

The Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth

Hotel, Restaurant, Bar, Sports and Social Club



John Alderson with beacon Account Manager, Hayley Anderson

Background

John Alderson has been the General Manager at the Royal Maritime Club for the past 17 months. Prior to this John had worked as General Manager at the Best Western East Anglia Hotel in Bournemouth.

The Club was previously known as the *Portsmouth Sailors Home Club* and has been established since 1851. Its original purpose was to provide a 'stop-over' point for the seaman of the Royal Navy returning to Portsmouth after two or three years at sea. The Club was a safe place to stay for the night as well as a safe place to leave their money. As far as it is known the prefix 'Royal' was added in 1855 following a visit by the Prince Consort and charitable status was granted in 1883. The Club was bombed and completely destroyed in 1941 and the present main building was reopened 1952.

The Club has latterly been re-branded to the Royal Maritime Club and has been able to open its doors to a wider range of members along with offering 113 bedrooms, leisure, conference and banqueting facilities to the general public. A diminishing Royal Navy means that these additional facilities have been essential for the survival of the Club, whilst the men and women of the Royal Navy still remain beneficiaries of the Charity.

Business aims

John's main aim for the business is to sustain the Club's viability. He is already making a difference as the Club made an operating profit last year, the first in 5 years! John is keen to continue to improve the product and services and his 5 year plan would see the hotels rating from one star to three!

Why work with beacon?

"The biggest directive I was given when accepting this role was to turn the business around. My past knowledge and experience working with beacon lead me to them once more. The Company had been down trading for the past five years, so I called upon beacon for assistance. A single saving made, from changing my PDQ machines to Barclay card, equated to a staggering £4.028.64 per annum!"

"beacon's industry knowledge has meant that I am able to continue to monitor with ease other high spend categories like food and drink."

What other recommendations have beacon made?

"Oranka fruit juices – my beacon membership entitles me to a 25% discount which has saved me £125.00 per month.

As I mentioned, I continually work on the food and drink areas with my account manager, Hayley Anderson. I'm confident that I'm receiving the best industry advice and prices. In addition, Mattisons, Screwfix, Utilities and cleaning products, the latter highlighted a saving to me of 30%. Changing our stationary supplier to Office depot has saved us nearly £100 per month! We have changed quite a few suppliers and got quite a few to 'sharpen their pencil' - all adding value to the business. It would be difficult to complete a year on year overview alone, because of the way the business mix has changed. But we know that we are now buying most products cheaper than we were."

Could you sum up your relationship with beacon in a 'sound bite'?

"A one stop shop for purchasing advice"

Would you recommend beacon to another hospitality industry?, and if so, why?

"Yes. For the savings that we have made."

Why do you stay with beacon?

"beacon offers security, I have confidence that the negotiations and pricing structures are going to be keen, and for somebody like myself where I have so many other aspects of running the hotel to deal with, I simply don't have the time to spend with each and every supplier."

How do you see the relationship with beacon evolving in the future?

"Further strengthening as the business evolves and I am looking forward to new companies that come onboard with beacon – because that will benefit me!"

What do you think of the level of service that you receive from beacon?

"Efficient and effective. beacon has made my life easier this last year!"

John Alderson, General Manager, www.royalmaritimeclub.co.uk