Opportunity through innovation

Faced with a difficult decision, Bellpumps knew that to remain competitive and to service the island efficiently, innovation was key.



Alan Le Quesne of Bellpumps and Drains accepts his 'Innovator of the Year' at the 2022 Jersey Construction Council Awards

The challenge

Bellpumps is Jersey's oldest drainage and pump company, servicing the island for more than 40 years. For all things to do with water – both clean and dirty – the team at Bellpumps consistently delivers fast, efficient, and economical solutions for both individuals and businesses.

Since its inception, Bellpumps had been under the same management until just over six years ago. In 2016, Alan Le Quesne purchased the company and began to transform how it operated.

Alan knew that to remain competitive and to service the island efficiently, innovation was key. While the pump side of the business had continually evolved with the rest of the market, implementing high-technology solutions, such as digitally controlled booster sets and modern pumping stations, the drainage side remained rooted in the past.

On lockdown

Change and innovation was needed however, the pandemic struck, and everything was reluctantly placed on hold.

In May 2021, Bellpumps faced a difficult decision: close the drainage operation or heavily invest and innovate.

“For six years, we’ve worked closely with Jersey Business” said Managing Director, Alan Le Quesne. “I’ve used them as a confidential sounding board since I purchased the business. Their impartiality makes it easy for me to seek advice, and their expertise makes it so much clearer to understand which way to turn.”

“In 2021, our accountants were telling us to shut down the drainage business. Having researched and identified the requirements of the market, I was convinced that this was an area of the business we could exploit, and I was determined to make it work. Jersey Business helped me find the solutions I needed.”

The solution

This year, the Government of Jersey launched the Productivity Support Scheme Grant to support businesses with innovation. If successful, applicants could be awarded up to 50% of their required budget, supporting them to evolve their business offering, ultimately increasing their efficiency and productivity.

Bellpumps worked with Jersey Business to create a comprehensive business plan, which took about a month from start to finish. The tender was put forward and fantastically, the grant was awarded. Bellpumps got to work investing in the latest tools and technology to enable high value growth in the drainage side of the business.

The investment helped to purchase digital cameras and tracking equipment, adopt the latest drain lining technology and equipment, retrain six drainage operatives, create a new multi-skilled drain lining and inspection team and develop new management processes.

The results

The outcome of the grant and the subsequent innovation was incredible:

- In the first three months, Bellpumps' monthly income from drainage services increased by 100%.
- The average monthly income generated per drainage employee had also increased by 100%.
- The percentage of customer quotes that converted increased by 71% in 2022 compared to 2021.
- Bellpumps was named 'Innovator of the Year' at the 2022 Jersey Construction Council Awards.

"The ongoing support and advice of Jersey Business was invaluable in bringing the project to fruition and without this, the whole process would have been much harder. Thank you to everyone who supported us."

Bellpumps & Drains

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