ROFFEY PARK INSTITUTE CASE STUDY

Gatwick Diamond-based Roffey Park is an internationally renowned leadership institute, founded in 1946, offering training programmes, consultancy services and qualification programmes including the MSc in People and Organisational Development and the Postgraduate Certificate in Coaching.

Roffey Park Institute is an example of a Gatwick Diamond-based company that has taken advantage of the region’s international links and expanded into Asia Pacific, setting up a permanent office in Singapore in February 2011 to serve clients within the region. “In the short term, our focus will be on countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, India, Indonesia and the Philippines – where English language is prominent,” explains Michael Jenkins, Chief Executive at Roffey Park Institute. “The longer term strategy will be to develop and expand into non-English speaking countries such as China, Japan and Korea, as well as Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.”

Faced with current and future concerns over the strength of the UK and European domestic market and the double-dip recession, Roffey Park - the oldest management and leadership development institute in Europe - took the bold decision to expand into Asia to enable it to develop alternative sources of revenue. “The Singapore economy is tightly managed and suggests that despite the continuation of the global recession, there is evidence of a continuing and growing need for leadership training in Asia,” says Michael. “Our clients want to see us providing thought-leadership between human resources and organisational development systems in the West and the East.”

To achieve international growth, Roffey Park was challenged by the Board of Trustees to make progress with a small investment. Michael explains: “In supporting the decision to set up an international operation, we were challenged by the Board of Trustees to make progress with an investment of £100,000 and to break even by the third year of operations. We have managed to do this and will cover all direct costs and investment to date by our year end in July 2012. Within 36 months, we will be in a position where the organisation’s revenue from overseas markets will count for up to one fifth of all revenues. Within the next three years, we plan for this to rise to a third, in line with CBI encouragement to British business not to count on the domestic market for survival, but to seek out new markets in the emerging economies.”

Roffey Park’s overall strategy for Asia Pacific market penetration has been to develop partnerships with key stakeholder organisations in Singapore. “We became members of the Singapore branch of the British Chambers of Commerce, and have been a finalist in 2010 and 2011 in their Education and Training Excellence Award. Our links with British businesses through the Chamber have helped our brand to be known in Singapore across many sectors,” says Michael.

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“We have taken advantage of advice and support from the Economic Development Board, the lead
government agency for planning and executing strategies to enhance Singapore’s position as a global
business centre,” continues Michael. “In addition, we won the tender to supply the Singapore
government with the Management Development Course, through the Civil Service College and we have
formed a media partnership with a leading national broadsheet newspaper in Singapore, The Business
Times, enabling us to capitalise on regular press coverage and appearances at high profile events.”

The success of this strategy can be seen in Roffey Park’s income levels. “Embarking on international
expansion at a time of economic turmoil was a bold decision that has returned dividends. Our Asia Pacific
revenue has grown from £50,000 to £750,000 in two years and we are projecting that our income from
Asia Pacific will reach £1,050,000 by the end of July 2013,” says Michael. “In the last twelve months, over
2,000 participants have attended Roffey Park programmes in Asia Pacific and our forward order book is
looking robust with programmes scheduled for the next two years.”

Rosemary French, Executive Director of the Gatwick Diamond Initiative, considers Roffey Park’s
expansion into the Asia Pacific region a fine example for other Gatwick Diamond-based businesses: “The
Gatwick Diamond Initiative encourages businesses to capitalise further and faster on growth through
international activity, as exemplified by Roffey Park’s success. Particularly impressive is Roffey Park’s
strategy of developing partnerships with key stakeholder organisations, resulting in working with leaders
and managers at the highest level in the Singapore government,” says Rosemary. “Roffey Park is now
enabling knowledge transfer from the UK to Asia and from Asia to the UK for the benefit of all its clients
and constituents, and this is especially commendable.”

For more information, visit: www.roffeypark.com

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