



(l-r) Guv. Jooles & Lvndon

Background of business

Advantage Fibres International Ltd., based in Ilkley, began trading in March 2008. Its founders and partners, Guy Dowson, Lyndon Day and Jooles Endean, collectively bring more than 60 years' experience of the wool and speciality fibres industry to their new business. Over the past two decades they have built strong trading partnerships with all sectors of the industry around the world. The company specialises in sourcing, collecting and processing

a wide range of natural fibres, including cashmere from China, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Afghanistan. They also supply de-haired fibre and combed tops, including camel, llama, mohair and yak.

Support journey

Although the company's founders had worked together before and brought complementary skills and experience to the venture, they had little or no prior knowledge of planning or launching a new business. Having heard of the Kickstart programme they contacted Airedale Enterprise Services, in Keighley, where Phil Harrison, a Kickstart Business Counsellor, offered assistance. In addition to guiding them through the business planning process, Phil also helped them prepare for VAT registration. He also recommended that they apply for practical support from the Kickstart professional services programme. This resulted in an accredited Kickstart supplier designing their brand identity, an illustrated brochure and a suite of business stationery.

Where they are now

The company certainly lives up to its name; it is truly international in its suppliers, inspection and collection services and the location of its major customers. Primarily they are to be found in Germany, India and Japan, where the growing popularity of pure cashmere is driving strong demand for the high quality of fibres AFI can supply. The corporate brochure and stationery produced for the company by a Kickstart professional services supplier is helping to build greater awareness and positive perceptions of the business on an international scale. "We want to get our clients as close to the farm gate as possible so our staff in China work directly with the herdsmen," says Guy, adding: "Phil Harrison and Kickstart have enabled us to move ahead much more quickly by supporting our marketing and business growth."

Background Information

Client Names: Guy Dowson, Lyndon Day and Jooles Endean

Ward in which trading or resident: company trades in Ilkley

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