

## Media relations crossing your path...

After spotting a niche in the market place a new Public Relations company has come to Cornwall, serving a range of clients within, and outside, the county.

### Overview

Black Cat Public Relations Ltd was formed in 2006 by Tim Bowcock, who grew up in Cornwall and spent more than 10 years in PR and journalism. Tim started his career at Cornwall's independent local radio station Pirate FM and BBC Radio Cornwall before working around the country as a BBC producer and TV researcher.

Having gained an insider's perspective of how the media works, Tim took up the post of Public Relations Officer for First Great Western, based in Swindon, before successful franchise bids led to a vastly expanded responsibility in the role of communications manager. With a portfolio covering media relations, internal communications, event management and public affairs, Tim began considering how he could take his expertise back home.

"The media has been a huge part of my life and as I began considering making a move back to Cornwall, my research revealed that there was a real niche in the market place. Firstly, many businesses have yet to exploit the benefits that PR can bring, while the county's larger companies have traditionally looked outside the county for Public Relations support. Running my own business had always been appealing and having identified the potential for a media

### Workforce

As well as Tim's events management background, Sherryl also has a background in pharmaceutical events, offering clients a wider range of additional expertise. Tim said: "The business has taken off so quickly we took on our first freelance member of staff in February and have appointed an additional account manager. We were really encouraged by the number of potential applicants who have the skills we require."

### Clients

Black Cat Public Relations' client roster is varied and growing. It includes London-based Journey Solutions, an integrated public transport provider, as well as local success stories such as Bott UK and The Electronic Waste Company. With the county's expertise in ICT Black Cat PR now has a number of technology clients including Forward ICT, a data backup specialist, CIOS, a database and presentations company and clickworkplace.com, an innovative company which helps businesses general revenue through employee browsing. In order to demonstrate the company's confidence in its work, Black Cat operates a "no coverage, no fee" principle. Tim commented: "This is a unique and highly effective USP,

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relations business in Cornwall it became a hugely exciting prospect that I really wanted to make work".

Tim decided to set up Black Cat Public Relations with his wife Sherryl. They have moved to Mitchell just outside Truro and his first few months have been busier than they could have imagined. Tim explains: "There's no doubt that starting up a business is extremely hard work, but we're already trading ahead of target and I have been hugely encouraged by the positive response we have received in the county."

The niche in the market place is just one of the many reasons the Bowcocks made the move. As well Tim's Cornish heritage, the beautiful landscape and fantastic lifestyle made relocating much more appealing.

"We were expecting our second child so particularly wanted to move here to benefit from schooling and a community feel which is a world apart from that found in many urban areas. Our quality of life here is second to none. The success of the business depends principally on what we do, not where we are. And because we can achieve great results from anywhere, being able to work in such a wonderful location really is a bonus."

and offers a risk-free way for companies to harness the power of PR. It provides the client with peace of mind that we are working hard to increase their profile while also demonstrating the benefits media relations brings."

### Support

Black Cat Public Relations received the actnow broadband rebate while Cornwall Pure Business has assisted the business with information on recruitment and advice on business demand. The business has benefited considerably from taking an active part in the many Cornish business networks. "I have joined the BNI which is an excellent network for business referrals and also have attended Business League and Chambers of Commerce meetings. The networking events are very popular and have already resulted in new business. Access to such networks has been invaluable, and highly recommended to relocating companies".

