

# Inspiration for local businesses

A programme from the popular series “Small budget big impact marketing” held recently for independent businesses in Stockport, Cheshire provided tremendous inspiration for those who attended.

The Regeneration Section of the Environment and Economy

Directorate of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council invited marketing specialist Diane Jackson of Main Marketing & PR Limited to devise and run a series of four workshops.

A good mix of businesses attended including both retailers and small businesses from the very experienced to those in their first year of trading.

The free workshops were extremely well received and covered customer service, business image, advertising and marketing and use of the internet.



## Excited, inspired and raring to go

**David Morley**, owner of Natural Home Floorings had been on a lot of courses over the years but felt this programme topped the lot. “It was better than going to university! The workshops were just so crammed full of practical help.

“I learned so many different ways of doing things. They really bucked my spirits up. Now I’m excited, inspired and raring to go. I’ve changed a number of things in the shop and we can see already that they’re working.”

**John Buckley** from Minuteman Press echoed the sentiments, “One of the best courses I’ve ever done; it was excellent. I came back from the course and immediately made some changes – and I’m working on others now. It was a different kind of course in that it covered some specific aspects of retailing, like your shop front. I appreciated the practical help.”

Chartered Accountant **Vincent Mather** endorsed the point “The course really makes you think about what you’re going to do. I learned lots of new things.”



## Council reaction

A spokesperson from SMBC said, “The programme has been a huge success and we have received encouraging positive feedback throughout. You start to appreciate the value you’ve added when you hear a business owner saying that the workshops helped clarify his thinking on the way forward for his business.”

For some the workshops reawakened long held knowledge that had worked its way to the back burner. The owner of picture framers Lazy Daisies commented: “To be honest I knew most of what was being said; I just hadn’t got round to doing a lot of it. The whole programme was useful and I’m galvanised into action now. I’m glad I went – it was well worth going to.”

His opinion was shared by David Marchant, Cobweb Computers, a computer supplier with a 10 year retail presence in the area. “A tremendous programme” – excellent for prodding and prompting you into doing things you may have forgotten or not even considered doing.

## Impact on the local economy

Marketing specialist Diane Jackson, who devises and runs the workshops in the UK, was delighted with the results in Stockport. “It’s always very encouraging to see and share the passion and determination of small businesses and to champion the cause of revitalising, reinvigorating and regenerating them. We empower delegates to apply good, practical and affordable marketing techniques.

“Initiatives will always be needed to stimulate the growth of smaller independent retailers and private businesses – none more so than in less buoyant times. Imagine what an impact all small businesses could have on the economy of a region, if they were all operating with the same ideas, confidence and motivation as our Stockport delegates are now.”

## Are you doing all you can to help your local businesses?

Maybe your Regional Development Agency could help fund a project like this in your area. For information about how other Project Officers have succeeded, or for practical advice and ideas on growing local businesses, contact Diane Jackson, Director, Main Marketing & PR Limited on 0845 129 9948 or email: [dj@retailsurvival.co.uk](mailto:dj@retailsurvival.co.uk).

