



Distance, Schmistance.

Darryl Anderson, Proprietor and Executive Producer

The history of Anvil Media is probably typical of any small business which starts as a sole-trader and begins to grow. The technician eventually realises that being expert in his or her field of production doesn't make him or her good at managing a business based on that very thing.

That happened to me.

I'm a video and television producer with a background in journalism and agriculture. I had worked for Channel Ten News in Sydney, Australian Good Taste TV program, and a long-running program called "Cross Country" – a weekly TV show for farmers. I've also got a degree in Agricultural Economics.

As a freelance producer of corporate videos, I was on solid ground. Even as a company with one other employee, we got by – kind of.

But by 2002 Anvil Media had grown to 2.6 full-time-equivalent people, and I realised that, although we'd grown significantly, we'd not grown profitably. Momentum was really non-existent and frankly, I had no idea how to fundamentally change what we were doing to make it work.

Almost despite my initial inclination, I looked around for some help. Self-sufficiency is the mark of this age, I think!

I looked at "Life Coaches". I looked at business consultants who were essentially accountants. I looked at mentoring programs.

Eventually I found a website that read well. www.edensilk.com.au.

Why did it read well? Because it talked of a whole-business approach, beginning with those activities which directly influence revenue, marketing and sales - I knew I was weak there! And because its language was that of reason – results in proportion to effort and no "Hup, hup, hup! Discover the person within!" pop psychology. I'm an economist, after all!

Now, I love WA. Even took our honeymoon there. Dennis Lillee was my boyhood idol! But Anvil Media is in Sydney. Was the width of Australia too great a distance

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to develop a productive relationship with a business architect – even one with a website that reads well?

Not that I've found.

Paul Curtis at Edensilk started working with me on my business in June 2002. (or was it May, Paul?) That's six months, so far.

The last six months have seen us dissecting Anvil Media, discovering what defines this business and where its strengths lay, where we should be concentrating our marketing efforts, discovering what our market likes about us and understanding the psychology of how buyers buy. Even beginning to look at systematising everything we do.

Today, Anvil Media is still chaotic. It's a work in progress. But, where I had no idea, I now have plenty, and a plan for bringing them about.

The last six months has been our busiest and most profitable so far, and we have grown to a business of 4.6 people.

Some of that new business traces directly to Edensilk-related initiatives. Some of it comes from existing relationships which have begun to bear fruit. Either way, how Anvil Media now represents itself to buyers, particularly in terms of our newly acquired understanding of the buyer, has made us far more successful as we seek to convert opportunities into turnover.

That first phone-call to Perth in May was almost certainly the most important I have made so far in business. While there's a lot more to do, I can now see much of what needs to be done. And with what we've achieved so far, I now know that what needs to be done can be done.

Watch this space!

Darryl Anderson
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