

Case Study from BBV

Sebastian Cranston, Cranston's Fine Ales



Sebastian Cranston from Ramsbottom, Lancashire was supported by Bolton Business Ventures.

Redundancy was the trigger that led Sebastian to start-up his own business. Deciding that the time was right to take charge of his own destiny, he launched Cranston's Fine Ales with the help of Bolton Business Ventures.

Sebastian attended a Barclays Get Ready For Business workshop in July 2013 and subsequently received 18 hours of 1-1 support. He had his own investment of £3400 received an initial loan of £7500 from BFNW and created 3 jobs. Due to the growth of the business he was successful in raising a further £15,000 of investment in February 2015.

Cranston's was set up to promote and sell micro brewed British real ales and run mobile bars and Sebastian soon discovered the satisfaction and sense of fulfilment making money from something he loved doing.

Assisted by his own dedicated BBV mentor, Sebastian was able to grow the business to the point where he was able to employ two part-time and one full time employees. He was able to invest in training for himself and his staff to attend a variety of courses from cellar management to brewing. Their collective specialist knowledge now allows them to offer unique services to brewers such as brand consultancy and chemical analysis.

The success of Cranston's Fine Ales was recognised when Sebastian became a finalist in Allied London's Leftbank Kitchens Competition, a situation which resulted in him being offered the chance to open a bottleshop in the heart of Spinningfields, in Manchester city centre. Once the Manchester bottleshop is open he plans to replicate the offering in other cities and open a brewpub.

Aside from the loan itself, Sebastian found that having access to such experienced mentoring extremely useful, making what appeared to be a daunting experience far more manageable.

Describing the first year on the scheme as 'the most exciting and significant year of his life' Sebastian believes he couldn't have succeeded without Bolton Business Ventures introducing him to the Ready For Business scheme.

Sebastian said:

"The scheme helped me to turn my business idea into a reality.

I found the help and advice invaluable!

The scheme is very useful for first time entrepreneurs. I think that just having an experienced business owner to start the process with is great."