

Trying to establish a new business in a new industry with limited funds, Mark Brandon, Managing Director of Sun Works, approached Jersey Business for support.

The island leader in solar PV

The business is steadily building a reputation as the 'go to' company for Solar Photovoltaic (PV) in Jersey. Solar PV is the generation of electricity through installing a series of Solar Panels onto typically a building's rooftop.

Rising electricity prices alongside a steady fall in the price of Solar PV technology gives a good case for a successful business in the renewable energy sector. However Jersey has its own set of limitations surrounding Solar's integration and how financially viable it is for people adopting the technology. Making this no ordinary day job.

The birth of Sun Works

Having left his job as a qualified electrician in 2012, Mark was determined that renewable energy should be available in Jersey as part of the islands future energy mix. He set about understanding

the technology further by becoming a qualified Solar PV installer and then understanding the unique Jersey market place before approaching Jersey business.

Sun Works (C.I.) Ltd was subsequently incorporated in August 2013 by Mark Brandon with the assistance of Jersey Business. Sun Works were looking to offer a complete solar photovoltaic design and installation service for both residential and commercial sectors. It was apparent the business needed to operate on very limited resources, possess low overheads and find make use of skilled sub-contractors where possible. Further challenges were to develop a business plan and cash flow forecasts to get a clear picture of where the business needed to be and how it should expect to operate. Also in the sales and marketing area, defining the benefits of solar technology in order to identify and engage potential customers was crucial.

Collaborating with Jersey Business

Nick Steel met with Mark and was immediately engaged with the potential for the business and with Mark's determination and enthusiasm.

Nick helped Mark work on ideas surrounding workforce with Jersey law, logistics for shipping of materials, cash flow and also had a large array of very useful contacts and connections to offer. Some of these are now potential customers or leads brought through by Jersey Business.

Having determined who the potential customers would be, the next stage was to develop the model that would create a sustainable business. Nick advised that Sunworks needed to start with smaller contracts in order to generate cash flow which could then be used to develop the pipeline and eventually be able to handle a larger volume of orders. The business could then hope to secure further investment down the line with a good reputation to their name.

As projects were completed successfully, Nick encouraged Mark to push for local PR, magazine editorials and develop social media platforms to promote the business. These are now invaluable resources for the business in showcasing the installations Sunworks has undertaken, as well as developing the conversation about the role of solar power in the future.

Outcomes

The company undertook its first installation in January 2014 and in its first year has installed 58.2kWp approximately 65,000kWhs of electricity. This equates to 228 solar panels powering around 13 Jersey homes fully for one year.

Jersey Business continues to provide ongoing support to develop the business.

Relevant Links

- Sun Works Email
- Sun Works Website