

CASE STUDY: WORDBANK ENABLED LONDON: JARGON BUSTER THINKS BIG

Three entrepreneurs have developed an Award winning technology based innovation. It enables companies to extend their website accessibility and attract millions more people to their products and services. Their innovation is an automated communication tool which converts corporate jargon and unclear language into meaningful information. The developers of the new tool claim to substantially increase the return on investment in company websites.

The tool has been called “WordBank” by developers Lisa Abbott an occupational therapist, Andrew Mason, senior programmer, and Alick Mackenzie, Managing Director. It gives website users immediate access at the click of a button to more descriptive content. Innovative use of audio and graphics have been added to ensure website readers respond more quickly and with more engagement to website offers of advice, products and services.

WordBank also makes websites more attractive and readable for millions of people who use English as a second language inside and outside the UK. Industry experts estimate poor use of English costs UK companies £4.8 billion a year in lost business. Enabled London was selected from hundreds of applicants to win a place on the prestigious BBC Innovation Laboratory programme, and has been nominated in the New Statesman New Media Awards which highlight the positive impact of new media technology on public life.

The initial development work supported people with learning disabilities. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 gives disabled people rights in many areas including better access to web-based information services. Corporate language can be difficult to understand, unfairly restricting many people’s access to information and services. The users of the service range across private and public sector organisations. The Disability Rights Commission is piloting WordBank in May and June. The London Mayor’s Office and the

Royal National Institute for the Blind are also exploring opportunities to use WordBank for their diverse online communities which are hard to reach.

An active supporter to Enabled London is the Thames Innovation Centre. Their Think Big innovation consultants operate a partnering agreement with London Metropolitan University who provide incubator facilities for new businesses. Think Big consultant Clive Bonny explains: “The partnership between London Metropolitan University and Think Big allows both of us to refer customers to each other’s support facilities where experienced on-site advisors help entrepreneurs at no extra cost. Alick has an innovative product which enables organisations to enhance their investment return on their website. It helps companies get their messages across to the millions of people with language barriers and create stick-ability for web page readership”

Think Big gave Enabled London advice across a spectrum of technical and business issues. These included intellectual property protection, innovation road-mapping, routes to market, neuro-linguistic programming, customer psychometrics, and how to use electronic icons. Alick says “Think Big have highlighted the commercial value of WordBank to enable large and small organisations to communicate more successfully with clients online. Their practical hands on advice has safeguarded jobs and created more clients in wider markets such as Regional Development Agencies and corporates. We can now grow more quickly with lower costs of sale.”

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