



Real Member Stories

Architect



Around £65k a year comes from being a BNI member...

Case Study: Cameron Lloyd of Bastion

Architects always seem to be in high demand these days, with new developments being approved every day and more people looking to extend and improve their homes as an alternative to moving. But finding someone you can trust with such a large, expensive and important project isn't always easy, which is why so many people rely on personal recommendations and a good track record when choosing an architect. That's just one of the reasons Cameron Lloyd of Bastion gets up early every Thursday morning to trek to Ascot Golf Club and meet with fellow business owners.

"I've been a member of the Ascot chapter since its inception – so from when it was a core group, through launch until right now, which is around five years. I was introduced to BNI as a concept by my brother in law, who was a member. He was a tradesman and just dragged me along, not telling me anything about it, but knowing I'd be interested when I got there. He just told me it was a get together with half a dozen tradesmen over a fry up and have a chat about clients and whatever. And then I turned up and was confronted by people in suits and lots of different professions, which was a bit daunting! But I made some really good connections and I got work out of it straight away, so when it came to joining, I couldn't really not! I thought I'd give it a go and see how we got on."

"I've never, never done anything like it before then. I'd never been to anything remotely network orientated like that. I was always okay in public settings and in public speaking and talking to multiple people. The nature of what I was doing at the time in commercial architecture I was constantly involved in a huge design meeting of multiple people and professions. But actually doing it for myself was completely alien."

"For us as architects, the biggest way BNI has helped us is obviously in turnover. Financially it's been massively beneficial to us, and at any one time it probably accounts for around 20-25% of our takings. Around 65k a year comes just from BNI. A lot of that is because most of the work we've got has been small, regular projects that slot in around the bigger ones.

We've got clients that we've won through BNI and have been working with for the whole five years now, and the repeat business is really incredible. It's helped up achieve a nice level of natural growth.

It's also helped us grow quite a bit – we've gone from it being just me and a one-man band to a permanent team of 5 with 12 subcontractors – so the level of growth in five years is really incredible".

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“I think the strength of it is its accountability. That's the number one thing for me, I think there's quite a few other networking groups that I visited and you get invited to that always try to use BNI as a negative to promote their own networking, and the one thing they use is that there's no pressure to find referrals for other members. At which point I always ask, well if I'm not pressed to find work for other people, then why are they bothering to find work for me? The accountability of BNI is a major driver for me, and it's a big, big factor as to why I think it's been successful.”

Among the other positives of BNI, Cameron picked up on one thing a lot of newer member struggle with – building relationships with your chapter. He explains how it worked out for him:

“The relationships are also massive for us, or massive for me in particular. And I openly admit to most people that for the first 18 months of my membership, I didn't really grasp that part of it, and I was very much the 90-minute member who would only turn up to meetings and that was it. But then as you start properly getting to know some of the people within the group, the relationships part kind of happens on its own. You actually start becoming friends with these people, and that's been a huge driver for me from the personal point. I've built lifelong friendships with my chapter, so I don't just see them as business associates anymore. That's a massive factor for me in getting up every week. It's that I'm actually going to try and help my friends succeed, and I know they are doing the same for me. And once you get that, you can start looking outside your own chapter and build friendships in other groups too.

I've made some amazing friends now from BNI that are in different parts of the country, just from meeting them at different events.”

Contact Cameron

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BNI is the most successful business networking referral organisation in the world. We have thousands of members in the UK and Ireland, passing hundreds of thousands of referrals worth over millions of pounds every year!