



## GREAT GUNS MARKETING

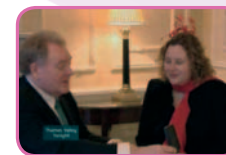
### OBJECTIVE

Storm began work with Great Guns Marketing in February 2007 to conduct a seven-month campaign aiming to raise the profile of the telemarketing agency, as well as its founder and managing director Liz Jackson. Great Guns was keen to showcase its excellent credentials in specific markets where it identified room for growth.

### SOLUTION

A proactive media relations campaign was implemented targeting the national business press, local media around its headquarters, and vertical titles in specific areas, such as finance, IT, healthcare, HR and consultancies.

In addition to issuing news releases, Storm utilised Great Guns expertise as well as Liz Jackson's highly regarded reputation as a successful entrepreneur, to pitch Great Guns for ad-hoc columns, business view columns, company profiles, expert opinion sections, and by-lined articles.



### RESULTS

Great Guns Marketing has received a number of new business enquiries as a result of the campaign, and their reputation and awareness within their particular industries has also increased, with more potential clients now aware of the company and its services.

The campaign generated coverage in titles ranging from The Sunday Times to BBC Radio Berkshire, ITV's Thames Valley Tonight, Basingstoke Observer, and through to New Business, Call Centre Europe, Call Centre Focus, Marketing Services Talk, My Business and Start-ups Magazine.

The resulting coverage had a reach of almost eight million and delivered an EAV of more than £70,000, with a return on investment of four times Great Guns' initial investment.

## Vote for your industry champion

The industry champion category at this year's CCF European Call Centre Awards (a special) because the winner will be decided by you, the readers of CCF. Read about the nominees below, then simply log on to [www.callcentre.co.uk](http://www.callcentre.co.uk) to vote

**Thames Valley Tonight**

Thames Valley Tonight is a leading call centre company, specialising in providing a wide range of services to its clients. The company has a strong reputation for customer service and is a member of the CCF.

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Log on to [www.callcentre.co.uk](http://www.callcentre.co.uk) to place your vote before 15th September. The winners will be announced at the CCF European Call Centre Awards on 15th September. To bank one of the five remaining tickets, please log on to [www.callcentre.co.uk](http://www.callcentre.co.uk)



## Thames Valley Tonight



## Against all odds

Starting your own business is a challenge at the best of times, all the more so when you're just 20 and on the verge of going totally blind. But Great Guns Marketing founder – and new recipient of an MBE – Liz Jackson, didn't let that get in her way. **Chris Alden** went to meet her

She was out in London to watch the opening ceremony of the 2007 European Call Centre Awards. Liz Jackson was there to receive an MBE for her services to the community. It was a moment of triumph for the 27-year-old founder of Great Guns Marketing, a company that has grown from a one-woman operation to a multi-million pound business. Jackson, who is partially sighted, started the company in 1998 and has since built it into a leading provider of call centre services. Her story is one of resilience and determination, as she has overcome significant challenges to achieve her success.



# THE TIMES

## Founder's blindness fails to stop firm going great guns

**HOW I MADE IT**  
**Liz Jackson**  
Founder of Great Guns Marketing



TWO years after starting her own business, Liz Jackson suffered a setback more challenging than the usual problems that face fledgling firms: she went blind. Over four months she lost all sight in both eyes. One of four children, she was born on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent and grew up in Maidstone and then Hastings. Her father was an engineer. After passing just one of nine GCSEs, Jackson left school at 16 to do textiles at college. But she dropped out after six months to take a job via the now-defunct Youth Training Scheme, as an office junior for a mergers-and-acquisitions company. She said: "I didn't think I wanted to work in an office but I had no idea what I wanted to be and I needed a job."

Jackson wasn't very good at the job, but after two months her boss overheard her answering the phone and asked if she would like to try cold-calling firms to set up appointments with potential customers – otherwise known as telemarketing. She loved it. As the years passed she built a telemarketing team round her and was promoted to manager. By 1998 at the age of 25, however, she decided it was time to do something else. She said: "I told my boss I really wanted to leave because I had grown as far as I could and wanted to spread my wings. He said why don't you set up your own telemarketing company?" So she did. The bank refused to lend her any money but the Prince's Trust gave her a grant of £1,000 and lent her £4,000 at a low interest rate. She started Great Guns Marketing from her flat and her former boss became her first client with her totally working for him two days a week

worse happened: Jackson went blind. She said: "I would pick up a book and be able to read it quite clearly and then the following week I wouldn't be able to read the words because they had merged. The week after I couldn't see anything on the page and the week after that I couldn't find the book." Jackson responded to the situation by being extremely practical about it and trying to solve the problems of blindness. She employed a personal assistant to read things to her, took taxis to work, and after a while learnt how to use voice-activated computer software. "Not even for one moment did she consider closing down the business. She said: 'I don't really have much time for sitting around and being miserable. It's a waste of a life.'"

spending the rest of the time scouting for new customers. The telemarketing she does is all business-to-business rather than to consumers. "We don't call people in their homes, we call people in their offices on behalf of our clients who sell just about anything," said Jackson. "We might work for an accountancy practice, which wants to help their clients with their management accounts. All we do is make appointments for our clients to go and see potential customers." As the business grew, she moved it to a converted garage and then to proper offices when the neighbours complained about the noise. She said: "The council asked me to shut the business down because we didn't have planning permission. It was awful."

But after eight years with the company, Jackson decided it was time to move on. "I left for one reason: not wanting to spread my wings," she says. "I want to fly."

**Cambridge Evening News**

**Telemarketers set out new stall**

Great Guns Marketing has opened an office in Bourne, near Cambridge. The telemarketing agency opened its new office this week, headed by Alex Malacca. This is the firm's eighth branch in the UK and Ireland, and halfway towards founder Liz Jackson's goal of 16 sites.

**Cambridge Evening News**

**Telemarketers set out new stall**

Great Guns was founded in 1998 with a £1,000 grant and a £4,000 loan from the Prince's Trust. Liz Jackson was made an MBE in the New Year's honours.

**Basingstoke Observer**

**Great Guns to an MBE**

THE Queen has promoted Basingstoke entrepreneur Liz Jackson with an MBE for Services to Business. Liz receives the award for not only her outstanding achievements in the business world but also for setting an incredible example for other women.

**businesszone.co.uk**

Start-up Stories: Liz Jackson - Going great guns

Despite losing her sight at the age of 26, Liz Jackson has grown Great Guns Marketing from a computer-run firm from her lounge to one employing 120 people and turning over £2.5m a year. She talks to Chris Alden about the secrets behind her success.

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