



SILVERPRENEURS®

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

2021-2022

Co-Directors: Mr C Gough and Mr V Hogg

CONTENTS

VISION AND PHILOSOPHY	Page 3
THE PROGRAMME AND PROCESS	Page 5
CLIENT ENGAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS	Page 6
MARKETING AND PROMOTION	Page 9
TESTIMONIALS AND CASE STUDIES	Page 12
OUR PROGRAMME SUCCESSES	Page 13
AREAS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT	Page 15
RECOMMENDATIONS	Page 16
CONCLUSIONS	Page 16

VISION AND PHILOSOPHY

From its point of inception, Silverpreneurs® had a noticeably clear target market and vision. It was exclusively created to inspire and empower the over fifty's, who wanted to start up their own business or grow their business as part of a fun and collaborative business community.

It was therefore more than just a place to find business support, but a space for like-minded people to show just how good life is after 50. The programme included eight months of support where members could learn, grow, and share their unique skills and

experience with the group.

Prior to launch, the co-directors engaged in a long and focused period of intensive research that enabled them to create a unique programme specifically for this age demographic. It became clear that there was a real need and audience for the kind of support that the programme could offer; Silverpreneurs® would attract the interest of people who have, more than likely, enjoyed a successful and rewarding career in the corporate world but had incubated a personal desire to create their own business.

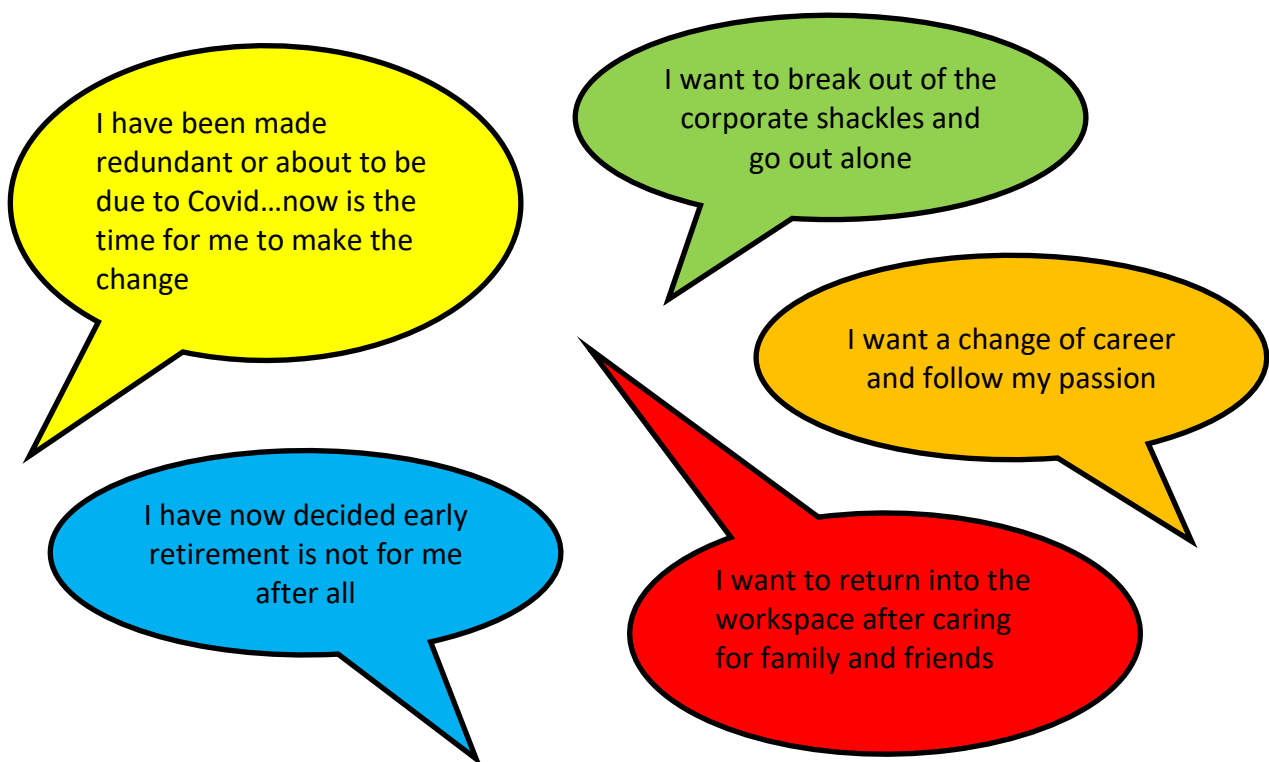
A key piece of data identified during the research gave justification to the programme's potential: over fifty's were increasingly becoming recognised as the ideal

candidates to start up their own businesses. No doubt due to reasons such as life and work experience, this has been proven as they are the age group that is three times more likely to make their new business succeed.

The world's experience of the Covid pandemic has in almost everyone's case, led us to radically change our life plans, our work perceptions; almost forcing us to re-evaluate our lives. Comments made by people identified as being ideally suited to the programme included.....



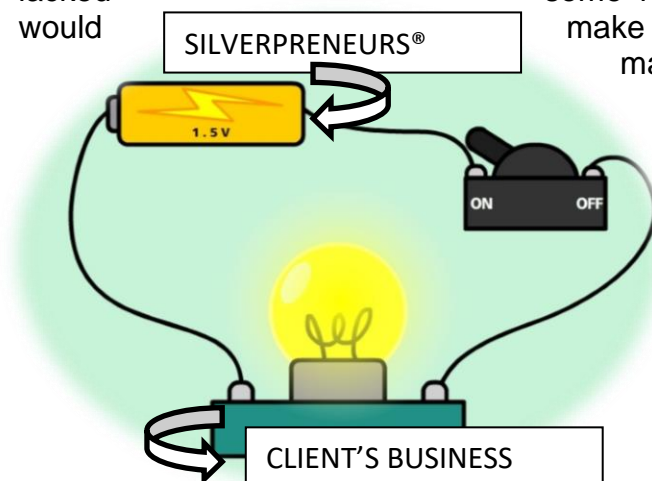
Chris Gough and Vernon Hogg
- Silverpreneurs® co-founders
and directors



The people who made these comments, and many others, were seen as a perfect fit for Silverpreneurs® because they were already demonstrating a positive and motivated mindset, a passion for their business idea and the sector that they would like to enter and that they had a support network around them to help them achieve their business goals.

As a simple analogy, as illustrated in this diagram, the client and their business are represented by the switch, bulb, and wires in an electrical circuit. In other words, they had potentially identified all the key components required to establish their business but lacked

some fundamental knowledge and acumen that make their business, i.e., the bulb, light up. For many clients, what was missing in the circuit to make the bulb light up was the battery. Silverpreneurs® would be the battery.



Research informed that people in this age group had some exciting, creative, and innovative business ideas but that these had remained incubated for a wide range of reasons and personal circumstances, including fear of the unknown: launching a business as a fledgling

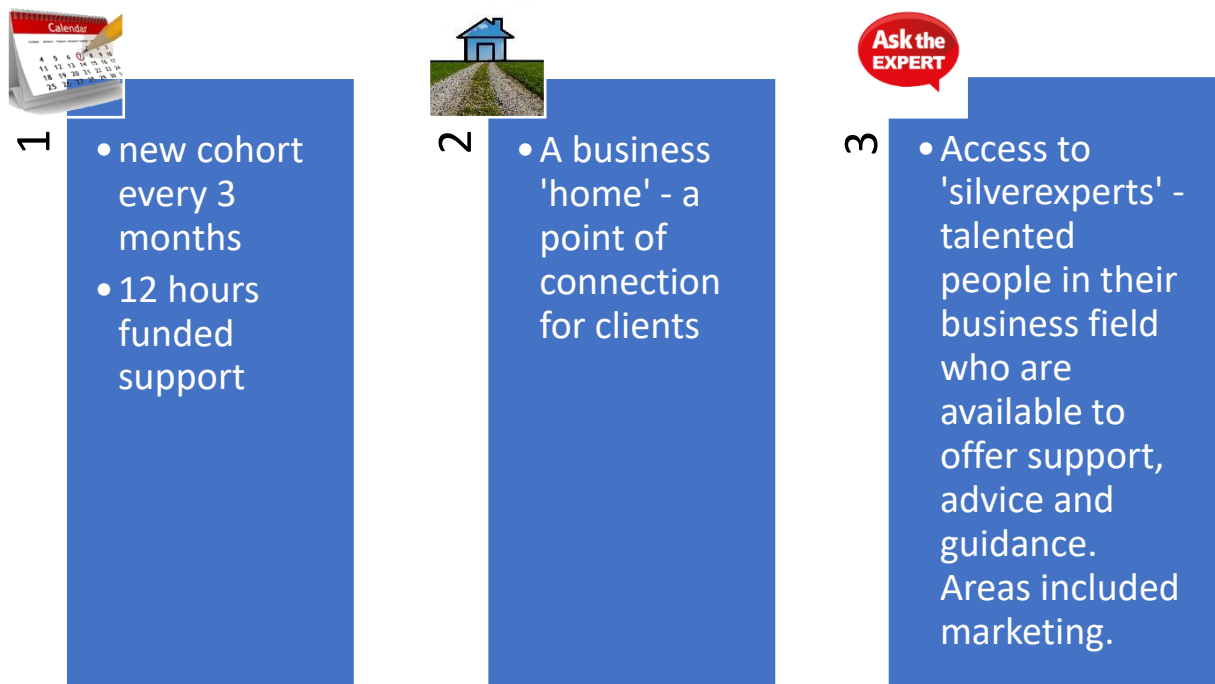
entrepreneur is a hugely daunting prospect. Helping to remove some of these barriers, fears and anxieties would be at the heart of the Silverpreneurs® programme.

Although the co-directors wanted to enable clients to become confident, independent, knowledgeable, and pro-active businesspeople, they also knew that clients would require some degree of 'hand holding' as they embarked on their journey. Indeed, this compassionate, supportive approach to client engagement very quickly became one of Silverpreneurs® USPs.

The programme was, therefore, designed to facilitate the client's business journey – to help them to identify contacts and connections, make links and referrals, whilst endeavouring wherever possible to encourage the client to move their business forward as autonomously as possible so that they remain in full control of their progress and the development of their business.

THE PROGRAMME AND PROCESS

The programme had three key components that was made available to clients:



The Silverpreneurs® programme included three months of business support delivered through a combination of group and 1-2-1 sessions. As much of the client engagement took place during the most challenging and restrictive phases of the Covid pandemic, most contact had to be made virtually. Face-to-face meetings, presentations and events were therefore restricted and only introduced when it was safe to do so.

The programme contained a mix of the below support, tailored for each start up. The introductory, 'fact-finding' discussions with a new client were therefore extremely important

as the outcomes of this pre-support phase would shape and determine the support strategy that was subsequently devised for the client.

The introductory meeting would, therefore, explore previous work history and experiences and personal requirements. The aim, therefore, would be to help take the client from idea to launch, all set within a collaborative and supportive community of like-minded Silverpreneurs® that it was hoped would stay together long after their business has launched.

Core Offers:

Strategy and Business Planning	Investor Readiness	Support for your business	Sales and Marketing	A Place To Be	Continuous Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A working business strategy & finance plan with the co-founders • Future vision of business, aims and objectives & milestone setting • Business plan and cashflow planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale up, Investor Readiness & Pitch deck development • Key introductions for Angel & Venture Capital relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your own in-house Researcher & Research analytics for your business case • Grant awareness & application support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing & Social Media planning • Tendering Projects, local and National • Unique Selling Points & differentiators of business or product • Routes to market (market sectors, niche developments) • Business development, key opportunity introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community, events, guest speakers, presentations • Regular one to one founder meetings • Networking circuits with co. founders • Meet-up Groups, Professional and community based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Co. Founders eco-system • My story, My life, Pitch decks and cake • 7 -day access & support from Vernon and Chris • WhatsApp group

CLIENT ENGAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

The following charts and tables explore the client data from the cohorts who completed the programme between 2021 and 2022.

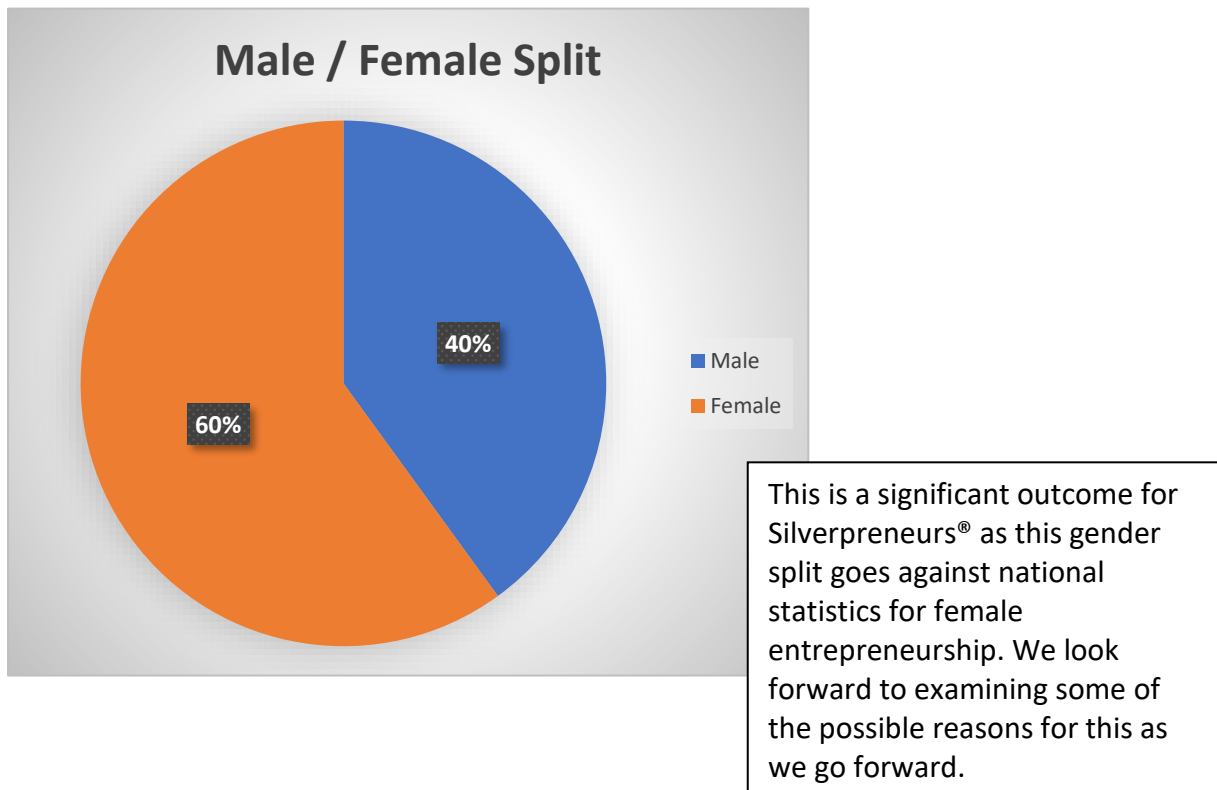
Participation Rating

The co-directors have awarded a score out of ten for each of the forty-two clients in terms of their overall engagement and the impact that the project has had on their business development:

Client Name	Business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Phillipa Lundberg	Manufacturing										
Steve Butler	Property Surveyor										
Sally Kellard	Hospitality (B&B)										
Carole Moreton	Hospitality (cake making)										
Caroline Bailey	Cookery Training										
Chris Allen	Marketing Consultancy										
Sharon Jenkins	Retail										
Roger Belham	Furniture Manufacturing										
Denise Brinton	Recycling										
Edward Dugdale	Charity										

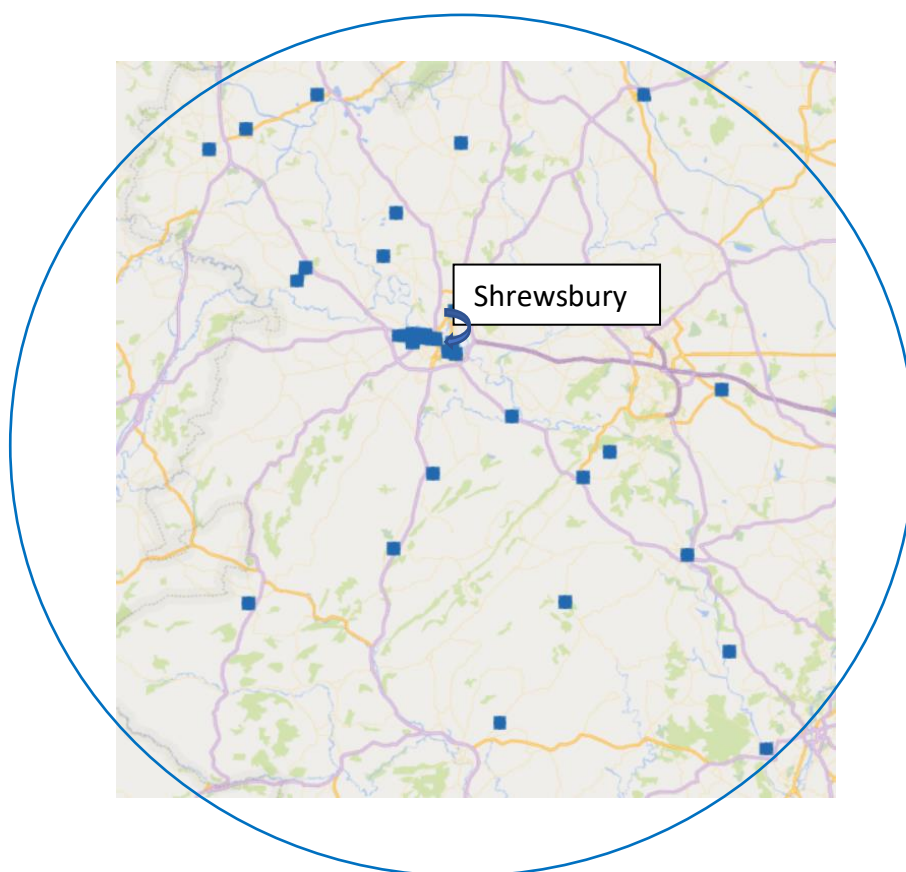


Gender Breakdown



Client Geographical Location

There was a 15-mile radius take up from a central point of Shrewsbury town.



MARKETING AND PROMOTION

One of the fundamental successes of the Silverpreneurs® programme has been the co-directors' ability to recruit the support of a wide range of talented, and influential individuals who are experts in various aspects of running a business. These 'Silverexperts' have been able to collaborate with the clients and provide advice and guidance uniquely tailored to the client's specific business and specific needs. Their involvement gave the programme real kudos and quickly helped to build a reputation for Silverpreneurs as a well-respected programme, due to its directory of associates and affiliations.

The 'Silverexperts'

The following business professionals are recognised and thanked for their contribution to the programme:

- Andy Wheeler – Finance and Pensions Advisor
- Lawrence Faulkner – IP Specialist
- Shaun Philpott – Accountant
- Ruth Martin and Janet Jones – Marketing and PR (Martin & Jones Marketing)

It is important, at this point, to highlight one 'Silverexpert' who has not only engaged with nearly all forty-two clients but has also supported the marketing and PR for Silverpreneurs®

itself across the region. Ruth Martin, and her colleagues from Martin and Jones Marketing, has had a significant and positive impact and they deserve this special recognition.

Various sources helped to generate client interest in Silverpreneurs®. These included the Shropshire Council/Growth Hub Newsletter, LinkedIn, PR / local press e.g., articles in The Shropshire Star, and SBLTV.

Almost all the clients have identified challenges in the marketing of their business, particularly with regards to social media, which for many new entrepreneurs is seen as a vast and scary world to step into. Ruth's bespoke support and ability to secure trusting and supportive relationships with the SP® clients has resulted in a considerable number of clients being able to progress their business with renewed confidence and with a presence across a range of social media platforms that is helping the client to generate interest and traction in their business.

Evaluative Report produced by Mrs Janet Jones from Martin & Jones Marketing

Martin & Jones Marketing has produced six press releases and three case studies for Silverpreneurs® since its launch in August 2021. A further case study was proposed but the client did not respond.

The press releases produced wide coverage in regional print, online, business and broadcast platforms. Half of the press releases focused on the scheme itself and developments within it. The other half focused on the stories of its clients and functioned as testimonials for Silverpreneurs® as well as part of the clients' marketing package offered as part of the scheme.

Media coverage of the press releases was then picked up on cross-referenced social media to maximise publicity and integrate with the overall marketing strategy.

The Silverpreneurs® focused press releases were released to the media in August and October and were all widely used by:

Broadcast:

- Radio Shropshire
- Shropshire Business Live TV

Print and online media

- Shropshire Star
- Shrewsbury Chronicle
- Telford Journal
- Ludlow Journal
- Oswestry and Border Counties Advertiser
- Whitchurch Herald
- Oswestry Life magazine

Online media

- Oswestry Life
- My Shrewsbury
- Love Shrewsbury

B2B media

- Shropshire Business Magazine

- Your Chamber Your Voice – Shropshire Chamber of Commerce

Two of the three press releases were followed with radio and television interviews on Radio Shropshire and Shropshire Business Live TV. Client focused press releases were released to the media in February, March, and April 2022. They were also picked up by wide range of media and two out of the three were followed with radio interviews on Radio Shropshire.

Press releases


18-08-21: Shropshire's silver entrepreneurs offered exclusive business support programme
 08-10-21: Shropshire's silver entrepreneurs get extra chance to join exclusive business support programme
 28-10-21: Shropshire's silver entrepreneurs share ideas at first get together
 28-02-22: Former RAF officer launches new family information service
 30-03-22: Strong family values brings new care provider to North Shropshire community
 12-04-22: Shrewsbury couple take their catering skills to Poland to help Ukrainian refugees

The team from MJM are also currently working on a further press release as a round-up of the Silverpreneurs® success so far. This is due to go out to the media by the end of April.



In addition to the support that was provided by the Silverexperts, Vernon and Chris, the programme participants were able to take part in a series of 'Masterclasses' that focussed on marketing and were delivered by MJM. These were presented virtually and further helped to upskill and train the participants.



TESTIMONIALS AND CASE STUDIES



SILVERPRENEURS®
Experience equals value.



CASE STUDY

Jacqui de Jager
The Happy Skin Clinic® and
The Happy Skin Gym®

Jacqui de Jager of The Happy Skin Clinic® and The Happy Skin Gym® came to Shropshire from Buckinghamshire with a career packed with corporate experience and business knowledge. She had previously founded and run cosmetics and medical aesthetics company The FAB Practice and was the co-founder of the Brookland Dental Clinic.

She had a fantastic new business idea of setting up a skincare clinic for rural people, as well as a skin gym with one-to-one sessions for improved facial muscle tone and skin health. But the new start in Shropshire after divorce left Jacqui feeling out of the business loop as she focused on setting up her new company – until she signed up to the Silverpreneurs® programme.

"I had family members close by, but no business network. My main aim for joining Silverpreneurs® was to meet local businesses and I love the concept of an organisation that supports mature people in business," she said. She signed up in the summer of 2021 and soon found that the one-to-one sessions with the "Silverexperts" helped her to put together and implement her new business plan.

"Chris (Gough) seems to know everyone and if I mentioned I needed advice from a specific industry sector, Chris would almost instantly produce a name and contact details. Chris has put me in touch with some fantastic local business people and I'm very grateful. And I consider Ruth Martin as my marketing guru!"

Jacqui has already started working with some of the businesses she has been introduced to through her Silverpreneurs® membership, and the guidance and advice from the Silverexperts has led to a rethink of her business plans.

"I was over optimistic with my opening dates. Chris picked up on this and I rethought my strategy. I'm experienced at start-ups and directing skincare clinics, having been involved for over a decade. However, this time round I wanted to perform some of the treatments myself, which involved extra study. It was a big financial decision and I couldn't afford to fail so I needed to put my all into it. Chris recognised this and helped me manage my own expectations – that was a game-changer. I am now studying for a beauty therapy diploma and to become a face yoga teacher – a first for Shropshire I believe," she said.

Now she is planning the launch of her new business with plans to employ a part-time therapist and a self-employed doctor or nurse. Jacqui has found the support of the Silverpreneurs® programme invaluable in helping her start over again after a difficult few years.

"It's been so good to find that there are people out there who give up their time to help people like me and that it's more than okay to take a step back in order to move forwards. Chris and Vernon have fought for us over-50s to gain funding and all the Silverexperts and associates genuinely want to help. All it takes is to reach out and ask for help," she said.

More information about The Happy Skin Clinic can be found via Facebook @thehappyskinclinic, with a website on the way



CASE STUDY

Jerry Dolan
Go Adventure 1



Go Adventure 1

When Shropshire's Jerry Dolan left behind an exciting career in the Army, he could not abandon his love of adventure and challenge. Now he is working with the Silverpreneurs® team to turn his passion for the outdoors into a successful business.

The former member of the Special Air Services spent two years in charge of an adventure centre for the British Army in the Canadian Rockies and recognised that there was a market for offering the same kind of experience to would-be adventurers. He had already spent several years running similar expeditions on a part-time basis before his retirement from the Army four years ago.

So it was a logical step to set up his own full-time company, GoAdventure1, working with military specialists to offer the adventure experience to a wider audience. Now GoAdventure1 offers expeditions and adventure holidays for families and individuals to destinations such as Norway, Bengal, USA and Thailand led by a team of outdoor guides and instructors drawn from Army Physical Training Corps and Royal Signals officers who have commanded leading Ministry of Defence outdoor centres.

The courses, which are suitable for all levels of experience, cover mountaineering, climbing, orienteering, survival skills, kayaking and canoeing. So far the core of the business for 65-year-old Jerry, has been with public schools. But the pandemic and lockdown in 2020 and 2021 brought business to a near standstill and Jerry knew that he had to expand his customer base to develop an all-year-round income for himself and his team of a dozen freelance instructors.

"I met Vernon Hogg from Silverpreneurs® and I knew that the experience of the Silverpreneurs® team would help me develop the business.

"I signed up to Silverpreneurs® in the autumn of 2021. It's been a bit difficult as I've been out of the country a lot since I joined the programme. But even in the time I have had with the Silverpreneurs® teams I have been given really good advice on how to expand into a new market and how to develop the business.

"What has impressed me most has been the way Silverpreneurs® has opened up a network of contacts and businesses that I can work with," said Jerry.

He's looking forward to tapping into the full Silverpreneurs® experience in early 2022 and making the most of the expertise on offer.

"They have been really pro-active in keeping in touch with me and making sure I know what is on offer from Silverpreneurs® even though I haven't been around to attend all the sessions.

"I would wholeheartedly recommend Silverpreneurs to other companies. I know that all that specialist support is there to help me develop my business. All the fruit is there, I just haven't gone to the tree to pick it yet," he said.

More information about GoAdventure1 can be found at the website: <https://www.goadventure1.com>

OUR PROGRAMME SUCCESSES

There is a huge amount to celebrate and be proud of and these positives, strengths and achievements can be taken forward as the programme evolves and is renewed.

As stated above, a key success was the impact of the marketing – both for the clients and their own businesses and for Silverpreneurs® itself. Engaging with the Martin & Jones marketing engine from the very beginning ensured that the website was appropriately launched and positioned to maximize visits to the website and programme take-up.

Chris and Vernon, as co-directors, had a fully aligned vision for the programme and they agreed exactly how the programme should be best delivered. This clear messaging of aims, methodologies and values from the outset ensured a consistent approach which was also important when reporting outcomes to the Marches Growth Hub Shropshire. This consistency extended to the digital CRM that was used for client records. SET provided a shared drive so that both Chris and Vernon could record and monitor progress and rates of engagement.

Throughout the time, Silverpreneurs® has been grateful for the support, endorsement and promotion of the programme that has been received from the Marches Growth Hub Shropshire, Local Businesses and Shropshire Council. All associates and partner organisations have shared the belief that this age demographic rightly deserves the opportunity to develop their business ideas and, in turn, contribute to the local and regional economy. Having such prestigious and influential partners has certainly enabled Silverpreneurs® to reinforce its credentials as a respected and well-connected company with its clients.

A key benefit of the programme has been Chris and Vernon's direct involvement with each client right from the introductory conversation and throughout the 12-hour programme to the point of sign-off and completion. Even when support was signposted to other Silverexperts, the co-directors meticulously maintained records of contact, actions, and involvement. This has ensured messaging between SP® and the client was prompt and dependable. This was appreciated by the clients and contributed to their sustained engagement and motivation for the programme.



Silverpreneurs® clients enjoyed their inaugural 'get together' at Shrewsbury Football Ground in October 2021 as part of the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce EXPO event.

Some of the events that were arranged to promote client collaboration and engagement were successful, most notably the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce 'EXPO' event at Shrewsbury Town Football Ground in October 2021. This was the first time that members of the SP® programme had met together, due to Covid restrictions that had severely restricted any face-to-face contact up to that point, and the event prompted a great deal of interaction and the sharing of business development journeys, success stories and achievements. A positive outcome of this event was the way in which SP® entrepreneurs with similar businesses and/or mutually beneficial businesses could exchange contact details and establish new alliances. For example, a great connection was made between the J A Milton upholstery business and Roger Belham who makes bespoke furniture.

AREAS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT

Despite the many positives and successes, every scheme will have room for improvement and Silverpreneurs® is no different. Client outcomes and experiences will always highlight areas that could be improved.

Observation: The initial interaction and dialogue with a new client and community was a crucial part of the programme. This was the qualification processing stage, where essential background information was obtained.

Solution: The enquiry form that was devised to support this conversation could be improved to make sure that the right questions are being asked to determine whether involvement in the programme is suitable for the client and will support them in establishing their new business.

Observation: Along with a revision to this enquiry form, sharpening up the 'entry criteria' would be beneficial. For example, for some of the clients, their propositions were very much ideas based or linked to an interest or much-loved hobby and so, were potentially less likely to evolve into a profitable business in several cases.

Solution: Amending entry criteria to people who are 'business ready' may appear stricter, but it will ensure that their subsequent engagement with the project would propel their businesses more rapidly and effectively.

Observation: The impact of Covid has been referred to throughout this evaluation. It certainly impeded social interaction between the directors, the clients and each other. One of the cornerstones of the programme was to create a business 'home' – a point of connection between members of the programme. Deep and meaningful connections and collaborations were missed and became very much ad hoc rather than being a core outcome of the programme. The gatherings were successful, but more could have been done to promote and facilitate group interaction and networking.

Solution: Going forward, events need to be considered more carefully from the point of view of the client.... how will this event promote my collaboration and engagement? What can I learn from others in terms of helping me to take my business further?

Observation: The success of the programme also, inadvertently, led to a problem for the programme due to the timescale requirement. Forty-two clients across the three cohorts became a logistical challenge for the co-directors within the required timeframe. Every client had a completely unique and bespoke delivery in each business case, a unique selling point for the Silverpreneurs project.

Solution: A longer time scale for the engagement with each cohort would have helped with the development of deeper relationships with each client and helped to prevent a loss of momentum with each client's business journey due to having to work with a high number at the same time.

After all, an outstanding SP® USP is that it was never designed to be a 'one stop shop' of generic delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To support logistics, we need to consider implementing a more digitised application process with a more efficient integration with CRM.
- Ensure the programme going forward includes greater opportunities for client interaction, shared learning, and collaboration. Hopefully, there will be no new Covid restrictions going forward and so it will be possible to introduce these important social aspects into the scheme.
- Identify more opportunities for face-to-face contact and interaction with clients
- Work to extend and build on the team of 'Silverexperts' as these have an extremely important use and purpose within the overall programme by providing bespoke guidance and support for each client according to their specific needs.
- Alumni development now needs to implement for on-going communication & engagement.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the Silverpreneurs® programme has had a very real and positive impact on the businesses of clients who engaged in the project and who fully, openly, and enthusiastically embraced the level of support, advice, and guidance that they were offered.

The programme has incentivised this age group and instilled in them a belief that being over fifty does not preclude you from entering the world of business. In fact, as the programme has shown, starting a new business venture at this age can have positive benefits and reap huge rewards from a professional, personal, and financial point of view.

Post Pandemic, the situation for 50–64-year-olds has worsened, (Centre for Ageing Better, April 2022) 228,000 people in this age category have left employment, reportedly living off savings, drawing down pensions early which is forecasted to raise the issue of future ageing poverty for this group. DWP, Jobcentre plus is not in communication with this group in many cases, therefore, not seeking help or support, and not aware of such programs that could provide guidance, i.e., Silverpreneurs.

Return-ship focus is currently rising in agenda, there is a marked increase in awareness of getting some of the 228,000 back into work or potential enterprise.

There has been a significant amount of parity in the comments that have been shared with us by clients who engaged with the programme. These include improved confidence, increased knowledge about the world of business and, importantly, having a better understanding about where to go for support and knowing the right questions to ask to obtain

the information required to move an aspect of their business forward, and not forgetting peer support.

The Co-directors will now spend focussed time thoroughly reviewing the programme – its values, aims, goals and philosophy and the identified areas for improvement. The outcome of these discussions will then be used to determine the future direction, design, and format of the programme.

