



Money
 Small Businesses In 2009
 Fund Your Business
 Business Banking
 Business Tax
 Insurance
 Exiting Your Business
 Payment And Cashflow

Sales & Marketing
 Developing Products
 Selling
 Marketing
 Advertising
 Customers

Your People
 Recruiting New Staff
 Leadership
 Rewarding Employees
 Employment Law

Technology
 Your Website
 Online Marketing
 Business Tech
 Business Communications
 Business Continuity

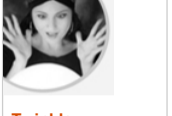
Operations
 Business Planning
 Business Premises
 Transport And Fleet
 Franchising
 Advisers
 Green Business
 Import And Export

Business Themes
 Business Problem Solving
 Great Leaders
 Exiting Your Business
 Start-up Business
 Growing Business

More Business
 Start-up News
 Starters For Ten
 Entrepreneur Profiles
 Business Video
 Business Horoscopes
 Start-up Newsletter
 Entrepreneurial Columnists
 Business Blog
 Business Product Reviews



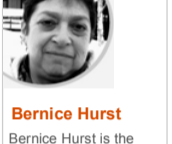
Columnists



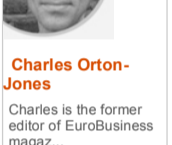
Twinkle
 Throughout the ages, man has consulted the heavens...



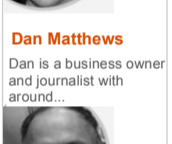
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 She's lurking at your AGM, earwigging on the...



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Karen Moore, founder, Going for Growth

Karen Moore, founder of Going for Growth, explains why you don't have to advertise to grow quickly, why starting up is full of surprises and how she overcame 'classic' start-up mistakes.

Explain your business so my mum would understand it

Going for Growth is a business to business telemarketing consultancy. We work with small to medium size businesses, helping to increase their client base, profile and market presence.

Whether clients want to develop [telesales](#) internally or outsource their telemarketing requirements, we offer a complete bespoke consultancy service.

Why did you start a business in the first place?

I started to notice a couple of gaps in the market. Initially I began to feel that I could offer internal sales teams an alternative to a lot of the generic courses that training organisations deliver.

I felt that after ten years in [telemarketing](#) that I had a true insight into the real challenges that telesales teams face. So I started creating and delivering my own practical, bespoke courses for telemarketers delivered by a former telemarketer.



Soon after I also became aware that there was a gap in the market for professional yet affordable telemarketing exclusively to smaller businesses and so the other arm of my business was born: Target Growth 360.

In all honesty I had always wanted to run my own business but like many I was fearful of actually taking that step! Last Christmas I just decided it's now or never! It's without a doubt one of the hardest things I've ever done but four months on it's definitely the best decision I've ever made!

What surprised you most about starting up?

How much it takes over your life! 24 hour days are so not long enough anymore! Also I wasn't prepared for the isolation, managing an entire business by myself in the very beginning was tough! But now I'm more used to juggling all the balls I find it a lot of fun.

I've also been pleasantly surprised by how supportive other businesses are. Also how quickly we've grown I wasn't expecting to recruit two staff so soon.

Was there anything you would do differently now?

Earlier this year I had two clients who let me down with work promised and didn't pay me on time for previous work done and so now I have tightened up my [payment terms](#) and issue everyone with an agreement which so far has dramatically improved my cash-flow.

What was your strategy at launch, and have you stuck to it?

Strategy was always to make telemarketing more accessible to SMEs and to create solutions that offer a better return on investment. I feel we are keeping to that in how we operate and in how we listen to our clients.

For instance as a result of client feedback I have recently introduced our 'quality standards guarantee' and 'fair deal' policy and I hope these measures will give our potential clients that added assurance.

What's been your biggest hurdle or stumbling block so far?

Trying to grow a business with limited funds! I've never paid for advertising and so I attain all new business via networking, referrals and cold calling.

Biggest stumbling block recently was when I realised I was making the classic [start-up](#) mistake of winning lots of work, but then being so busy delivering it that I couldn't win any more!

Classic catch 22. I think I would have experienced a serious famine of work if I hadn't of come to my senses and recruited just in the nick of time.

And your luckiest moment?

I don't think I've had one lucky break as such. I would say that I'm a firm believer if you put yourself in the way of opportunity and maximise each opportunity that comes along then good things will come from that.

Where are you now with the business?

At present I am committed to developing my new recruits to ensure that we continue to deliver a quality service to our existing clients. I'm also growing our client base at a manageable rate and continuing to raise our profile.

What does the future have in store?

Right now I'm really enjoying developing Going for Growth, I will continue to grow my telesales team but I have no intention in becoming the size of a call centre operation.

From a [training](#) perspective I have several new online concepts which I'll be testing and hopefully introducing later this year. I have specific sectors and niche markets which I expect us to increase our share with and for us to generally grow our brand throughout the UK.

I also have several innovations on the horizon which hopefully in time will create a sister company under the Going for Growth banner.

What's your best piece of advice for someone who's about to start a business?

- Research your industry, target audience and potential market.
- Strive to differentiate yourself from your competitors and have a clear compelling message why people should use you.
- Have a specific plan mapping out where you want to go and how you will get there
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes as it's inevitable, it's how we deal with them and learn from them that count's.
- Join Business [networking groups](#) –For your own personal development as well as business growth. Do not fall into the trap of working in isolation!
- Starting a business can become all time consuming; make sure you have a strong support network.
- Be authentic with your customers, don't pretend to be bigger, better or different to whom you are. Stay true to your ethics.
- Manage your cash flow-cash flow is king!
- Go into business with passion and flair and not just for the money! Someone once told me when you align your strengths with your values and passion the money will just follow.

I believe this. If you go into business purely for the money you'll soon get bored before you make any!

Why not sign up to our [small business newsletter](#) and learn more?

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 By [LaunchLab.co.uk](#) on **Apr 15, 2009**

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