



Funded by
UK Government

Accelerator Case Study



Luke Evans Bakery



Sector: Bakery

Size: Small

Location: Amber Valley

Turnover: £3.5m

About the business

The Evans family established Luke Evans Bakery in 1804. The family business manufactures bread and confectionery for retail and wholesale and has an onsite bakery shop. Based in Riddings, Amber Valley it currently employs 49 people and runs a click-and-collect service, six days a week, through its website

lukeevans.co.uk

Challenges faced

The business is facing several challenges which have created barriers to further growth. Like many businesses, Luke Evans Bakery's growth has been hampered by increased wage bills, ingredients, utilities and living costs.



Amber Valley
Borough Council

east midlands
chamber



Funded by
UK Government

Accelerator Case Study

The business has also wanted to maximise technologies and processes for manufacturing efficiencies. However, it's been hard to meet production demands in a working space that is challenging and with equipment that is expensive to maintain and replace.

In addition, recruiting and retaining staff has been a problem, particularly with a reduction in government-funded training provision and less accessibility and interest from those who want to learn bakery skills.

Finally, though there is a desire to scale up the business, introducing new products and lines, sustainable packaging, marketing agency support plus needing modern bakery equipment is hugely challenging in a competitive market. This is all in an environment where corporate/wholesale markets are becoming increasingly price sensitive.

Solution and impact

Last year Managing Director, Helen Yates attended the Amber Valley Accelerator launch event. The Accelerator project is delivered by East Midlands Chamber and funded by Amber Valley Borough Council's share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Helen was introduced to Chamber Business Adviser, Peter Lawrence for business support. Helen commented that the regular, scheduled meeting with Peter had been instrumental in progressing and achieving their growth ambitions.

Helen said: "Peter has been a highly effective business adviser to me which has in turn benefited the business. From the moment we started working together he has made a significant impact on our strategic journey."

Peter has also signposted and connected the business to other support services and organisations. Operations Manager Laura O'Bierne has been on the Help to Grow: Management Course which supports her personal development and the bakery's strategic direction.

An introduction to the East Midlands Made Smarter digitalisation support has resulted in manufacturing process road mapping and recommendations for improved production and cost savings. The opportunity for £20,000 grant funding is currently being explored to support the recommendation costs.



Funded by
UK Government

Accelerator Case Study

Luke Evans Bakery is a member of the East Midlands Manufacturing Network (EMMN) and Helen regularly attends the Derby events. These have provided peer networking and support opportunities, along with the latest updates on market trends and activities impacting the manufacturing sector. It was at one of these meetings Helen was introduced to Devtank, who are specialists in test and measurement solutions. The business has taken advantage of funded IOT (Internet of Things) monitors which Helen heard about as part of the Smart Manufacturing Data Hub presentation.

A free energy audit through the Accelerator project has identified cost and carbon footprint reductions. It provided some useful recommendations such as solar panels, a chiller upgrade, compressed air testing and optimisation, individual machinery metering, portable heating reduction and improved heating controls.

Its IOT monitors will be fitted in the coming weeks and together with the measures above will support energy saving and reduce costs, and help it become a greener business. Helen is also being supported by Peter for a decarbonisation grant to help with funding to optimise savings.

Helen added: “Peter creates a comfortable environment where anything can be discussed without feeling judged. His open line of communication and excellent ability to provide constructive criticism has helped me ‘see the wood for the trees’ on many occasions which enables me to focus on the strategy and planning.”

A word from the business

“Peter has an excellent understanding of what funding and support options are available and has pointed me in the right direction for opportunities we have taken advantage of, which I wasn’t aware of, or previously considered.

Thank you, Peter and the Chamber. I hope there aren’t plans to stop this very valuable support.”

Helen Yates, Managing Director

Accelerator has provided:

- 1-2-1 Adviser support
- Energy audit
- EMMN peer support
- Made Smarter road mapping

Impact to business:

- Reduced energy costs
- Reduced carbon footprint
- Improved efficiency
- Increased confidence



Amber Valley
Borough Council

east midlands
chamber