



Adamsons Drinks Takes a Shot at Tendering

Established in 2002, Adamsons Drinks is an independent wholesale distributor of soft drinks, snacks and confectionery and employs 55 people in Central Scotland. With support from Business Gateway Fife's Expert Help Programme, staff accessed free tender training through the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) in 2018 and 2019. In 2020, Adamsons Drinks won its first ever contract: a place on a Scotland Excel framework.



When Adamsons Drinks completed a business acquisition of a rival company in 2017, it inherited a place on an existing Scotland Excel framework for the provision of groceries and a contract under it for the supply of water to Fife Council. Having no experience of public sector tendering, but knowing it had the capability of servicing a much larger area than the acquired company, Adamsons Drinks explored the possibility of doing business with this new market with the support of Business Gateway Fife's Expert Help Programme. Staff registered with SDP in early 2018, participated in seven free tender training webinars, three "Talking Tenders" webinars, and attended Meet the Buyer in November 2019. Gregor Wylie, Managing Director of Adamsons Drinks, said: "As we had not had any previous experience in public sector tendering, we benefited greatly from the webinars and Meet the Buyer event we attended. The webinars were a fantastic tool, providing in simple terms procedures and helpful tips."

In April 2020, Adamsons Drinks won for the first time; a place on Scotland Excel's renewal framework for two lots: "Supply and Distribution of Crisps, Confectionary, Soft Drinks and Water" and "Distribution of Groceries and Provisions." The framework has a total value of £120m, and will run for an initial two-year period, with the option to extend. While a place on a framework is no guarantee of work, Adamsons Drinks is now positioned to win a share of the total spend.

Gregor continued: "We had no experience in public sector tendering. I felt out of my depth, but I also knew this could be a lucrative opportunity for the business. With guidance and support from Fife Council's Economic Development team, who were incredibly friendly and approachable, we were advised to take part in what turned out to be invaluable training on how to tender through the Supplier Development Programme. We have now been successful in being awarded a place for two lots on a Scotland Excel framework for supplying Scottish councils, and we couldn't have done it without SDP." Pam Garrie, Admin Assistant for Adamsons Drinks, added: "I found the SDP webinars to be a great help in understanding the world of tendering. I learned that no question is a daft question when tendering!"

Dot Smith, Fife Council Economic Adviser, said: "Businesses are being encouraged to seek and continue to tender for vital contracts for a range of goods, services and works, despite difficult trading conditions. SDP can help businesses get tender ready, giving them the knowledge and tools to allow businesses to put themselves forward and reap the rewards, just like Adamsons Drinks."