



THE ALTERNATIVE BOARD
Shared Wisdom, Bottom Line Success

Doug Hohener

CreativeWorks Marketing

Markham, ON

Member Since: 2009

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When Doug Hohener joined The Alternative Board in 2009 his company, CreativeWorks Marketing, was a home-based business with no employees. Today, the company has two full-time employees and one part-time, and has moved into a 1300 sq. ft. office in Markham. It has also received 14 international awards, including both Gold and Platinum level re-branding awards from Hermes.

Before starting his own business, Hohener gained his marketing and branding skills in the employ of several large agencies. When he founded Creativeworks in 2005, he began with consulting work, which over the years turned more toward project work. He found himself struggling to move beyond a one-man show.

“I wanted to take on more work, but I couldn’t do that without hiring. Hiring was a scary thing. I needed someone to tell me how it works,” he recalls. “At the time, I didn’t know TAB was the answer. But I started my business when I was fairly young, and I didn’t have anyone else to ask.”

“TAB gave me an opportunity to sit down with other entrepreneurs and hear how they have handled the same issues,” he says. “It was a huge eye opener for me. It’s like having an executive team.”



In addition to reassuring him about hiring employees, Hohener says that being a member of TAB has helped him clarify his company's goals and direction, and helped him put processes in place to take the business where he wants to go. He also says that TAB's Strategic Business Leadership (SBL) process has enabled him to clarify what is unique about his company.

"One thing I've learned is that change is a good thing and it's part of growth," Hohener says. "It makes us all nervous. But if things stay the same, nothing will happen for sure."

For Hohener, hiring employees and moving into a large office space were changes that put him on edge. Having his fellow TAB members as sounding boards reduced his anxiety. "They'll say 'I remember being freaked out, too.' So, why am I freaking out about it? It keeps things in perspective. It's hard when you're an owner and not surrounded by your peers."

Hohener has recommended TAB to other business owners. "I tell them no matter what type of business you have, it doesn't matter. We all have common problems and experiences, and TAB gives you an opportunity to learn and grow your business."

"Without TAB, I wouldn't be where I am today. There's no question," he asserts. "I joined TAB at a time where I was either going to go back to consulting, or jump in with two feet and go for it. I've never looked back. It was the best decision."

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About The Alternative Board

The Alternative Board® (TAB) helps forward-thinking business owners grow their businesses, increase profitability and improve their lives by leveraging local business advisory boards, private business coaching and proprietary strategic services.