



Expanded global reach and new US office for Bournemouth company

Case study: Trade

Company: Think Create Do

Sector: Creative

UK region: South West

Target market: US, Australia, Europe

www.thinkcreate.do



When creative and digital consultant Matt Desmier arranged to take a group of 15 UK business people to an event in Santa Monica, the Los Angeles team of UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) was happy to help maximise their time there. A day of introductions and briefings was declared by the participants to have made the trip worthwhile, even before they got to the event they had flown there for. Since the trip, Matt has recruited two new team members for his company, Think Create Do, organised several more successful events both in the UK and overseas, secured speaking opportunities around the world and he is now opening a new satellite office in San Francisco.

Bournemouth-based Matt Desmier is a creative and digital consultant, working with businesses and public sector organisations to help them understand

how they can combine the creative with the digital. His clients include tech companies, start-ups, web design, software and advertising agencies and video production companies. Together with his team of 3 other staff, he runs networking events, training and peer-to-peer learning events.

Matt is also a great resource for other organisations, such as Bournemouth Borough Council, Bournemouth University and UKTI, when they want to access local businesses to attract them to their own events.

“Before I set up my own company, I worked at Business Link for many years, so I already knew managing directors of some 400 local businesses,” says Matt. “Now, my team and I mentor small and medium sized businesses, working with company owners to implement better business and marketing processes and connect with the local digital economy.”

Silicon Beach

One of the main events that Matt arranges is called Silicon Beach. Now in its fifth year, the heavily curated event attracts around 200 people, and features 20 hand-picked speakers. When Matt found out that there was a digital networking event called Silicon Beach in Santa Monica, Los Angeles, he got in touch with the organisers to explore opportunities to work together. Silicon Beach Santa Monica was in its fourth year, attracting around 3000 attendees and hosting around 200 speakers. Organiser Kevin Winston was delighted to join forces and agreed to give 11 speaking slots to Matt’s group.

Matt put together a group of 22 people, including representatives from 15 business suitable businesses and arranged sponsorship for the visit from various sources, including Air New Zealand who covered half of the cost of flying the group to Los Angeles.

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Matt Desmier, co founder, Think Create Do

Matt also spoke to a UKTI trade adviser who referred him to the Los Angeles team at the British Consulate, for local support. UKTI Los Angeles arranged a packed programme for the group the day after they arrived, which included: introductions to local service providers (solicitors, accountants, public relations agents); a round table discussion with successful local entrepreneurs about doing business in Los Angeles; lunch with companies from a co-working space; meeting with Talent House, a UK company that had set up in the US; and briefings how to conduct themselves at the Silicon Beach event, what to expect, details about demographics and other market intelligence.

“In many ways, Bournemouth and Santa Monica are very similar,” says Matt. “Both have a growing digital economy and both are proving themselves in comparison to bigger commercial centres nearby – London and Los Angeles. We were delighted to have UKTI’s support with our visit. The programme that they arranged for us before the event was hugely valuable. Our association with UKTI, and having them with us, gave us credibility and ensured that, even though we were unknown, we were taken seriously. In fact, we created quite a buzz and were very well received.”

Overseas growth

Several of the UK companies reported successes resulting from the visit to Los Angeles: one recruited a US-based staff member, another secured a contract and another entered into meaningful conversations with at least two potential clients.

Matt’s company also had great results. As well as establishing its credibility as a global entity, the company was subsequently invited to speak at several other global conferences – in Los Angeles, Australia, which included an appearance on local television, New York, Barcelona and Athens. One of the people at Talent House that Matt met in Los Angeles through UKTI, came to

speak at Silicon Beach Bournemouth in September 2015. Another contact Matt made in Los Angeles, Savanna Peterson (named by Forbes Magazine as one of 30 under 30 to watch), came to speak at the first London-based Silicon Beach conference in February 2016. Savanna will be working for Think Create Do as it opens a satellite office in San Francisco. Silicon Beach UK is also exploring the possibility of becoming the sole UK partner for an upcoming event, Northside Festival, in New York City, which attracts 100,000 people. Matt is talking to UKTI in New York about local support that might be available around this event.

“We are proud to be putting Bournemouth and our local businesses on the map,” says Matt. “Being invited to speak at events around the world gives us the chance to promote Bournemouth as the exciting digital hub that it is. Having UKTI’s support is an added extra that our clients appreciate. The work we do is very complementary to their work promoting UK plc, and we are always happy to collaborate with them when the opportunity arises.”

The UK and the US

The United States (US) is the largest, most competitive and technologically advanced economy in the world.

The US Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has consistently seen growth of 1.8 per cent or more since 2011. It is the UK’s top export destination and is ranked the fourth easiest country to do business with.

Negotiations between the US and EU for the Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership (TTIP) should generate even more opportunities for the UK. This will remove trade barriers by lowering tariffs and making regulations similar.

For further information about business opportunities in the US, please go to www.gov.uk/ukti

Helping you to do business abroad

Doing business in another country can be a challenge, so it’s good to know that UK Trade & Investment is there to help you succeed.

Through a range of unique services, including participation at selected trade fairs, overseas missions and providing bespoke market intelligence, UK Trade & Investment can help you crack foreign markets and quickly get to grips with regulations and business practices overseas.

Through our Passport to Export programme we offer new and inexperienced exporters:

- free capability assessments
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- mentoring from a local export professional
- free action plans
- customised and subsidised training
- ongoing support once you’re up and running

UKTI was delighted to support Think Create Do in its business overseas.

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