



**Category:** Outstanding Public Relations Consultancy

**Company:** Stone Junction

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**Date of incorporation, number of employees - including executive / support staff - and annual fee income:**

Stone Junction, incorporated 2006, is the first PR agency for the fourth industrial revolution. Based in Stafford with 17 staff, our fee income grew by a whopping 80.47% in 2017, reaching £926,922.

**Business objectives and analysis of performance against budget over the past three years:**

Stone Junction's story over the last seven years has been remarkable. Growing at an average rate of 52% P/A since 2012, we are overachieving against our targets every year. And we're focussed; all our clients are in our core international science, technology, and engineering sectors.

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

1. To be the biggest independent agency outside London
2. To be the best PR agency in the world to work for
3. To change the way businesses market themselves

**OBJECTIVES March 2017 to February 2018 (all achieved):**

1. To turnover £750,000 (smashed - £926,922)
2. To make profit of £225,000 (smashed - £327,780)
3. To win three CIPR or PRCA awards (smashed - six)

**SUMMARY OF 2015 AND 2016**

1. Increased turnover: 113% to £513,598
2. Increased staff: Eight to 16
3. Increased profit: 120% to £130,510

## BUSINESS OBJECTIVES March 2018 to February 2019:

1. To turn over £1,061,000
2. To make profit of £225,000
3. To win six PR/business awards

By 2021 we will:

- Increase turnover to £2,073,289 (25% YoY)
- Increase profit to £518,322
- Increase headcount from 17 to 37
- Add seven new languages to our team – including Chinese, Italian and Swedish
- Open additional offices in Liverpool and Stuttgart
- Lay the groundwork for a US office in New York or Chicago to open in 2022
- Creating an accountant's estimated company value of £3,372,549

### **A brief overview of business / team strategy:**

We are at the heart of the way communication and persuasion is changing. As PR consultants we've always been expert storytellers. But the way we tell our stories has been at the centre of a digital revolution since the day the company was born.

We implement our vision using a simple strategy, called G.U.I.D.E. U.S. Each letter of the acronym relates to an element of the business that we can manage and influence. It allows us to stay laser focused on the things that really matter.

We hire science and technology qualified staff to deliver technical credibility and multilingual staff to provide international reach, complimented by technical PR and journalism specialists. We have a specialist Asia Pacific team and a specialist US team.

We are technical, international and specialist. We change minds.

### **A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:**

- Eleven CIPR members, six accredited, two chartered, all funded by Stone Junction. There are only 250 chartered practitioners in the world.
- Richard Stone, our MD, is chair of the CIPR Midlands committee
- Stone Junction is CIPR corporate affiliate, ISO9001 certified and a member of the PRCA

Four training sessions per month:

1. Internal PR training: 36 modules of hour-long interactive training to develop PR and marketing skills
2. TARTY Tuesdays: Technical training sessions allow none-STEM qualified staff to develop knowledge of everything from robotics and cyber security to fog computing and bio-informatics
3. Margarita Fridays: Cocktails and PR case study analysis and discussion

We measure progress against CPD in monthly one-to-ones and quarterly appraisals. We measure performance using numerical SMART objectives attached to clear salary increases. Anyone can trigger a salary increase or promotion by achieving their objectives, without line manager approval.

We devote over 350 hours per year to training every year. In our most recent quarterly staff survey, our team rated our training programme at 7.83 out of 10.

### **A summary of recent outstanding achievements, including client list growth / retention:**

TO BE THE BIGGEST INDEPENDENT AGENCY OUTSIDE LONDON

- Increased turnover: 80.47% to £926,922
- Increased staff: 16 to 17
- Increased profit: 151% to £327,780
- Entered PR Week Top 50 Technology agencies at number 45
- One of only five agencies in the PR Week 'Ones to Watch' report
- Two Gold PRide awards (STEM and Issues, Crisis or Reputational Management), two silver PRide awards (Low Budget and Education), two DARE awards (Trade and B2B and Integrated Campaign)
- Shortlisted for a CIPR Excellence award
- Launched a studio, with in house design, video and photography
- We still work with three launch clients from 2006

TO BE THE BEST PR AGENCY IN THE WORLD TO WORK FOR

- Work per head is 20% lower than industry average (measured using PR Week league tables), for exceptional work/life balance and improved client retention
- Pebbles and Stones, our buddy scheme, has improved the settling in process for new staff

- Grinding Down into Sand, our management training scheme, provides monthly one-to-one coaching with our business coach and funded CIPR membership and chartered assessments
- £23K by 2023: We are working to raise our graduate starting salary to £23K per year by 2023. It has already increased by £2500 since 2015 and each of these increases has been applied retrospectively to all existing staff members.
- Seven internal promotions and 86 salary increases in twelve months as the result of passed SMART objectives, excluding our £23K by 2023 increases

## TO CHANGE THE WAY BUSINESSES MARKET THEMSELVES

Last year, Stone Junction created a bold digitalisation plan, called Stone Junction 4.0. Riffing off the Industry 4.0 tag, universally used across industry to signify the fourth industrial revolution, we have created a new level of service in the business.

Now, every member of the team has completed at least two of Google Fundamentals, Facebook Blueprint and Twitter Flight School, every client receives a Google Analytics and Moz integrated report showing the impact of our digital offering on their SERPs results and we have switched our clippings analysis to the more evocative and visual, Coverage Book, from old style spreadsheets.

### **A summary of a campaign you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:**

Brief: To promote Renishaw's apprenticeship and careers opportunities, focusing on long-term investment and share price.

Objective one: Sustain the number of applicants to Renishaw's apprenticeship schemes and improve quality:

- 377 applicants in 2018, a 5% increase on the previous year, target exceeded by 19
- A reduction instant regrets, reflecting higher quality candidates
- 261 clippings about apprenticeships, including in The Guardian

Objective two: Achieve 50 broadcast, print and online clippings promoting engineering careers to women:

- 69 clippings encouraging women to consider engineering (target exceeded by 19)
- Former apprentice Lucy Ackland named in The Daily Telegraph's top 50 female engineers
- Coverage on ITV News Central featuring four female engineers, marking Made in the Midlands' inclusivity campaign

Objective three: Use media relations to raise Renishaw's profile, generating 420 clippings in local, trade and national media (one for every £100 spent on PR), 84 in print (20% of total):

- Share price has risen from £3696.0000 to £5605.0000 since June 12, 2017
- 622 clippings, 89 print, 530 online, four broadcast (against a target of 420)
- Coverage highlights: The Times, The Guardian, The Engineer, The Manufacturer

Budget: £42,120, £3,510 P/M. One clipping for every £68 spent on PR.