



Real Member Stories

Asset Finance



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around £357,000 this year...**

Case Study: Julie Morris of Pinewood Asset Finance

When it comes to something as sensitive as finance, most people prefer to work with someone they know is trustworthy, who can handle their needs professionally and get them the best possible deal at the same time. For that, they turn to recommendations of companies people have used before, or who are known in the local community.

Julie Morris co-owns Pinewood Asset Finance, an independent finance broker offering finance for equipment and vehicles for businesses and individuals. Working with a number of individuals and business owners to offer hire purchase, lease finance and personal/business contract hire, Julie and her team have been helping people finance anything that isn't a building for over 20 years. For almost all that time, they have been members of several chapters of BNI, which has helped them achieve that trust in the local community.

'I personally have been a member of the Bracknell chapter of BNI for 15 years. Before me my husband and business partner Peter had been in another chapter for 5 years, so all in all we've been in BNI for around 20 years. We're almost founder members, but not quite!'

'We found BNI when Peter decided to come out of the corporate world and set up his own brokerage. One of the first things he did was go down to his local printer to get business cards, and that printer was a member of BNI and invited him to join him for a meeting. He loved it and saw the benefits, so applied straight away and that was that!'

'It took some time to build up trust with the members, as you would expect, but now we get around 80% of our new business through BNI.'

We have members in 2 chapters; Bracknell and Farnborough so we have a two-pronged approach there which has worked really well. I think this year we have thanked for around £357,000 – and that's just this year mind you. We have had some very big bits of business from BNI as well. We supplied one member for 7 vehicles over a 6 month period, which came to £120,000 – which is the single biggest referral we've had in 20 years.'

“We get about 80% of our business through BNI”

‘The personal development is a big part of it for me. The first meeting I went to I couldn’t even stand up, let alone do a one minute presentation because I was just so nervous. And it wasn’t because I didn’t know what I was talking about, because I obviously did. But the thought of standing up and speaking in front of so many people just filled me with dread. But now, I’m the president of the Bracknell chapter!

That’s a huge development for me. Obviously you have to push yourself, and with the support of your fellow members then you do feel more confident in pushing yourself to get out of your comfort zone, and I think that’s what I’ve done. And it’s had a major impact on my life.

We asked Julie what her advice would be to other asset finance companies considering joining BNI would be, and she had some great thoughts:

‘I would say jump in with both feet really. It’s certainly going to enhance your business, and you’re going to get more business from it. You’re going to build a huge support network, and for me it’s an add-on to my business. To be able to recommend people who I trust to provide services that we don’t provide ourselves. But we’re certainly happy and confident to refer those people. Specifically, for asset finance? Have lots of one to ones!

It’s only when you have one to ones that you really get to the nitty gritty of what people want, and that will highlight how you can help them. Because sometimes it’s not immediately obvious how you can help people.

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Find your local BNI meeting...

To find your local BNI meeting please visit www.bni.co.uk and enter your postcode.

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!