

We Mean Biz

A no-pressure, no-hassle, no-egos way to network in the Bristol area

Project rescue and a major upgrade to back-end processes

Think business networking at its best, creating a culture that's supportive, warm and friendly, effective and always with the long-term view in mind. Since 2008, Women Mean Biz and, more recently, We Mean Biz (WMB) have connected like-minded business people in South West England. And always with a well-rounded, ethical approach to building deep, supportive relationships. When founder-owner Philippa Constable and her team needed to take the business to new levels of effectiveness, automation and geographical reach, Evergreen was the power behind their network's expansion...

'I first met Andrew Cope at our inaugural We Mean Biz meeting in Bristol,' explains Philippa. 'He'd heard about us and joined the group. We had New Zealand in common, I liked his approach to business and we were on the cusp of changing our website and 'back-office' provider as WMB evolved.'

Having decided to change provider, Philippa found Andrew's team to be consummate professionals. Philippa again: *'He helped on several different levels, offering advice, liaising with our outgoing service provider and taking over running of our website brilliantly.'*

The previous supplier was good, but businesses evolve and as WMB's dimensions changed (in early 2019 it has 19 networking groups across South West England, with over 200 members and a constant flow of site visitors), so did its website development needs.

'Andrew and his team are so "can do", responsive and reliable. We knew that our new provider had to be a trusted partner for the long term, work to our timeframes and budgetary constraints, and always deliver what we needed, when we needed it. And they do.'

WMB's website simply must work

With its complex transactions by a big community of members, leaders and connectors, plus the back-office admin to keep networking happening, WMB's website simply must work.

'We couldn't run and grow our business the way we do without the website – or without Evergreen,' says Philippa. 'The site has to work seamlessly and efficiently. It's the same whether users are first-time enquirers, existing members making a booking, or a team leader managing their group. It's not just about good-looking design but ongoing, increasingly sophisticated, bespoke software design, supporting spreadsheets and our online booking system.'

Streamlining site functionality

Since taking the website over and starting to facilitate WMB's recent growth spurt, Evergreen has worked continuously to improve and streamline WMB's administration, log-in and viewing functionality.

'Without them, our future planned growth just wouldn't be possible,' says WMB's founder-owner. 'We love how Evergreen are so switched-on to the automation, streamlining and up-scalability that we demand. And all the time they are so discreet and professional, quick to respond and committed to sharing our ambitions for growth. It's been wonderful – all the more so because they inherited someone else's website design and our budget didn't allow them to start over from scratch.'

Benefits, and lots of them

It's still early days to quantify with pinpoint accuracy the benefits of Evergreen's involvement, but according to Philippa Constable, *'the weekly time savings are considerable.'*

'Automation has transformed how we do business, freed the time of my operations manager, Marisa, and transformed our meeting administration – everything from basic admin and GDPR compliance to visitors' dietary requirements. There's still more to do (we're just beginning Phase 2 of our involvement with Evergreen). But already, in just over a year, the partnership has transformed how WMB works and created a solid foundation for future growth.'

Easy to work with

Case-study subjects consistently comment on how easy Evergreen is to work with and WMB is no exception. *'They're so professional, personable, "can do" and efficient at all times. We ask for something to be done and it is, with lightning speed and responsiveness. Then Andrew or one of the team will ask whether we'd thought of doing "this or that" and there's another incremental improvement.'*

Evergreen is renowned for high service levels. *'Working with them has been unlike working with any other web company. We've definitely benefitted from Andrew's use of the system as one of our members. And he works to our budgets and timescales.'*

Hiccups along the way?

'Of course there were a few,' says Philippa. 'We both work in the real world. As with any bespoke service there will be occasional hiccups.'

According to its owner, WMB expected teething troubles and realised that despite thorough planning, it would be impossible to think of everything. *'The impressive thing is how fast and responsive Evergreen have been; they seem as invested in the project as we are and that is a huge differentiator – they want it to be a success as much as we do. And it is.'*

At the time of writing (April 2019) the WMB site has been live for several months, with further enhancements happening all the time.

'Evergreen have been so good at helping us balance our improvement "wish list" with available budgets and required timings. We capture incremental improvement ideas all the time. Then they help us prioritise and manage implementation at a time, and cost, that suits.'

Everyone loves Evergreen's work

The response to the works done, from more than 40 team leaders, as well as other site users, has been very positively received – not surprising given how much repetitive administration it has saved them. Of course, Philippa and her management colleagues love Evergreen's input. So, were there any 'Wow!' moments along the way?

'Two things stand out,' says Philippa. 'The first was how well Andrew's team handled the takeover from our previous website provider. It was scary for me as business owner, but they were brilliant, absolutely wonderful. The other thing that sticks in my mind is how, while sat in front of the big screen in Evergreen's offices, I've been impressed by their ability to think one step ahead of us. And how they suggest little improvements that, together, amount to practical benefits far greater than the sum of their parts.'

A year or so after taking over WMB's website and its complex back-end, a solid, well-managed foundation is now in place for whatever the future brings **We Mean Biz** and **Women Mean Biz**. No wonder Philippa Constable has recommended Evergreen – and would do so again without hesitation.

An exceptional business

'I can unreservedly say that Evergreen is an exceptional business to work with on every level. Without their input I wouldn't have the business that I've got and our members wouldn't have the networking experience that they deserve. Nor would I be able to contemplate our future growth with such confidence and peace of mind.'

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saved us a lot of time

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Events				
View: Current / History				
Type	Group	Date	Actions	
Meeting	RECREATION & CALTHERED	Wed 20th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	BRISTOL	Wed 20th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	BRISTOL - CENTRAL	Wed 20th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	Leamington & Mellowley Shaking	Tue 18th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	BRISTOL - SOUTH	Wed 13th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	SOUTH GLAZES	Tue 12th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	BATH - CENTRAL	Tue 12th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	Reading for Business	Wed 6th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	THE CROWN JEWEL	Wed 6th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	BRISTOL - GLITZER	Wed 6th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	NORTH DORSET	Thu 14th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175
Meeting	Networking Skills	Fri 13th Sep 2018	BOOKING	192,175

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