

Strategic Growth Services

Unlocking your agency's full potential

“ We've worked with Kingston Smith for a while and they've been vital to helping us grow our business. Although our management systems are already in good shape, the KS360 workshop really helped our management team to get a clearer picture of our strengths, key improvement opportunities and where we should focus our efforts in order to better achieve our objectives. Having an expert on our sector running the workshop meant that in just a few hours we were able to turn insight into action.

I'd certainly recommend this exercise to any organisation that is serious about growing its business.”

Ian Henderson, CEO, AML Communications

Your potential, our expertise



Most media and marketing agencies are founded by people with a passion for the industry, seeing a way to deliver better creative products and services for their clients. That passion, and the all-consuming effort required to ensure that the business is successful, means that **agency leaders invariably spend most (if not all) of their time working ‘in’ the business rather than ‘on’ it**, and have little time for proactive strategic planning.

As the agency grows, leaders can often lose focus as they battle to manage the multitude of daily challenges and opportunities associated with growing a business: building sales, managing people, controlling operations and keeping on top of finances, amongst other things. Most agencies also experience a gradual blurring of their original vision and objectives over time, as barriers to efficiency and profitability creep into working practices and company structure. More often than not, **these dynamics can result in the agency failing to realise its full profitability and enterprise value (EV) potential.**

In addition to supporting agencies with traditional accountancy, tax and corporate finance services, we provide strategic support to agency owners and managers who are serious about growing their business, by helping them to take a step back and think strategically about how to dramatically improve business performance.

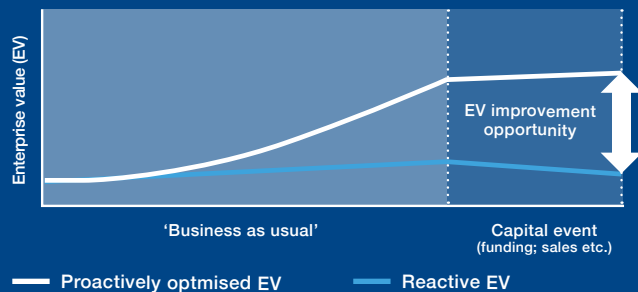
SME leaders spend most of their time working ‘in’ the business rather than ‘on’ it... which can result in failure to realise its full profitability and enterprise value potential.

Through the provision of simple and highly focused interventions, we help leaders:

- Get a reality check on the true **current state** of their business (vis-à-vis critical success factors, key drivers of valuation growth and benchmarked performance against competitors);
- Assess the extent to which the agency is ‘**set up for success**’ (i.e. set up to achieve its objectives and maximise EV);
- Identify and prioritise the **key risks/challenges and opportunities for improvement** that can in turn optimise business performance and EV;
- Ensure those prioritised improvements are **realistically achievable** and built into a **clear, compelling strategy** that is successfully implemented (complete, on time and in full);
- Bring **clarity, purpose, focus and control** back to the forefront of the leadership agenda.

Proactive management and improvement of the key drivers of Enterprise Value (EV) can generate a substantial improvement in performance, profitability and EV.

This focused proactivity (and use of workshop-based tools designed to achieve all of this in a quick, efficient and cost-effective manner) can help our clients to achieve significantly enhanced growth in performance, profitability and EV.



We have extensive experience of providing precisely the kind of strategic growth support needed to drive the greatest potential uplifts in performance and EV. Our team helps organisations achieve step-changes in performance in key areas such as:

Business development

- How to efficiently generate more (and better-quality) leads
- How to increase sales conversion rates
- How to increase profit-per-sale
- How to grow accounts

People management

- How to improve recruitment and retention of key personnel
- How to better engage and incentivise key people
- How to optimise HR procedures and practices

Finance & operations

- How to use outsourcing to simultaneously improve operational performance and profitability
- How to proactively manage tax to maximise net income and shareholder wealth

Strategy & planning

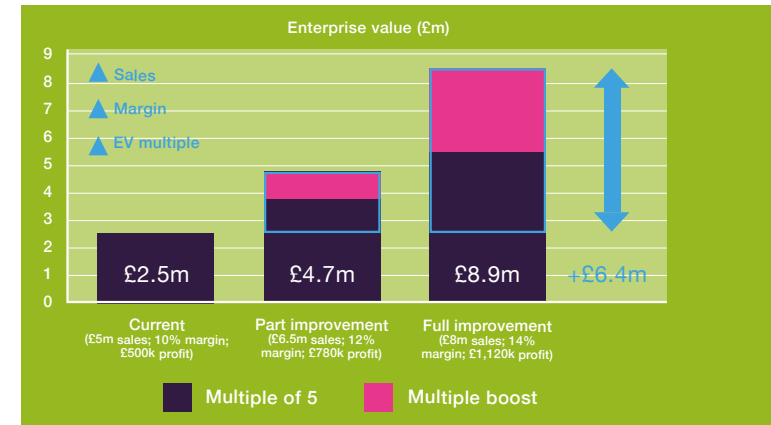
- How to produce useful management information that will drive smart decision-making
- How to create compelling and realistic strategies, business plans and metrics

This combination of experience and expertise means that we understand how to **help agencies maximise EV**. The incremental improvement in EV that is achieved can then be used to fund further growth (e.g. through investment of retained profits or by raising additional finance) or enable shareholders to exit the business; indeed, where owners look to exit (e.g. through a full or partial sale), the payback achieved for having proactively driven business growth can be substantial, usually delivering increases in both profitability *and* the exit EBITDA multiple that is subsequently achieved at the time of sale.

We sometimes begin the EV optimisation journey by using our **KS360 Diagnostic** process. This is a highly structured half-day workshop with senior management and stakeholders, facilitated by an experienced Kingston Smith partner to assess the current state of the agency. The process **rapidly identifies and prioritises key risks, challenges and improvement**

opportunities and allows leaders to effectively **direct 80% of resources to the 20% of ('vital few') tasks that will generate 80% of improvement.**

By teaching clients powerful improvement methods that are fast, easy and effective to deploy, we help them improve sales, margins, profitability and EBITDA multiples...thereby ensuring that EV is maximised.



“As a company we’re already proactive about the strategic management of our business. However, not only did the KS360 process help to sense-check our current strategic plan, it also flagged up some useful and thought-provoking opportunities for improvement.

All in all, this was a thoroughly useful exercise and we would certainly recommend the KS360 process to anyone with the ambition to improve performance and grow their business.”

James Collis, Managing Director, Revere

About Kingston Smith

- **We are sector specialists.** From start-ups to multinationals, we work with a variety of businesses across the media, marketing services, management consultancy and IT services space. We have vast experience of working with agencies and understand the nuances of managing business growth and transactions in these sectors.
- **We offer an unrivalled full-service offering.** When considering how to maximise (and realise) enterprise value, we provide businesses and shareholders with aligned and coordinated advice across a variety of areas including strategic planning, business development, corporate finance, HR consulting and outsourcing, in addition to our traditional accountancy and tax services.
- **We are SME specialists.** We work with a variety of clients, from start-ups to more established medium-sized businesses. Our focus on the SME arena means that we truly understand what it takes to grow successfully. As thought leaders, we regularly conduct research into what drives success in the SME space; our insightful reports outline how to improve performance and share key lessons that help our clients outperform industry norms.
- **We have an extensive network in the UK and beyond.** We have access to numerous agencies, potential alliance partners, deal databases and potential acquirers in the UK and internationally through our global Morison KSi network and other relationships. When you're looking to sell, we can rapidly access decision-makers within acquisitive organisations and across our private equity network, enabling us to deliver the most credible and appropriate buyers willing to pay a premium price for your business.

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Our awards

