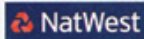


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DEBBIE KLEINER-GAINES 42

Managing director, Best Health UK

After working for an environmental charity for four years, having a child inspired Kleiner-Gaines to start her own business. Best Health was set up in 2001 with a £10,000 loan, which she invested in marketing to create a thriving business from nothing. Best Health is a medical insurance broker. Like any good mortgage broker, the firm offers the whole market to individuals but acts in the customer's best interest to get the most suitable product. The difference is that Best Health deals with companies and individuals.

JASON DIDCOTT 41

Co-founder, Butlers in the Buff

What once was a fun and frivolous idea is now an international business. Bristol-based entrepreneurs Jason Didcott, William Jones and Stacey Lynn are behind the 'male order company' Butlers in the Buff and recently launched an international franchise in Sydney.

The business provides 'butlers' to the hospitality industry wearing only a bow tie, collar, cuffs and an apron. Launched eight years ago, year-on-year profits at Butlers have risen by 30 per cent, with turnover of £500,000 in the past year.

RUTH MOODY 33

Managing director, Farscape Development

Ruth Moody set up Farscape in 2004 after working for a youth development company that specialised in overseas expeditions. Her vision was to run a company that offered powerful experiential training to businesses.

Farscape has won contracts with blue chip companies such as Airbus, Allianz, Sir Robert McAlpine and Aviva. The company runs training programmes that challenge people to change their behaviour.

"People are the most important and expensive resource in any company, so training needs to be focused on an individual's needs, challenging and designed to achieve results," says Moody. "If you sit in a classroom people often switch off and the learning opportunity is lost. But give them the opportunity to experience something for themselves and they are more likely to make the changes that will make them more successful when they get back to work".

JASON MILLER 40

Founder, Tinder-Box

Tinder-Box was founded by Jason Miller in Devon less than three years ago. It's a boutique business coaching company and already works with Pepsico, Lloyds TSB, Premier Foods and Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Cornwall – quite a roll-call for a fledgling business.

"Our vision is to become the leading boutique business coaching consultancy in the UK. This isn't a lifestyle business; we are really building something here," he says. One element that sets Tinder-Box apart is that it shuns the associate model favoured by many coaching businesses.



"The people who work for Tinder-Box are partners in the business. They are part of it. That's because we are particular about our offer and keeping up the quality," he says.

With Lloyds Banking Group, BP and Lehman Brothers also on the client list, there is presumably plenty the company's coaches can be doing to support some clients feeling the pressure.

JAMIE BREESE 37

Founder, Only Connect and Only Select

It's less than three years since TV presenter and columnist Jamie Breese launched Only Connect in Bristol to combine

business and social networking, but the events are already mainstays of the city's social calendar. The events nowadays welcomes more than 400 guests at a time. Only Select, the sister company, is strictly business, invite-only and welcomes up to 150 delegates per event. Breese has plans to take the format around the country and the planet in time.

NEIL MACDONALD 41

Operations director and co-founder, The Orchard Pig

Cider and apple juice company The Orchard Pig, in West Bradley, Somerset, is flying. Turnover has increased steeply year-on-year since the company was formed in 2007 by Neil Macdonald and managing director Andrew Quinlan.

The business is based on restoring and managing 800 acres of orchards for the owners – mainly around Glastonbury but also as far afield as Taunton and Wells. These provide the fruit from which the company makes its range of lightly-sparkling ciders and cloudy juices, giving it an assured and growing supply as more trees are planted. More than 5,000 bottles of cider are bottled every day.

FRANK CONNELLY 41

Managing director, IT Ambulance

Frank Connelly set up this Dorset-based company in 2005 when a hobby of fixing computers became a livelihood. By forming partnerships with business contacts across the region, Connelly has been able to expand across the south of England, opening two offices each year since the company's launch.

Last year he secured private investment from the regional business angel network SWAIN for a three-year growth plan, which has enabled IT Ambulance to expand into Bristol and London.

DEBBIE MAJOR 37

Director, Petite Affair

Debbie Major founded internet and mail order company Petite Affair in 2005. The retailer offers clothing for women who are 5'3" or under. The business, which is run from Barrow Gurney, has annual sales of more than £500,000. Major says it's an example of how the internet has changed retailing by enabling niche markets to be developed and exploited in a way that just wasn't possible before.