

Allen Group



The Allen Group is one of the UK's fastest growing property and construction consultancies, delivering a range of services to clients in a variety of industry sectors. The business was founded in 1996 with 8 members of staff. Today they employ nearly 100 people over 5 UK and 2 European sites. Allen's IT function is based centrally at their key Birmingham office.

Drawn together under the Allen Group banner are a number of specialist divisions, each embracing the same philosophy but offering their own areas of expertise:

- Allen Construction Consultancy
- Allen Retail Consultancy
- Allen Europe

Given the Group's aggressive growth targets the Management Team were concerned that the company's existing IT infrastructure and support systems were inadequate to support Allen's future operational needs.

"CCL's approach came just at the right time" said Paul Quinney, Director. "We knew that we didn't have the necessary expertise or objectivity internally to address the IT issue. CCL's independence and experience in our industry gave us confidence that they would be able to work with us in assessing our options and formulating a workable IT strategy for the future."

To assist Allen with project costs CCL were able to introduce Birmingham Business Link who, after a diagnostic process, agreed that Allen were eligible for support under their Diversification



Programme. "Mike Sansom at The Business Link was very supportive, the funding we received via Diversification was one of the deciding factors in us undertaking the project."

Working closely with the management team at Allen, CCL conducted an Options and Strategy exercise which assisted Allen to make the transition from their previous tactical and reactive approach to IT to working towards the implementation of a coherent IT Strategy which is closely aligned to the business plan. During the course of the project, the requirement for a new Business Systems Manager was identified and CCL's services as Specialist Recruiters were called upon. The candidate selected as a result of this project has been in the post now for 5 months and has proved a valuable addition to the team. He has continued to work with CCL through Training Needs Analysis exercises for the remainder of the IT team and a Risk Assessment exercise leading up to the full IT strategy implementation which will shortly be completed.

"Allen has grown rapidly over the past two years" said Paul Quinney, "we have needed a practical, responsive and focussed approach from our suppliers to help us to achieve our objectives. Our CCL Project Controller, Ian Ainsworth, has proved a great asset, his enthusiasm and professionalism are remarkable."

In conclusion he said "CCL's knowledge and experience has enabled us to use IT as a tool to support, rather than impede the business's goals of growth, diversification and improved operational efficiency. They have provided the procedural infrastructure to allow us to remove, wherever possible, unnecessary risk, from within the business."

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