

Growth continues at tender specialist AM Bid

AM Bid, Scotland's largest bid and tender specialist, reported rapid growth during its fifth year of trading.

Turnover to the year end 30 September 2019 was up by £169,000 at £898,000, an increase of 23%.

This has been achieved with no external financing and the business remains debt free, with no bad debt across the five years.

Staff numbers also continued to grow with 12 employees now based in Scotland and England. There is also a pool of 25 experienced Bidding Associates located throughout the UK and Ireland who provide increased capacity during busy periods.

There was continued governance last year from the Board led by David Sole OBE who is the non-executive Chairman. The Board met quarterly setting the strategic direction for the business and reviewing both business and financial performance.

Last year a Senior Management Team was established with the appointment of an additional two senior managers. Andrew Loughlin joined the business from Babcock International Group on 8th October 2018 in the Head of Bids role, with Alasdair Oliphant joining from The City of Edinburgh Council on 3rd January 2019 as Head of Operations.

Looking ahead, business opportunities remain strong as the company continues to grow and deepen its client base, with owner Andrew Morrison targeting at least 25% growth in 2019-20 with a greater focus on profitability.

He said: “Whilst there are continuing political and economic uncertainties around Brexit, the make-up of future UK Governments which may either increase or decrease the amount of public sector tendering and the possibility of a second Scottish independence referendum, we remain of the view that the future for outsourced bidding services remains strong.

“There are unlikely to be any material changes to public sector procurement in the short to medium-term and there is evidence that the private sector is adopting an increasingly procurement-led approach to its sourcing of goods and services.

“As many organisations move away from direct employment of support services, including bidding, we see opportunities to grow our customer base.

“We are also further developing our services in both funding applications (assisting organisations to obtain external funding e.g. from Innovate UK and Scottish Enterprise) and award submission writing.

“It is intended that Board level employee directors will be given the opportunity to purchase shares in the company providing the business with both additional capital for investment and greater long-term buy-in from business-critical senior executives.”

The business places a high premium on continuing professional development and holds Corporate Membership with the Association of Proposal Management Professionals (APMP UK) – which is recognised as the professional body for the bid world.

In November 2018, all permanent members of staff (and three Associates) successfully attained professional bid qualifications. For the past three years, different members of the AM Bid team have been invited to deliver presentations at the industry’s annual best practice conference held in London.

A clear succession plan has been in place for some time. This came to fruition on 1st October 2019 with David Gray taking over as the Managing Director. Andrew Morrison moved into a newly-created Business Development Director role to focus on continuing to grow and scale the business.

The business also moved into offices for the first time, setting up its Scottish HQ at the new WeWork facility at 80 George Street, Edinburgh.

The move coincided with a change in the company's accountants to a larger Edinburgh-based firm, Thomson Cooper. Carrie Campbell, a Thomson Cooper partner, joined the Board on 1st October 2019.

