

Employer Case Study

Digital Industries including Creative Digital, ICT and Print

Reach Further

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Reach Further is a training consultancy that helps businesses make the most of the web. We specialise in creating niche web communities and learning opportunities that bring people together online, to create and share knowledge in new ways. Our strategies help our clients improve their brand and reputation, establish their expertise, create new income streams, and reach out to capture new customers. We also show businesses how to save time and money and work smarter using the web.

As specialists also in elearning, Reach Further helps tutors take their teaching online, and we have from the start forged strong links with educational establishments, such as Park Lane College and Leeds Metropolitan University, including taking in new media and computing students on work experience placements. We met Sharon Wood first through a placement, then offered her paid vacation work, before giving her a part-time contract as a Junior Social Media Consultant while she completes her degree at Leeds Metropolitan University. We have had five work experience placements in total, three of whom have gone on to paid work with us, and we hope to take on two students a year in this way.

The core of Reach Further is small and focussed, so we need to make sure we are cost-effective in everything we do. Taking students on a work-placement allows us the benefit of their skills and enthusiasm for little more than the cost of our time. Recently

trained, they are on top of the new technologies, experimental, and eager to learn – this gives us a real advantage in a field where we are recommending the latest tools to our clients, and need to discover quickly what really works and what's just a fad.

With some liaison with their tutors, it's possible for the assignments the students need to complete for their qualification to match closely with the projects we need them to complete for us, and for our clients. We've seen this approach result in our students getting excellent marks, as they apply their learning in a very practical way. We were immensely proud that Sharon received a lifelong learning award in recognition of her achievements.

By working with students throughout the year, we can plan big development projects with them for the holidays. This gives us another competitive advantage, as we increase our capacity and output over the months when other companies are having to cope with reduced staff numbers.

“We have built work placements and flexible working opportunities around part-time study into our strategic plan. We see this as the perfect way to build our experienced, skilled and agile workforce for the future, with little recruitment cost.”

Liz Cable, CEO for Reach Further