

Building a booming broadband business



Following a high-powered City career, Vanessa Phillips was hungry to start something new that would fit in with bringing up her young family. Spotting a niche in the broadband revolution, she turned to Business Link for support to launch and grow OutSec.

“Our Business Adviser is more than a sounding board. He has all the facts at his fingertips, or knows the person who has.”
Vanessa Phillips, Managing Director – OutSec Ltd.

“I was looking for a challenge that I could manage from my kitchen table, in between the ironing and nappy changes,” jokes Vanessa. “Inspiration struck when I read an article about the potential of broadband and its impact on digital voice recording”. This quickly led to the launch of OutSec, an online digital typing service that allows organisations to outsource their typing requirements.

The business started with just Vanessa and has grown profitably to have a teleworking network of over 250 ‘virtual PAs’ who type for clients in such diverse and specialist fields as property, medicine and expert witness work. “I had read about Business Link and it seemed logical to contact them when I started OutSec,” continues Vanessa, “and their advisers have been with us every step of the way.”

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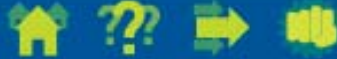


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CASE STUDY



Business Link Adviser Peter Mulhall has worked with OutSec for some years now. “One of my first tasks was to complete a Business Performance Diagnostic,” says Peter, “and we quickly identified their software as a major competitive advantage.” He was able to help OutSec secure a grant that contributed towards a key software development stage that remains vital to their continuing market leadership. And, according to Vanessa, that was just one area of Peter’s considerable contribution: “We seriously considered off-shoring our typist network and Peter provided contacts in markets like New Zealand. But the real value was in the business data he sourced for us through Business Link, which demonstrated our business was best based in the UK – British is Best.” As the company has continued its meteoric growth, Peter still regularly provides OutSec with advice and access to information.

By way of example, Vanessa explains: “We had a client with potential issues about transfer of undertakings, and we didn’t know where to turn. Peter provided a Fact Sheet and established that we needed specialist legal advice. If Peter couldn’t find an immediate, simple solution, then we knew no one else could.” This respect is mutual. As Peter says: “OutSec has grown into the sector leader, with Vanessa and her Operations Director, husband Richard Phillips, becoming prominent speakers and opinion leaders. Vanessa has even been profiled in a new book about businesswomen and is a role model for female entrepreneurs.” As to the future, Vanessa is bullish: “Growth, growth and more growth. We are breaking new ground in our business sector, as a teleworking business and as a whole new outsourcing model, and will turn to Business Link whenever we need sound advice.”

OutSec is in such a strong position they are potentially able to influence the trend for demand in this sector

Peter Mulhall, Business Adviser, Business Link

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