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Case-study: FTP Concepts



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KMS Marketing: helping FTP Concepts grow

FTP Concepts designs, installs and manages digital information networks, whatever their size and scale. These range from small networks in local shops and locations to UK wide networks, such as the ones owned by huge media providers like JCDecaux.

As part of a growth plan, FTP Concepts' Managing Director, Martin Ayrton, is setting up a new company to meet complementary needs of FTP's customers.

However, it wasn't always like this.

Understanding the pain

When Kara, from KMS Marketing, was first introduced to Martin in 2012, Martin was frustrated.

Despite working hard, having a great reputation and products, the business wasn't delivering the results it should be and everything felt "painful".

Martin also wanted to grow the business but wasn't sure how to. One of Kara's current clients, and a mutual contact, recommended Kara to Martin, because she was insightful, straight-talking and able to see the bigger picture.

Kara soon ascertained that Martin and the FTP team were doing too much – they were offering a vast range of products to a huge range of customers; everyone from small one-man bands to global entities. It was taking considerable time and energy, and not generating the results this small but talented team should have been seeing.

Kara encouraged Martin to step back, see the bigger picture, and supported him as they set to work.

“...painful...doing too much...not generating the results...”

Initial approach: asking the tough questions

First, Kara helped Martin gain clarity around what FTP was offering, who to and why.

This took place via a series of structured conversations, where Kara challenged Martin to focus on what the business was really about and who they should be working with.

Following Kara's facilitated discussions, FTP Concepts realised that they exist to design, install and manage digital information networks, for large and small organisations.

“We were in a mess...Kara asked the right questions, giving us clarity...she then provided a sensible plan for moving forward.”

However, FTP Concepts' marketing positioned them as “small looking after small” even though they ran some of the UK's huge DOOH networks - but they couldn't talk about them because they were contracted under strict Non Disclosure Agreements.

As Martin says, “We were in a mess – we were the back-end behind all of these huge DOOH projects but were contractually obliged to say nothing.

“So, on the face of it we looked small-scale but we knew we could handle so much more. “Kara asked the right questions, giving us clarity of purpose. She then provided a sensible plan for moving forward.”

Next: a tactical plan to adjust the market's perception

Once this clarity had been achieved, KMS Marketing created a Tactical Marketing Plan to adjust FTP Concepts' market positioning. Improving their core marketing tools, such as the website, came first.

As budget was pressing, in 2013 KMS Marketing updated FTP Concept's current website. This included providing updated pages, copy and images.

Kara and her team also overhauled FTP's social media presence, taking over their social media accounts and running them with regular, updated, and relevant content marketing material.

For two years, Kara managed FTP Concepts' Tactical Marketing Plan, putting in place a strong foundation for their marketing. This included producing case-studies, presentations for pitches, video show-reels, press releases, and other key pieces of tactical marketing.

Martin observes that, “Kara helped get the marketing show on the road, allowing us to be more accurately represented amongst prospective customers. This really helped us with our growth journey.”

When more budget was available, in 2015, Kara and her colleagues project managed and oversaw a complete website revamp.

This involved designing the website to accurately reflect FTP's services, their quality, and the organisations they work with. It included project management, working with the web-designer, sourcing copy and images, researching and writing case-studies.

By the end of 2015, FTP Concepts had in place a solid foundation for all of their Tactical Marketing.

A strategy to grow the business

A key part of Kara's work with FTP was to provide an objective, "critical friend" to Martin as he decided how to grow the business.

It soon became apparent that Martin himself could offer a whole range of complementary services but it was not suitable for FTP Concepts to provide them.

Therefore, following conversations with Kara, Martin decided to set up a sister company that would provide the creative arm and then use FTP Concepts to deliver the elements that FTP did well.

This led Martin to make the big decision to hire a Managing Director, so he could take a step back from the day-to-day running of the business and focus on expansion and strategic decisions.

Kara also challenged Martin about whom FTP Concepts were providing services for.

She noted that, "There were some smaller customers that were real energy-drainers. They didn't appreciate the product or service they were getting and they weren't using it correctly.

"Their needs could be serviced just as easily elsewhere, freeing Martin and the team up to concentrate on servicing more of the 'right' customers and winning bigger clients under their own brand, rather than white-labelling."

The FTP team slowly devolved the energy-sappers through natural waste and a sensitively managed programme so that no one was left "in the lurch".

"We're heading in the right direction now...Kara has been instrumental in helping me...make these decisions."

Martin can safely say that, “We’re heading in the right direction now. It feels like FTP Concepts is doing what it does best and we will soon be able to offer complementary, creative services without diluting the FTP brand. Kara has been instrumental in helping me reach and make these decisions.”

Conclusion

Kara has been working with FTP Concepts for over four years.

As she observes, “It’s been great to see this small yet strong company move purposefully into the position it deserves and to see the rewards of this.

“Would I recommend her to any company that is struggling to get the results they need? Yes.”

“The FTP team are an enthusiastic, talented group of people who are now getting the work they should be while still delivering first-class service for their smaller clients.

“I’m proud to have played a role in this.”

Martin says, “Kara is great. She has been there for us providing straight down the line advice and services. She’s shaped my thinking and helped me decide what FTP Concepts needs to be now and in the future.

“Would I recommend her to any company that is struggling to get the results they need? Yes.

“Should you bring her in to be an objective, critical friend who can overhaul your marketing so it delivers results? Yes.”

Please contact Kara at Kara@KMSMarketing.co.uk to find out how she can help your organisation achieve the success you deserve.