

SME ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

SMEAA Member Profile: *Zeemo*

Who: Zeemo
Business Owner: Sukhbir Mehla, 36-years-old
What: Zeemo is a digital agency – with added zing!
Where: Melbourne, Victoria
Operating Since: 2002
Website: www.zeemo.com.au



SMEAA: Tell us a little about your business.

Sukhbir Mehla: Zeemo connects businesses of all shapes and sizes with the online world. While our bread and butter is in developing customised websites, we don't stop there. We provide solutions to generate website leads and help put together integrated marketing strategies. Our A-to-Z of online solutions also includes online marketing, mobile websites and apps, web analytics, business branding and social media.

SMEAA: What motivated you to start your own business?

SM: I moved to Australia to do my MBA at Deakin University and started the business to support myself while studying. I love meeting people and the variety that comes with the diverse range of business backgrounds. Helping clients spend their hard-earned money wisely, to market their business, is very satisfying.

SMEAA: How has your business evolved since its inception?

SM: I've been running the business since its humble beginnings as Infinite IT Solutions in the garage of my rented flat. That was over 10 years ago and Zeemo has since evolved and expanded, along with the ever-changing digital landscape, to become a full-service digital agency employing 30 staff.

SMEAA: Who are your clients and where are they mostly based?

SM: Our clients are like a delicious assortment of licorice allsorts! They range from small family run companies to large well-known ones, from a plethora of industries and places around Australia. But they all have one thing in common – they each require a tailored solution to achieve their unique online objectives.

SMEAA: How many staff do you currently employ?

SM: We have five staff members based in our Melbourne office and 25 in our development office in India. Depending on the number of projects we are handling, we also enlist the services of sub-contractors from time to time.

SMEAA: Are you targeting new clients, or more so focusing on getting more business out of your existing customer base?

SM: We'd be crazy not to be actively trying to attract new clients, however we also pride ourselves on innovating to ensure our existing clients remain competitive. I liken the digital world to Melbourne experiencing four seasons in one day, it's constantly changing! Continual advancements in technology (tablets and smartphones), the way we communicate (social media) and evolving circumstances within businesses (wanting to sell online) keep us on our toes. Existing clients look to us to provide ongoing recommendations for improving their online presence based on our experience and industry knowledge.

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SMEAA: What business challenges have faced and how have you overcome these?

SM: Many businesses have been telling us they want to make changes but can't afford to due to the current economic climate. Apart from offering a range of options for differing budgets, we have found that the way we explain and demonstrate the long-term benefits of customised solutions versus templates, with regards to flexibility, robustness and user-friendliness, makes a big difference. We also place emphasis on the impact your online presence has on your brand.

SMEAA: Tell us about some of the bigger successes your business has enjoyed?

SM: Becoming a preferred website provider for AMP is definitely one of the highlights. Getting referrals from our happy financial planners is the greatest compliment we could receive for our work. Other successes include expanding our solutions to include mobile websites and apps and winning government business.

SMEAA: Many businesses are doing it tough out there; how's the outlook for your business?

SM: The outlook is bright! A positive of tough times is that it forces you to review and make improvements to your offerings. We have identified that many small businesses are time poor. They get caught up in back-end operations or don't have the resources to focus on implementing an integrated marketing strategy, so we are currently building on our services in this area. Opening a second office in another state is also on the cards.

SMEAA: Do you have a business motto or any business advice you'd like to pass on to fellow SME owners?

SM: I've always been a believer that if you continue to do what you've always done, you'll continue to get the same results. Review the performance of not only your website, but all of your marketing

and advertising initiatives, on a regular basis. This will help you to identify those that are underperforming and achieve the most optimal mix. As it can be hard to identify areas for improvement, remember to ask your customers for feedback, because what you think works might actually be driving them away.

SMEAA: When did you join the SME Association of Australia?

SM: I joined the SMEAA in 2012 after coming across *My Business* magazine. I was looking for new ways to keep informed about opportunities for SMEs, such as networking, and to gain exposure for our new business name.

SMEAA: What benefits have you and your business enjoyed from joining the SMEAA?

SM: I really enjoy taking some time out to read through this magazine and learn from the experiences of other like-minded business owners. I also use the online SMEAA Business & Suppliers Directory when looking to engage suppliers for services such as printing. Networking is a priority for us in 2013 and we hope that SMEAA has an event on the cards for Melbourne. *(Ed: SMEAA Networking events are currently being planned for Melbourne, as well as Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide, so watch this space.)*

SMEAA: Will you be renewing your SMEAA membership?

SM: Yes I will be, to ensure we stay informed of what's trending in the SME world.

SMEAA: What would you say to other small business owners who are considering becoming a member of the SME Association of Australia?

SM: Get on board and learn more about your fellow SMEs! You never know what great ideas or opportunities might come from it. ■

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