

ERDF Project CASE STUDY

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which is supporting activity until June 2023, provides funds to help local economic growth. The funds are accessed directly by organisations, including local authorities and universities, which deliver programmes and grant schemes that businesses can benefit from. Funding can be accessed to support innovation and research, broadband coverage, low carbon and energy efficiency and growth in small and medium-sized businesses.

The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership area, which covers Shropshire, Telford and Herefordshire, was allocated £60m for the current funding period and this has supported a range of activities since 2016.

The Project: Business Growth Programme

BGP offers grant support to Start-Ups and SMEs and is designed to strengthen supply chains, stimulate innovation and help businesses grow.

The Business: Jesmonite www.jesmonite.com

A building materials manufacturer, Jesmonite's products are used around the world earning the Bishop's Castle company a global reputation for innovation. Jesmonite is described as the 'chameleon of the building industry' for its ability to mimic a range of materials and finishes. It was invented in 1984 by Peter Hawkins as a safe alternative to fibreglass and a lightweight alternative to cast concrete.



The Challenge:

But Jesmonite's global success was also stopping the company from growing its market share. As Jesmonite materials had become increasingly well-known around the world, there was a need to make the Jesmonite website more accessible to overseas customers who did not understand English.

The global harmonisation of legislation also dictated the format and language of material safety data sheets which Jesmonite was legally bound to supply with their products. These were currently only available in English.

The Solution:

Funding was used to "internationalise" the Jesmonite brand, using a BGP2 grant.

The website was translated into various languages, and then redeveloped with the necessary functionality so it could automatically appear in the language of a customer's location. The funding also enabled the translation of all MSDS's and hazard labels so that Jesmonite could meet the global legislative requirements when distributing Jesmonite materials overseas.

Consequently, the funding has also assisted the company by placing it in a better position to secure more contracts overseas and increase both its profitability and staffing, so that it can further develop and grow.



For further information

ERDF projects designed to assist the local economy in Shropshire can be accessed by businesses until 2023. To find out about projects that could provide support for you please visit:

<https://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/about-us/shropshire/> or call 01743 250526