



TAB has given Rob Watson of ph9 the clarity and confidence he needs to move in the right direction

ROB WATSON HAS LITTLE FORMAL EDUCATION AND ADMITTEDLY WENT TO ONE of the worst schools in the UK, but you would have no idea of that with the business, ph9, that he has since grown. Rob's bullish personality and determination from an early age has certainly helped him to achieve his goals. In his first ever job interview, Rob's concluding line was "I'll start on Monday." He got the job and that was the beginning of his life in web design.

ph9, a web solutions business, was started in 2004 with just Rob. There was a lot for Rob to learn – basic understanding of what is involved in running a business and developing processes to work from. There was a lot of trial and error. It took 5 years of hard work to get to the point where he was in a position to recruit his first employee. As for many business owners, this is a big step to make. As Rob said, "You have the right people on the bus!"



Over the years, Rob has moved his business to become less reliant on one-off projects to avoid the 'feast or famine' nature that this encourages, and reduce the worry of covering monthly overheads.

It was when Rob had just one employee that he came across TAB. He realised that he was being very reactive and to move his business to the next level he needed some help to stop him getting 'side-swiped'.

Rob is very much focused on processes and getting results, making sure that budgets and targets are pragmatic.

Rob is concerned about the future with the uncertainty of Brexit. ph9 survived the tough times in 2008/2009 so Rob is confident they will ride the Brexit wave. He believes you've just got to get on with it and not make excuses.

TAB has given Rob clarity, the confidence that he's moving in the right direction and tools to ensure his team are focusing on the important things. "We have two 44 inch screens in the office so that all staff can see our KPI and rolling P&L, so we all know what we need to achieve," said Rob.

"Since joining TAB I have made some good friends who laugh and cry together, which is testament to how strong the bond of the Board is. The different skills and diverse range of

businesses on our Board means you get such a variety of views to help you see things from a new perspective."

Rob sees TAB as insurance – "I couldn't be without it to help me through some of the challenges I face," he said, "and the bit of time I need to invest each month in the Board meetings and 1-to-1 sessions has made me more efficient and focused."

With his business in order he can now focus on some personal goals. He can go away on holiday and know things are not going to fall apart in his absence and also think about starting a family, and more importantly be able to spend time with them. But that's not going to divert Rob; his aim in 5 years is to have trebled his business, so there's still lots of work and help from his TAB Board ahead!

