

# Case Study



## Explore Learning Explore Gladstone

# Explore Learning

Explore is a network of learning centres for 5-14 year olds. Fully trained graduate tutors guide children through maths, literacy and writing courses based on the National Curriculum which complement and support their normal school work.

Explore ascertains the strengths and weaknesses of each child, tailors learning to their individual needs and guarantees a low ratio of tutors to pupils each time. Children attend regularly, once or twice a week (but without having to book in advance), boosting their results at school and consequently their confidence.

Tutors give specific feedback to parents and work closely with local schools, even visiting them and offering on-site workshops. A further advantage to families is the location of their centres. Explore's strategic partnership with Sainsbury's means that most are sited within a large branch of the supermarket, resulting in easy accessibility and parking and allowing busy parents to catch up with their shopping whilst children catch up with their spelling.

All these factors make Explore simply unique and have ensured that this pioneering group has become extremely successful since they opened their first centre in Chelmsford in 2001. Explore now operate seven days a week on 17 sites, with over 5,000 children registered in total.

In the early days, with just one centre open, a simple database package was enough to meet Explore's information technology needs. However, as the company began to expand, it became clear that more sophisticated software would be required, particularly to run direct debits. The very unique nature of Explore's business meant that no specific tailor-made solution for them existed on the marketplace. I.T. Director, Stuart Morgan, decided to investigate gym management software, since this covered their required applications most closely (namely membership management and processing of payments).

*"Overall, its been a very positive experience."*



*“We looked at a variety of products and suppliers and eventually chose Gladstone Health & Leisure’s Plus2™ software solution, for three main reasons,” says Stuart. “First of all, Gladstone were able to install Gladstone Plus2 on a central Citrix server at head office and run all our branches as thin clients. Not only that, but they can support the server as well as their own product, giving me a single point of contact to deal with – a fantastic advantage. Finally, Gladstone Plus2 is the only system which allows members (in our case, children) to be separated from the payers (their parents), a feature essential to our operation.”*

After a trouble-free installation five years ago, further benefits of buying from Gladstone became apparent to Explore. Stuart continues *“Gladstone’s Project Management Team provided just the right level of hand-holding and ensured that the product fitted perfectly. Operator training conducted both on-site and at Gladstone’s head office was so comprehensive we were able to create our own “Gladstone champions” within Explore capable of managing future training in-house.*

*“Configuring Gladstone Plus2 is also simple and easy; we have completely customised the software ourselves setting up fields to meet our exact specifications. But then I wouldn’t have wanted a product requiring constant intervention from the supplier.”*

Explore’s accounting team love Plus2 because direct debits run problem-free and the marketing team are enjoying the prospecting facility within the software which enhances the quality of their campaigns through improved targeting.

Stuart is also impressed with Gladstone Support, even if he doesn’t have to call them that often. *“I like dealing with a UK-based call centre where the support consultant is sitting next to the programmer who developed the software and behind the analyst who QA tested it. The end result is that I’m talking to someone who knows more about the product than I do, which is what I would expect.”*

Stuart would highly recommend Gladstone Health & Leisure to others. *“Overall, it’s been a very positive experience. As a customer, you’re always out to get a good deal, but we’re also interested in building relationships with our suppliers and that’s what we’ve got with Gladstone.”*

***“Configuring Gladstone Plus2 is also simple and easy”.***



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