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Accelerator Case Study

Abigail Warner Ltd

ABIGAIL
& Co.



Sector: Luxury Paper Goods Manufacture **Size:** Micro **Location:** Derby **Turnover:** £150K

About the business

Abigail Warner, based in Derby's historic Friars Gate Quarter, is a design studio with two full-time employees, supplemented by skilled consultants during peak seasons. The business was established in 2007 and specialises in crafting bespoke, high-quality stationery and gift items. It has earned a reputation for its heritage-inspired designs, customised products and exceptional customer service.

Challenges faced

The greatest barrier to its growth has been the lack of resources post-pandemic, which has significantly impacted the retail and design studio. Covid-19 brought about a severe contraction in demand, leading to a reduction in available capital and workforce. Additionally, the rising cost of living and energy has posed significant challenges for Abigail Warner Ltd.

These crises have put immense pressure on its operations, making it difficult to maintain its growth trajectory and meet increasing market demands. Furthermore,



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the strain on cash flow has been substantial, affecting its ability to invest in new technologies, marketing efforts and inventory. The cumulative effect of all these factors has been a major hurdle in scaling the business and expanding its reach.

Solution and impact

Last year owner, Abigail Warner, got in touch about the fully funded support available from the Derby Accelerator. The Accelerator project is delivered by East Midlands Chamber, Derby City Council and Derby University. It is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Abigail has been working with Business Adviser, Aruna Bhagwan who has helped to refine the business strategy, understand market trends and identify new opportunities.

Through a Growth Voucher, the business has taken advantage of specialist consultancy and one-to-one support. This tailored advice has provided insights, particularly in digital sales and marketing strategies.

Abigail was also successful in her application for a grant from Derby City Council. This has enabled the implementation of advanced digital marketing tools and enhanced eCommerce capabilities, helping the business to expand its customer reach.

Abigail comments that in addition to the above support, workshops on digital marketing and eCommerce optimisation have equipped them with best practices to refine their online presence.

The support has had a huge impact on the business including:

- **Increased competitiveness** – a stronger digital presence and streamlined online process have improved their market position
- **Job safeguarding** – stabilised revenue streams have allowed them to safeguard existing roles and create new seasonal opportunities
- **Operational efficiency** – implementing new technologies has saved approximately 150 hours annually, freeing time for growth initiatives
- **Cost reduction** – Resource management has optimised costs by around 10%
- **Sustainable growth** – energy efficiency practices have reduced the business's environmental footprint and overheads



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Abigail commented: “Overall the Accelerator Project has empowered us to strengthen our digital presence, navigate challenges and position ourselves for long-term success.”

A word from the business

“The support from the programme has been invaluable. It has provided us with the expertise and resources needed to overcome our challenges and achieve our growth objectives. We are now more competitive, efficient, and well-positioned for future success. This grant has been a game-changer for Abigail Warner.”

Abigail Warner, Founder

Accelerator has provided:

- 1-2-1 Adviser support
- Grant Funding
- Specialist consultancy support
- Workshops

Impact to business:

- Improved efficiency
- Cost savings
- Energy saving
- Jobs saved/created
- Sustainable growth



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