THE LOOKINGLASS
consultancy

Case Study

Adding An Office For A Design Company

Issue

A five year old design company was losing ground to its leading competitors who had both added additional offices within the past two years.

The company's owners wanted to be sure the potential return justified the investment and the disruption to their original business. They were also reluctant to expand unless they were certain the company could maintain its cultural uniqueness.

Challenge

The Lookinglass team was engaged to perform a cost benefit analysis of the possible expansion. This included evaluating the business potential of the second market and producing a comprehensive estimate of the capital and overhead costs.

We also had to integrate the two offices operationally and culturally.

Lookinglass produced a cost benefit analysis for a company's geographic expansion, and developed an organizational model that leveraged the company's capabilities in both locations

Approach

Lookinglass spent time in the proposed market, interviewing potential clients and prospective employees, and researching local cost factors. We carried out a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the competitive environment and defined a number of unmet needs.

The team then conducted a thorough evaluation of the company's current day-today operations and cultural uniqueness, and determined the skills the company would need to add in a new management structure and developed the specs for an expanded information system.

Finally, we identified three initiatives based on suggestions drawn from our staff interviews that could be built in to a new office to extend the company's cultural identity.

Based on the analysis, Lookinglass recommended that the company should proceed with the expansion.

Current Situation

The company accepted our recommendation and we were engaged to help implement the expansion. The office was opened eight months later and after the first year, the company had established itself as one of the top three design businesses in its second market.

The company was operating on a system that shared CRM and job management data in real time between the two offices, and which kept staff in both locations fully informed about the company's work.

Forty percent of all projects shared talent and resources from both offices, and the company had developed new revenue streams from opportunities created in the second market.

The company had been approached about a potential joint venture by a client attracted by the company's multi-office capabilities.