

**DOORDEFENDER™**

*Pictured: Mark Bonnett of the National B2B Centre with Ernie Griffin of DoorDefender*



## Open Source Software opens doors for Birmingham business

**A clever idea for doorstep security has now come to fruition thanks to Birmingham company Willearn.**

The idea to bolster home security was dreamt up by William Whelan and Ernie Griffin, two taxi drivers and directors of the company.

The pair was spurred into action after seeing the bruised face of an elderly woman in a newspaper after she had been attacked by an intruder who she had opened the door to.

Chatting about the story as they waited for custom in a taxi rank, William and Ernie came up with DoorDefender.

The product – a new take on a conventional door chain – uses an aggressor’s own strength to close the front door of a home if forced entry is attempted.

The metal arm mechanism is fitted to the door frame and cannot be snapped like a conventional chain, in fact the more force the caller uses, the faster the door will close.

DoorDefender has been tested to withstand 750kg of force and it can

even be set up to activate an optional high-pitched alarm.

William and Ernie built six prototypes before finding the perfect design. The process of turning the product into reality was helped along the way by Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Coventry University’s marketing company CUMAC.

William said: “Quite literally we had lots of doors smacked in our faces during the long process of getting the product to market, as we tested the DoorDefender.

“We even had to change the strength of the spring that closes the door as health and safety officials thought we could get sued if we trapped a potential burglar’s fingers in the door!”

Manufacturing started in China with an out-sourced firm but the pair ditched that and brought manufacturing back to the UK, a fact they take great pride in.

### A Content Rich Website

The product, which costs less than £50, has been flying off the shelves

since Willearn, based in Kingshurst, Birmingham, got advice from the National B2B Centre to develop their open source, content rich website [www.doordefender.co.uk](http://www.doordefender.co.uk)

The website has helped to promote the product to a worldwide audience. The company can manage the content themselves, taking control of what is displayed to visitors and search engines, and can signpost potential clients.

New functions have also been added with help from the National B2B Centre, showcasing the product in a better way and also helping to generate more enquiries.

Ernie said: “We hear about doorstep crime almost every day and DoorDefender provides an effective method of opening the door to callers to check ID but then closing the door if there is a threat.

“It is a small price to pay for security and peace of mind.

“The website has enabled us to tell the world about our product and we are glad to see that working with the National B2B Centre is already paying dividends.

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"It's not necessarily the amount of enquiries the site attracts that is important but the quality of them and the business it leads to."

Ernie and William both currently work as taxi drivers to keep the business going as it is still in its early years.

### The future

Councils in London and Birmingham are currently looking at DoorDefender and the product has already received rave reviews in the national press and the company was featured on BBC Midlands Today.

The product is accredited with the Sold Secure Award, which is recognised by the Master Locksmith's Association, the Home Office, police and insurers.

An Innovation Networks Capital Grant was also awarded to the business in recognition of its innovation and investment in the West Midlands.

Mark Bonnett, of the National B2B Centre, said Willearn's web portal has

generated a great deal of interest in the product.

He said: "William and Ernie have developed a truly unique product and addressed a concern that many people feel about their homes.

"It is a product that can be used everywhere and the website has helped the company to reach out to a much wider audience.

"The feedback so far has been excellent, sales figures are looking very impressive and the business is going from strength to strength. We are very proud we have been able to help Willearn on its road to success."

### Further Information

Do you want to plan or improve the content on your website? Do you want to analyse the performance of your website content?

If you would like advice on developing a content-rich website please contact the National B2B Centre using the details below.

### Creating a content-rich website

- A website provides a business with a promotional tool capable of reaching a global audience
- Simply having a website isn't enough, it should have the right content to represent your company and attract new business
- It pays to plan your website content; you can do this by using the B2B Centre planning tools which can be found at [www.nb2bc.co.uk/toolboxes/marketing\\_online/i\\_need\\_a\\_website](http://www.nb2bc.co.uk/toolboxes/marketing_online/i_need_a_website)
- To enable visitors to find your website it should be optimised with page descriptions, keywords and links for search engines to see
- To establish credibility with visitors when they first arrive at your site, especially if they are from overseas, you could provide articles that highlight your expertise, case studies and testimonials from clients
- Any good news that you get should be mentioned on the website; also think about mentioning it on a blog
- Review your website statistics for free at Google Analytics [www.google.com/analytics](http://www.google.com/analytics)
- Check out how your website is ranked by search engines and get an action plan to improve it's search listing at [www.nb2bc.co.uk/seo](http://www.nb2bc.co.uk/seo)



\*Also available in Dark Brown and Brass finishes