



Emma Starrs and Jane-Anne Ramones

Friendship brings about new business

Jack Marshall

jack.marshall@jpimedia.co.uk
@JackMarshall

A long-lasting friendship is one of the most fruitful things one can cultivate. But for one pair of lifelong friends, their fondness for one another has produced something more - a business.

Having first met as pupils at Parklands High School in Chorley in 1987, Emma Starrs and Jane-Anne Ramones founded Kenland Media Relations in November, setting up the Lancashire-based PR consultancy out of a desire to use their myriad skills to help clients gain more media coverage.

Working with a swathe of community groups, individuals, and SMEs across the health, fashion, lifestyle, and travel sectors, Kenland sees Emma and Jane combine over 30 years' experience in retail

and PR with a wealth of contacts. Combining their areas of expertise to great effect, they offer a friendly, professional, and empathetic approach to brand-building.

"The first thing many SME owners and marketing managers think when looking to reach their audience is that they can't afford agency fees," says Emma, who read English at Durham University before starting her PR career in the press office at Airtours Holidays. "Secondly, they worry it'll take their time away from the day-to-day running of their business.

"Our tailored, low-maintenance approach, means we basically operate as an in-house PR function without the overheads or the hassle," she adds, having then moved to Brahm PR in Leeds, where she gained big brand experience, before launching Ad Hoc PR in 2007.

"If I had to pass on an old school tip that's vital to our

success, I'd say it's the power of the phone call. So many people avoid making them and hide behind sending mass emails - not us! Like everything we do, we choose the personal approach to build trust and tap into the power of direct human interaction."

Boasting a wealth of industry knowledge as a result of her 15-year career in the retail sector, Jane is the co-founder and director of JAK Hanson in Wroughtington, a destination shopping outlet with over 70 brands under one roof, and is confident that Kenland's flexible approach will pay dividends.

Jane said: "Bringing in long-term strategies means that media coverage and influencer outreach has a lasting snowball effect in awareness-building. We can plan three-, six-, or 12-month strategies or even handle one-month projects for particular events."

Biocarbon initiative sites will help rejuvenate soil

Lancashire County Council has become one of the first authorities to start a pioneering pilot project with North West-based Positive Biocarbon to rejuvenate soils and store atmospheric carbon using biochar.

Biochar is a charcoal-like substance made through a controlled process called pyrolysis that converts organic biomass waste into stable soil carbon. The project is being conducted at two separate sites: Chisnall Hall, near Chorley, and Midgeland Farm, near Blackpool, and will see a total of six hectares of farmland used during the pilot.

Biochar effectively stores carbon and can last for hundreds of years in the soil. When plants and trees decompose, the CO₂ captured throughout their life cycle is released back into the air.

In just 10-13 years, this project could lock as much



Biochar is a charcoal-like substance made from biomass waste

CO₂ into the ground as a broadleaf woodland of the same size could in 50 years.

James MacPhail, Biochar consultant, said: "This new ground-breaking initiative should create a catalyst across the UK for other local authorities to adopt best practice in soil remediation.

"It is well documented that offsetting alone cannot

combat climate change; we need to look at solutions for capturing carbon too.

"Not only does biochar creation through pyrolysis capture atmospheric carbon and store it for hundreds of years but it also has the physical properties to improve soil quality, enabling previously unproductive land to become useful again."

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