

# Mind Tools Case Study

## Plateauing sales and no growth to doubling turnover from £800k to £1.6m.

# Problem

## No growth. No strategy for growth.

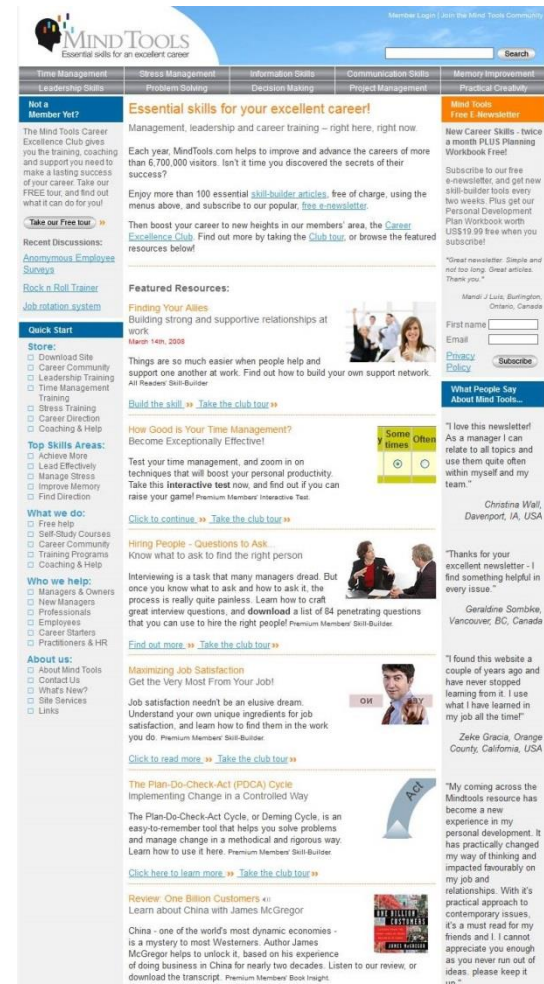
Following the production of an industry benchmarking report by an external consultant, a number of problems were identified that included overall underperformance, low conversion rates and low sign ups compared to industry standards.

A mediocre website, with poor copy and usability, and little in the way of creative design, was seriously holding Mind Tools back.

### Problems facing Mind Tools:

- Overall underperformance with sales plateauing at £800k.
- Very low conversion rates and sign ups.
- Enormous amounts of copy and content not written for the web.
- Confusing and poorly constructed navigation system.
- The information architecture was illogical and confusing resulting in very poor usability of the website.
- Literally hundreds of links on each page led to mental overload

Confident that I could substantially increase sales, I accepted the request from James Manktelow, the CEO and co-founder of Mind Tools, to completely reimagine the website, the user experience of potential customers and provide a platform that would enable the business to grow.



The previous Mind Tools website.

## Solution

### Forensic analysis. Deep insight.

I analysed MindTools.com thoroughly to see where website usability, user experience and communications could be improved.

As part of the marketing and corporate communication strategy review, I researched comparable websites and competitors.

A persona of the target audience helped me empathise with the needs, wants, fears and desires of the people we were trying to engage with. This empathy then helped guide me as I produced a new communication and user experience strategy for the website.

I created a new sitemap, incorporating the new communication strategy, and website usability (I'm trained by Jakob Nielsen), user experience, simplicity and motivational psychology principles guided the production of the information architecture during website planning.

User journeys then mapped out the simple and elegant experiences and journeys that we wanted future customers to take through the website.

Once this work was completed I sourced and recommended a suitable web design agency. I then provided creative direction and fully briefed the successful agency.



The reimagined Mind Tools website

### Note

Thousands of companies launch new websites each year with little website planning conducted beforehand.

This is crazy.

By carefully mapping out predetermined user journeys and creating a beautifully simple user experience, you can more than double sales and create the conditions for continued business success and competitive advantage.

By not considering these critical issues during website planning, you are putting the future of your business at risk.

## Result

### Turnover doubles. Queen's Award.

Increasing turnover substantially was the goal for this project and the reason why I was hired. Increasing turnover, substantially, was the result.

Mind Tools has grown considerably since my intervention.

Turnover has more than doubled from £800k to more than £1.6m. Following this relaunch and a period of exceptional growth, Mind Tools won the Queen's Award for this growth in the International Trade division.

### Testimonial

"Stuart helped us fundamentally rethink the way that people interact with the MindTools.com website.

Starting with our audience persona, he devised a new sitemap and wireframes, and then tracked the new user experience with user journeys through the wireframes.

The insights from this resulted in a much-improved user experience. In conjunction with a complete visual refresh of the interface, this resulted in a very substantial increase in turnover.

I strongly recommend Stuart for his website planning, website usability and information architecture skills."

**James Manktelow, CEO**  
MindTools.com

The screenshot shows a webpage layout for MindTools.com. On the left, there is a vertical list of skills: Problem Solving, Decision Making, Project Management, Time Management, Stress Management, Communication Skills, Creativity Tools, Learning Skills, and Career Skills. Below this is a testimonial from James Manktelow, CEO of MindTools.com, praising Stuart Wood's work on website planning and usability. The main content area features a large announcement: 'Mind Tools Wins Queen's Award for Enterprise: 2012'. This section includes a photo of James Manktelow holding a trophy, a quote from Rachel Thompson, Director of the Mind Tools Club, and a quote from Business and Enterprise Minister Mark Prisk. To the right of the main content, there is a sidebar with a 'Development Plan Workbook' offer, a 'Follow us on Facebook' button, and a 'Join the Mind Tools Club' promotion for free workbooks. At the bottom of the sidebar, there are 'Related Resources'.

**Mind Tools doubles turnover and wins Queen's Award for exceptional growth**

**Want to connect with your target audiences?**  
Solving business problems and helping to achieve outstanding results is what I do.

If you'd like to talk about how I can help your business, please get in touch on [stuart.wood@stuartwood.co.uk](mailto:stuart.wood@stuartwood.co.uk).

## Lucky?

### Other examples of my work

I have more than twenty years' experience improving the performance of businesses.

#### Suzuki

The UK was Suzuki's fourth largest market in Europe. It's now its No.1 market in Europe.



#### Brightlines

The business was turning over around £200k. It's now turning over more than £1m.



#### RAW Productions

From sales in decline and three inferior websites to achieving a 30% growth in sales.



#### Time to talk?

If you'd like to talk about how I can help transform the future of your business, please get in touch.

#### Get in touch

You can contact me directly on [stuart.wood@stuartwood.co.uk](mailto:stuart.wood@stuartwood.co.uk) or by visiting [www.stuartwood.co.uk](http://www.stuartwood.co.uk).

