

## Blue Sheep®

**BUSINESS SECTOR: Marketing**

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 1-49**

**REGION: SOUTH WEST**

Business Profile: Blue Sheep® was founded in 1983 and is now recognised as an innovative, industry-leading B2B Marketing Services company. The business has an enviable client portfolio which lists many household names and has grown organically through the development of its trademark services and leading online and offline products

“On top of the benefits of an up-skilled workforce, there are also the rewards in having publicly declared that we have signed up to the Skills Pledge and we will support all of our staff to do their job properly through adequate training.”

John Wright  
Marketing Director

### The challenge

Blue Sheep, with over 21 years of marketing experience, achieved a record year in 2007 with 30% increase in sales following a succession of new contract wins. Such rapid growth has resulted in the company's workforce nearly doubling in the space of a year, placing increased demand on the businesses training resources.

### The solution

Blue Sheep, specialists in business to business marketing services, has signed the Skills Pledge, a government initiative aimed at improving workforce skills and led by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

Employers who sign the Skills Pledge receive broker support to help develop the skills of their employees and improve their business with the help of the LSC's Train to Gain service.

An industry leading company, Blue Sheep has signed up to the major government training initiative to help drive the business forward.

The Skills Pledge is open to all employers of all sizes in the private, public and voluntary sectors, and the Government will provide funding to enable organisations to support staff to gain basic literacy and numeracy skills, as well as a whole host of other business support through the Train to Gain service.

Blue Sheep will be receiving broker support across all levels of the business from administrative assistants to senior management with a number of employees undertaking essential qualifications up to at least Level 2 (equivalent to five good GCSEs).

### The results

Marketing Director, John Wright said: “Signing the Skills Pledge gave us the perfect opportunity to ensure that our employees gain the skills they need to compete in this fast growing industry.

“We want to maintain the fast pace that we have set but can only do so with the support of our staff. It was therefore essential that all staff got on board with this initiative. This is an opportunity that we couldn't afford to miss out on as it is becoming more challenging to recruit people with the right skills.”

#### What is the Skills Pledge?

The Skills Pledge is a voluntary, public commitment by the leadership of a company or organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, and work towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2 (equivalent to 5 good GCSEs). The purpose is to ensure that all staff are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the company/organisation.

#### What is Train to Gain?

Train to Gain is a Skills Brokerage service, managed and funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) that helps employers find the training they need for their employees. Train to Gain links employers with Skills Brokers who work individually with them to find out what their employees' training needs are, work out a training plan, and then help to find the right training for them.