

Annette's Story

Managing Director of Net*

A business tailored around my passions.

A global business working from a small village in Kendal.



Describe your business in 20 words

We are a web development and marketing company, offering a full range of services from branding, graphic design, web development, online systems, apps, marketing, print and digital media.

Describe what your best day at work looks like

I love when we have days that require us all to work closely together on a task as a team, it creates a great energy and shows what a great dynamic we have. I also enjoy the days when clients come in for meetings and we start brainstorming ideas to come up with exciting solutions for them. Again, it creates a great energy and allows us to be really creative.

What do you love about your work, running a business?

The digital industry we are working in is developing fast, it's changing every day. We are working not only on websites but also apps, APIs; systems being used by companies all over the world. We are proof that it is possible to work at the forefront of this industry even though we are not in a city. We can offer a career comparable to one you could have in Manchester or London, but from this beautiful area we live in.

Can you describe how your business works?

When I first set up the business it was just myself, so I worked as a sole trader for about three months and then decided to become a limited company. That was a huge leap because at that point you become responsible for wages, VAT returns, all kinds of serious stuff. I'm glad I made the decision as it

enabled us to grow and secure some really great clients as well as provide full time employment. We have grown to a team of seven really amazing people. It's great to work with such a fabulous team.

What does success mean to you?

To me, success is more than profit. Financial stability is crucial for sustainability and growth, success to me is much more than that. It's about creating a place where people really enjoy coming to work, feel valued and get to do what they love. It's about knowing you provide a great service that helps your clients too and it's about making a positive contribution to our local community. We provide free services to a range of local charities and community initiatives. We also ran our own campaign to provide 35 defibrillators in local schools. We are actively involved in supporting local events such as Kendal Torchligh Carnival. We are passionate about working with local schools to let young people know about the career opportunities available in the industry. We also provide work experience and apprenticeship opportunities. Success to me, is making a difference.

What are the biggest challenges your business faces?

There is an issue in finding qualified people to expand our team. This isn't a problem that only affects a rural business like ours, operating just outside of Kendal. It's a national problem, although it's exacerbated in rural areas. We need to find ways to attract the best talent into the industry. We have been working with local schools and colleges to try to raise awareness of opportunities available in the digital and creative industries.

People often talk about poor connectivity in rural areas. How is it possible to have such a high-tech business operating in the Lakes?

There is a great story behind this. Great connectivity has been made possible by B4RN, a local company. B4RN is registered as a non-profit community benefit society, run by a dedicated local team with the support of landowners and volunteers. The person behind it, decided to develop a solution to the lack of fibre coverage in rural areas and developed a telecommunications infrastructure which provides us with faster internet speeds than those provided by established companies. It's a great example of small rural organisations achieving world class solutions, allowing businesses like ours to thrive in the area. B4RN is registered as a non-profit community benefit society, run by a dedicated local team with the support of landowners and volunteers. This is an example of the creative approaches allowing businesses like ours to thrive in the area.

Why are you based in the Lakes and Dales?

I love living in this area. When I went to university I ventured as far as Lancaster but mainly so that I could keep my horses and dogs in this fantastic area. I created a business that would allow me to have the lifestyle I love and help others to have careers here too.