (MMC) has successfully recruited 205 SME's based in Greater. This ground-breaking project brings Marketing to the SME community in a powerful way involving Broadband, the 21st century telecoms Internet highway that is always on and is unmetered in its use.

Multimedia Marketing.Com Ltd specialises in digitally based marketing training, particularly delivering marketing training over the net. Organisations as far a field as Japan, India and USA are benefiting from using MMC's world class content.

Multimedia Marketing.Com Limited ? Minshull House ? 47-49 Chorlton Street ? Manchester, M1 3FY
Tel: +44 (0) 161 247 6052 ? Fax: +44 (0) 161 247 6301 ? Email: enquiries@MultimediaMarketing.Com ?
Website:www.MultimediaMarketing.Com

This project is supported by:
North West Broadband Fund, NWDA, DTI and UK Online for Business.



Power to Light ? 0161 202 3914 ? www.p-2-l.com