



Pictured: Lizzie Perring  
(Unlock the Music)  
with Mark Bonnett  
(National B2B Centre)



## Website calls the tune for Lizzie

**Lizzie Perring spent 18 years in the field of special educational needs for Warwickshire County Council. Part of that entailed teaching through the creative arts and, for some time, she worked as an education officer.**

In October 2004, she decided to set up her own business from her Coventry home – Unlock the Music – which would offer piano and singing lessons to take advantage of her musical expertise and experience.

By March 2005, Lizzie was working on the business full-time but needed to find greater focus and also to get the message out about her services.

“I wanted to do everything,” she said. “I’d got all sorts of ideas on what I could teach that went further than music and covered all sorts of creative arts.

“I needed someone to sit down with me to help channel where the website should go.”

### Website Planning

That organisation turned out to be the National B2B Centre. By going through a website planning process

Lizzie was able to decide which parts of the business she should focus on and develop.

“We decided that I would concentrate solely on teaching music and vocal coaching,” she said. “It was helpful to have someone there just to go through it with me and to give the business focus.”

Lizzie also received help from organisations such as Business Link and the Women’s Business Development Agency, but it was from the National B2B Centre again that she gained further crucial information on e-business.

She was introduced to open source software which meant she would have overall control of the website which was being developed.

It meant that she could change any information on the site without needing to go to a third party and could ensure it was kept up-to-date at all times.

### Results

By the autumn of 2005, the website was live and was helping Lizzie achieve incredible results.

More than 80 per cent of her enquiries come through the web and nearly every single one leads to business.

She has received praise for the depth of information on the site which now includes details on events that are planned where she and her pupils perform.

“There is no doubt that the website has played a major part in the success of Unlock the Music so far,” said Lizzie.

“Since setting up, there has been a steady increase in the demand for my services to the point now where I am permanently oversubscribed!”

The website is now also developing a reputation as a local musical portal. Lizzie shares information on events and also lists details on other music teachers, as she shifts her emphasis to concentrate on vocal coaching and life planning for musicians. She is also developing her own performances.

She also uses the site to make clear statements in order to steer inappropriate enquiries away from her business.

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"Initially, it was important to take on as many pupils as possible in order to gauge what was out there, but I don't want to teach people who are unreliable with their attendance.

"My reputation has grown and I can now make choices. As I have evolved my thinking I have updated the website to reflect this. I am making it increasingly clear on the website that I am focussed on medium term and long term learning opportunities.

"All my pupils are contracted with terms and conditions. As a business, it is no good to have people who turn up one week and when you reserve them a slot for the following week, they do not bother. The website is helpful to reinforce these things."

### The future

Since Lizzie is moving towards concentrating on vocal lessons and life coaching for musicians, the website will become even more important as a place to share information on other music teachers with a reciprocal arrangement in place.

Lizzie is also talking to the National B2B Centre regarding how she can move [www.unlockthemusic.co.uk](http://www.unlockthemusic.co.uk) up the rankings on search engines such as Google and Yahoo by using optimisation to drive more traffic to the site.

"At the moment," she said. "I receive around seven new visits a day with people spending five minutes browsing through five or so pages of my site. The site is set up to entice people to do this and I am pleased that it works well. From this, I average a 57% conversion rate, so that's four enquiries a week and with 41 pupils currently, this is plenty enough to keep me busy!"

"Unlock the Music has set up as a Music Society now so that this part of the business can be run by volunteers from the pupils group and their families and friends. As we start to push more events we will be planning how to get many more people to visit the site."

Mark Bonnett, of the National B2B Centre – the e-business centre of excellence for the West Midlands - said: "A website that is up-to-date and offers all of the information your potential customer needs is like gold-dust for any business.

"Lizzie has realised that almost from day one and it is paying dividends for the company."

### Further Information

Do you want to plan your first website? Or do you want to improve a website you already have?

If you would like advice on website planning contact the National B2B Centre using the details below.

### The importance of website planning

- The famous quote from Proverb "He who fails to plan, plans to fail" can be applied to your website; if you do not plan you risk getting it wrong.
- You should always plan a website before its implementation, whether that is to document every page and its content or simply to map the structure.
- Your business plan should be used to write your website plan, as this will dictate the content and design of the website. For example if your business plans to sell in new markets the website should seek to service these markets, whether that means selling products they are interested in or communicating in a different language.
- When planning consider the importance of your home page; what should it say? Remember the home page is where most people will land when they arrive at your site so it should engage visitors enough to stay on the site.
- In order to write your menus consider what a visitor will want to know about your business and its products/services.
- Remember every page should include keywords, page titles, page descriptions and link text, to show search engines what your site is about and increase the chance of it being returned to search results.
- To find out what parts of your website search engines currently see try using the National B2B Centre's new SEO tool at [www.nb2bc.co.uk/seo](http://www.nb2bc.co.uk/seo).
- To produce a website plan download the National B2B Centre's website planning guide and workbook from [http://www.nb2bc.co.uk/toolboxes/marketing\\_online/i\\_need\\_a\\_website](http://www.nb2bc.co.uk/toolboxes/marketing_online/i_need_a_website).