

CASE STUDY



"We have achieved our target turnover for year two in year one. From the first hour we spent with Andy Aldridge I knew he would be fantastic. He takes a very pragmatic approach to business and is personable and proactive. Andy's can-do attitude has been infectious."

John Smith, Director

About the Business

A supplier of new and used tractors and harvesters from the UK's leading manufacturers, the brand Louth Tractors has been serving Lincolnshire farmers for over 30 years. Taken over in 2011 by local farming family A W Smith, the business also offers servicing and a comprehensive range of farming and gardening equipment.

The Journey So Far

We're a family of farmers first and foremost and while we have diversified in modest ways before it's always been connected with farming. Re-opening Louth Tractors after it had closed was an entirely new kind of venture for us. We did it because we have another generation waiting in the wings and it's important for the older generation to stay busy and motivated and allow the youngsters to fly. We have five directors – all brothers and cousins – and hit the ground running thanks to a great deal of drive and enthusiasm, some top brands and a team of six really good people. Turnover in our first year was £1.7m.

The Challenge

Over the next year we quieted sceptics among the local farming community about our ability to make a go of things and built a reputation based on our long-standing business ethos as 'the friendly face of farming in Louth'. Turnover rose to £3m. The sales and workshop teams' experience and our combined determination had got us off to a good start, but I could see that while our farming background was valuable, a knowledge of the wider business world would be useful. Also, as I'm still a hands-on farmer and not in the office all the time, there was a clear need for the teams to be able to pull in the same direction and make things happen by themselves.

Getting the Right Advice

We are very independent! But I recognised that if we were to grow safely and sustainably we probably needed a new pair of eyes and assistance from someone who understands business through and through.

Enter Andy Aldridge

From the first hour we spent with our Coach Andy Aldridge I knew he would be fantastic. He takes a very pragmatic approach to business and is personable and proactive. The fact that his agricultural knowledge wasn't as strong as ours didn't matter at all. Business is business. He has given us the business structure and language every company should have – as well as more confidence.

Implementing Change

One of the biggest changes we've made is to hold monthly senior team meetings which everyone attends – come hell or high water. These meetings are playing a big part in keeping us on track. We spend two full hours together, with each team reporting on progress and Andy acting as independent chair –he's very good at teasing out what people really think and ensuring everyone has their say.

We're now encouraging heads of department to become directors. Andy has also helped us access funding for Leadership & Management training which will help the sales team sell in the way cars are sold today as I feel the agricultural industry is a little behind the times.



Practical, Down-to-earth Coach, Consultant & Non-Exec

Consult 3A is a results driven down-to-earth consulting service that enables businesses to flourish smartly and rapidly. Headed up by Andy Aldridge, Consult 3A exists to bring out the best in your business. Andy is an authentic and genuinely experienced advisor who offers medium term project based work to companies in the Construction, Agriculture, Manufacturing and Engineering sectors. He is also available for Non-executive Directorship for a small selection of qualifying clients. We help clients in Yorkshire & the Humber, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire.

So whether you are passionate about growing your business, need help with company direction, planning or structure, encourage work/life balance, implement new sales and marketing techniques or simply want to improve profitability, Andy and Consult 3A could be a perfect option for you.

www.consult3a.co.uk

The Results!

We now have a strategy and key performance indicators for the first time which are enabling us to fine tune what we do in every area of the business. As a result the customer experience, which was always good, is now even better, we've attracted additional franchises and increased some margins and achieved our growth goal much faster than planned.

- Up from 6 people to 15 people in two years
- Turnover increase from £1.7m to £5.7m in two years

The Future

We are now working on plans to introduce innovative new ways for our customers to finance farming machinery, build our reputation as a specialist in a particular kind of combine harvester, extend our premises and make sure we continue to meet the needs of customers of all sizes from the family farming business to the big corporates. Now that we are confident we can grow in an orderly and sustainable way we will also be keeping a weather eye out for opportunities and may possibly get some investment in. As Andy's support and chairmanship have been so successful, we now have him on board as a non-executive director.