

Why Choose Gala Tent Ltd for All of Your Event Needs?



Gala Tent Ltd Company History

Britain's first and largest supplier of marquees and pop up gazebo structures, Gala Tent Ltd, came into being when the company's founder and Managing Director, Jason Mace, was working behind the bar of his parents Working Men's Club. The year was 1999 and Jason had a moment of inspiration when in July of that year he was phoning local companies in the yellow pages in an attempt to hire a marquee for the club's millennium celebrations.

At the time the millennium celebrations were the highest profile media event across the press and television. The tabloid papers were reporting tales of massive increases in costs for any organised event on the millennium eve - wages for staff would be £50 per hr, pubs and clubs would be charging extortionate admission fees, and beer would be £10 a pint. Every call that Jason made to local marquee companies resulted in the same answer.

It became clear that most people had decided to stay at home for the millennium celebrations and were planning family parties, including a lot of street parties. That day Gala Tent was born when Jason sourced a UK supplier who had just the item for which he was searching.

The Business Plan

Jason didn't have much money to invest in setting up a business; his net worth was around £2,000, most of which was credit on a visa credit card. Using this resource he purchased a stock of basic, easy to erect marquees from a local importer. Very quickly this was sold and doubled his investment he was now worth £4,000. Seeing the huge potential, Jason invested the entire £4,000 in more stock. He repeated this until he had reached £10,000 but at this point he had exhausted the entire UK stock. The only option left to keep this fledgling business going was for Jason to import directly from China but the investment was £23,500 and Jason had only £10,000. He struck a deal with the supplier to pay £10,000 deposit in advance, and the balance upon delivery. At this point Jason was counting on his ability to pre sell the stock and have all the money ready to pay the supplier in advance of the stock landing in the UK. Logistically things looked good, the lead time was around 8-10 weeks and if all went well it would be just in time for the millennium.

The Marketing Plan

In the 90's there was a real interest in free ad papers, just about everyone had bought or sold items from them. It worked in the same way as online auctions do today. Because Jason had no budget for advertising a "free ad" seemed to be the best and only place to start. The advertisement read something like this:

"20ft x 10ft Marquee For Sale Ideal for Millennium Celebrations, Birthdays, Anniversaries, Bonfire, BBQ etc., comes complete with steel poles, canopy, full set of sidewalls, pegs, guide ropes and instruction manual.£100".

As you can see, the advertisement is not too commercial, in fact it looks more like Jason could be an individual selling a used marquee and the price is rounded up to £100. Had the ad been priced at £99.99 it would have looked much more like a commercial advertisement and received a lower level of response not only that, the paper may have charged to place the ad. However, he got it just right and the phone never stopped ringing. Jason then repeated this format in free ad papers across South Yorkshire, as well as taking the same style private ads in local circulation papers.

The Office

When the business started, Jason's office was a folding paste table sat in the middle of the room in his father's club. Because it was an active social club Jason had to set up his office in the morning and dismantled in the evening. On the table was a presentation of information on the marquee for sale, print offs of pictures, scanned and laminated. Jason didn't own a digital camera at that time they were beyond most people's pockets, neither did he own or know how to operate a computer. Fortunately, his big sister Lisa Mace, who is very creative and had a computer, agreed to print some flyers and point of sale material for his paste table. Jason's humble set up actually made a substantial amount of money and sales conversion rates were around 98%. The club telephone number was used for incoming sales calls as free ad papers didn't allow a mobile numbers at the time, so Jason's would have a product description, along with directions to the club from the M1 and A1, printed and pinned to the wall near the phone so that if he was not working at the bar someone else could take a sales call on his behalf. In return Jason would buy them a drink by way of thanks.

The First National Marquee Mail Order Company

Initially Jason was just concentrating on local business around South Yorkshire; the majority of purchases were collections with just a few deliveries but he knew that setting up a delivery service would be a huge benefit. Then, out of the blue, Jason's father Tony Mace received a phone call from Bob Pickburn, a lifelong family friend who was exhibiting Krypton Tuners at an outdoor trade show and it looked like rain! So, knowing that Jason had a little marquee business he asked Tony if Jason could deliver one on a next day service. Out came the yellow pages again to see if a local carrier would be able to offer this service. The price was quoted at around £34, Krypton agreed to pay the cost and the deal was done. The carrier collected the marquee that day and it was delivered on time the following day. And, as unpredictable as the British weather is, the heavens opened and the marquee saved the day. Jason commented at the time that he didn't realise that such a large parcel could be delivered on a next day service to the other side of the country.

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Then another inspirational moment, Jason's mobile phone broke down, he called the phone company and it was duly collected. Intrigued, Jason started a conversation with the man from the carrier and began to learn about freight transport. They worked from hubs and central distributions, which is how they manage to produce such an amazing next day service. Jason asked the driver if he could pass his business card on to their sales department and for them to contact him about a possible contract. The next day a salesman called and arrange to meet, Jason explained the business model delivering Marquees throughout the UK on a next day service. Jason shared his sales forecast with the courier salesman so that he could quote as accurately as possible. Eventually they agreed a 30 day account and £6 per parcel delivered anywhere in the UK mainland on a next day service. Armed with this parcel rate and national presence the sales soared, and Gala Tent became the first marquee mail order company, with the mission statement "Why Hire When You Can Buy for Less" which is still used today.

Partnership

Eventually Jason had raised the money required to pay his supplier upon the delivery of the container. Business went from strength to strength and Mark Thompson - Jason's Brother-in-law joined and bought 50% of the new concept company for £10,000 (now his share is valued at £7m). Mark proves to be a valuable asset to the company and business booms. In 2000 and with a strong database of clients and resellers it became clear that they also needed lighting, heating, flooring and furniture as well as more sizes of marquees and gazebos. It was time to expand the range: so more sizes and more products were introduced. At the same time the Gala Tent business grew, the club trade declined and it made good commercial sense for Gala Tent to buy the club and convert it into warehousing and offices. The property, owned by Jason's parents Jenny and Tony Mace was valued at £150,000 and had an outstanding business loan on the property of £80,000, the remaining funds after legal costs and bank charges were around £67,000. In order to seal this deal, Jenny and Tony became Jason & Marks "Dragon" investors and the remaining monies were ploughed back in to company.



Online Presence

In 2000 Gala Tent needed an online presence to extend its reach and support its sales efforts and this led to the recruitment of computer whizz kid Steve Biggs. Steve created a completely unique online shop and back office management system with which to run the company, all of the work was bespoke because it was not possible to buy an off the shelf software package that was capable of running the very unusual business model that had been created. With Steve on board Gala Tent became pioneers of online trading and it was one of the very first businesses in the north to have a fully transactional ecommerce website. Steve's background was design, engineering drawing and computer programming and capitalising on his skills, the Gala Tent product range evolved quickly, responding to client feedback and making them the most practical and user friendly structures in today's market. Ecommerce Revolution Surf's up, riding the Internet wave.

Creating a New Business Concept

Credit card payments were available at this time and online trade was growing, however, Jason spotted an untapped market for marquee hire. Not wanting to hire them himself, Jason calculated that it was possible to start a business hiring the steel pole entry level Gala Tents with little investment and a quick return. The critical factor was finance, Jason was highly aware that cash flow was an issue for any business start-up and so he created a way around the problem.

The First eBay Shop

Out of the blue one day Jason received a phone call from someone at the fledgling UK side of the US online auction company eBay. They asked if they could make an appointment to meet Jason and to discuss business, specifically the launch of eBay shops in the UK. The meeting went well; Gala Tent was presented with the new online management system for eBay shops with an offer for Gala Tent to become the first eBay shop in the UK. Once more the deal was done. eBay even set up special categories like Marquees and Gazebos on the provision that Gala Tent would list their products. Later Jason was informed that the Gala Tent eBay Shop was to be used to launch the new shopping forum for business, which is now a worldwide success thanks to Gala Tent's original contribution. The benefit to Gala Tent was enormous, at the time it was the only company selling marquees and gazebos on eBay worldwide and this brought a lot of overseas business especially from the USA.

Recruitment

Over the first year of trading Jason had developed and perfected the sales pitch for the Gala Tent telephone sales and had handled most of the incoming calls and customer service himself. However, with the company's growth there was need for a dedicated customer service department and another sales person. The two positions were filled and Jason passed on his knowledge and telephone experience. Jason's Sister Lisa Mace joined the sales team and showed a real aptitude for sales, eventually becoming team leader working alongside three more sales staff as the company grew to meet the demands of its customers.



Warehouse and Distribution

As the product range expanded there was need for greater warehouse management, Gala Tent recruited Andrew Scott, whose background was engineering as well as warehousing and distribution. Andrew was the ideal candidate as product testing was a key factor in product development and, with this extra skill on board, Gala Tent expanded even further.

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Expansion Plans

As Gala Tent grew over the next few years a need for larger premises arose and fortunately there was a commercial unit available nearby in Wombwell, Barnsley. It was advertised at £250,000 and Jason arranged a viewing, it was perfect, Jason made an offer for £215,000 which was accepted and Gala Tent moved in a few months later.

Property Boom

During this time the property market had started to boom and, with the Club now redundant and sat on over half an acre of land, Jason called the Barnsley planning department and asked for a site visit to discuss possible redevelopment. Following a site survey the planning department advised that the land would be considered for redevelopment on submission of approved plans. Jason then had the land valued by Merryweather's commercial team and the valuation came back at £375,000. But Jason needed to raise more so the Club was advertised for £450,000 based upon a gut feeling that prices were still rising. It wasn't long before he had a sale at the asking price. Jason was correct the property market was buoyant and property prices were on the up.

Expanding Again

In 2005 the company needed even larger premises and so it was decided to relocate which resulted in a move to Grimethope, Barnsley, where there was a suitable and modern unit, this was purchased for £525,000 + vat and the old unit sold for £325,000 making £110,000 profit on the investment. Then in 2006, with the need for even larger premises, Jason decided to purchase an adjacent 10,000sq.ft unit on the same industrial estate for £500,000. This would be a quick solution to the storage problem and would provide a safety net to downsize should this growth be temporary or the climate change. However the company was expanding at 20% per annum and a call for larger premises was still under discussion.

New Systems

Jonathan Higson joined Gala Tent, as Steve Biggs' assistant in IT, and became a key member of staff developing new and updating the existing back office systems to handle the growing business.

More Recruitment



2006 / 2007 Martin Blacksell joined Gala Tent, a very ambitious young man with the talent and commitment to work his way towards the position of sales manager and hitting every personal target. Craig Mooney joined the team and won salesman of the year two years running, eventually specialising in the bespoke modular side of the business. Glen Robinson joined the team enabling printing and branding service to be added to the portfolio. Glen showed a real flair for design and constantly keeps an eye on the completed product to ensure Gala Tent clients always receive the best quality printing at the lowest price and it is all delivered within 7 days. Recent recruit Sean Kershaw is also proving to be a valuable member of the team.

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Warehouse Team

The team who make sure parcels are picked and packed correctly, and despatched on time are Gavin Bailey, Richard Lyons, Richard Gillott, Graham Hall, and Robert Austin

Smoking Ban Boosts Sales

Gala Tent saw sales figures rise rapidly thanks to the government enforced smoking ban. Jason identified an opportunity and took it, investing in smoking shelters well before the deadline for implementation. Hundreds of Smoking shelters were sold to a multitude of workplaces including pubs, hotels and restaurants. An early enforcement of the smoking ban on Gala Tent premises also helped to increase the overall productivity of Gala Tent staff.

Printing and Branding Department

Gala used a few companies around the UK to handle the demand for printing and branding on their marquees, however this service was limited to sewn or stick on transfers and quite restricted in what was produced. There was an increase in the volume of enquiries for a more sophisticated type of printing as clients wanted photos, complex logos, scenery, landscapes, and food printing on fabric. The demand was overwhelming but the set up costs in the UK were also overwhelming and would add up to over £100k and then there was the added cost of labour to consider. So how did Jason manage to offer this high quality service at a very low price? Jason managed to strike a deal with a small up and coming company in China and offered them a premium price for a individual printed set of covers for a marquee, which could be flown into the UK with 14 days with the promise that a big sale would be imminent. This was unknown at the time, as Chinese companies would only accept bulk orders of mass production making Gala again the pioneering company in the concept. Jason knew the market and even though 85% of printing job were for an individual printed item there was also the chance of a big sale for promotional companies. With new systems and a dedicated department headed by Glen Robinson orders started to flow and as Jason predicted, in large volume, securing orders from Venture, MOD, Tesco, Virgin, RBS, Red bull, Virgin and Northern Rock.



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Bespoke Modular Marquee Manufacturing Department

Whatever you sell there is always a product that someone wants that you don't have in stock. Not wanting to lose any business Jason looked deep into the bespoke marquee manufacturing business currently dominated by the Germans. Jason was excited about the concept of taking on the Germans and his idea was simple, why would the British buy from the Germans when they could buy British. On a tour of China Jason came back armed with a suitable supplier and again this was the first time a bespoke modular marquee made from aluminium extrusion was imported from China. Gala Tent entered the bespoke modular marquee market and took a piece of the market from the Germans and eventually this became a unique department headed by Craig Mooney, which has a nice steady growth year on year.

Supplying the Military

It wasn't long before Gala Tent received an important call from the Military; they had an event and needed a bespoke marquee manufacturing for the special occasion. Jason drove down to the army barracks in person to perform a site survey. Onsite Jason met the officers who inform him that they had been phoning round other marquee manufacturing companies but Gala was the most proactive in returning their call and fulfilling their wants and needs. Jason smiled and said "That's because we are the best". The job was urgent, and after measuring up Jason discovered the sizes required were 9m x 15m and 6m x 9m. These are both popular sizes and it just so happened that on a previous order Jason had the insight to add these two sizes for stock so they were already on order lowering the lead time from 45 days to 21 days, perfect timing. Shortly after presenting this information to the officer in charge a purchase order followed and Gala became a supplier to the Military. Jason said at the time "Was that a coincidence or did I make that happen".

The Recession

In 2008 plans to expand were put on hold as the recession hit Britain. Gala Tent sales levelled out but the company consistently turned over between £4-5 Million and remained the largest supplier in its field.



Procurement

During the expansion of Gala Tent it became apparent that the company needed a procurement department solely to concentrate on goods bought in from China. Emma Taylor was promoted from customer service to procurement manager. With her knowledge of the systems and thorough filing structure she proved to be the ideal candidate.

Innovative Packaging

With the world becoming more and more Health and Safety conscious and the maximum weight of a package reducing to safeguard the courier's workforce, Gala Tent had to be increasingly imaginative with its packaging. To stay one step ahead of the competition required some lateral thinking, and after dozens of brainstorming sessions the idea was born, 'Modularisation'.

The unique way in which Gala Tents are packaged makes the ordering, storage and delivery of Gala Tents more cost effective. Very few items are specific to one size or model of structure ensuring that the stock held is more flexible, reducing the chance of a Gala Tent being out of stock. Jason calls this method his "...Coca-Cola recipe...".

Another benefit of this patented packaging method is the reduction in the amount of cardboard used. Gala Tent strives to be an environmentally friendly company by recycling or re-using as much of its waste packaging and pallets as possible.

Bespoke Systems

Imaginative products, packaging and procedures require equally imaginative systems to manage them, therefore all Gala Tent systems are developed and maintained internally ensuring a first-hand knowledge of the process and methods involved. The latest tablet hardware is proving to be a real labour saving device within Gala Tent, with the warehouse now fully wireless, stock checks take place throughout the working day with real time updates of the system. Another area in which the unique Gala Tent systems shine is the shows, orders can be taken even in the middle of nowhere with payment taken. Once submitted the order is sent over either Wi-Fi or GSM to our servers which then automatically place them into our back office system just like any other order.

Embracing upcoming technologies has had many benefits for Gala Tent for example the terrible winter of 2010 saw almost all staff stranded at home due to the exceptional snow fall. The following spring saw the implementation of a hosted VoIP telephone system which can be controlled remotely and divert calls destined for the office to mobiles. This along with the recently developed home worker system allows sales staff to work from home directly on to our back office systems.

The underlying philosophy in all of our systems development is 'Work smarter not harder'.

Still A Family Business

In November 2010 the Gala Tent operations and procedures systems required an update, and with talks of expansion once more and new key positions created the company looked to recruit additional personnel. Gala Tent recruited Gary Mace, younger brother of Tony Mace, whose background was management. Gary was the ideal candidate with experience, people skills and the Mace surname, which was in keeping with the Gala Tent family orientated brand. Gary took up the position of operations manager responsible for overseeing procedures in all departments and ensuring that everything works smoothly.

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Customer Service

Gary Mace introduced his wife Davina Mace who had just been made redundant by GT News due to the recession and has experience in stock solutions and customer service. Jason quickly recruited her to add further value to the new systems being developed.

Celebrating 10 Years with More Expansion Plans

In addition to direct sales to the general public, Gala Tent is now the preferred contract supplier for many hire companies, councils, branches of the emergency services and the military. The company has expanded once more by purchasing a 53,000sq.ft warehouse at Farfield Park, Manvers, Rotherham. This will provide substantially more storage for the expanding range of modular buildings, commercial gazebos, and furniture.

Gala Tent Opens HQ in Rotherham

The need to expand posed some very big issues especially financially and logistically, the complete predicted expense of the move was expected to be around £100,000. Gala currently operated from 2 warehouses, one 15,000sq.ft and one 10,000sq.ft both of which were owned, so they would need to sell at least one of the units to release funds for the bank to back this in the current climate. The



unit which Jason eyed up was 53,000sq.ft and this should be ample size for 3 years growth but unfortunately the price was 2.2m. The unit was owned by an investment company and had been empty for the last 4 years, so again Jason saw an opportunity to negotiate a deal. He initially offered £30 per sq.ft (£1,590,000) which was quickly refused so he made a second offer of £35 per sq.ft (£1,855,000). Jason left this open and looked at the possibility of selling both the warehouses Gala currently operated from. Jason called the local Estate Agents in Barnsley to see if he had any clients who may be interested in either of the units. The answer wasn't too positive, with the current state of the economy, prices are being driven down and buyers for this size of building are very rare. However the estate agent mentions that he is selling a unit on the same industrial estate and a potential client is viewing it in the morning. Armed with this information Jason ran round to a sign company on the same industrial estate and asked them if they could make a

simple for sale sign urgently and put it in view as you drive on to the estate. They agreed and a sign was up first thing the following morning. The clients who view the unit next door see the sign Jason has put up and on arriving at work the very next day two men were waiting to see Jason in reception. Eventually the two businessmen buy the 15,000 sq.ft unit and the move to Rotherham is in process. Coincidentally later that day another two businessmen from a recycling company drop in after seeing the sign and enquire about leasing the smaller unit and eventually agree a deal, it couldn't have been sweeter. So Jason has sold unit 1 and agreed in principle to lease unit 2, which lifts any financial strain from Gala, so all that was needed now was to move to Rotherham, however the deal was left with the counter offer mentioned earlier. Then out of the blue Jason received a call from the Estate agent informing him that there maybe be a deal to be done at £30 per sq.ft. Jason smiling again and a deal was done.

Jason recalls thinking at the time. "If I hadn't taken action at that moment then nothing may have happened"

Innovation Creates More Expansion Plans

Growth for the company had stabilised during 2009 and 2010 due to the recession but Gala Tent has recently restructured and invested significant time and money to provide for expansion plans in 2011. The company has just launched a new range of commercial gazebos called the Gala Shade - Pro that erect in just a few minutes and are designed to replace the old fashioned traditional market stalls.

Gala Invades Europe

Jason wanted to expand in to Europe as the products were now refined enough to offer to distributors overseas. Jason did his research on the overseas market and realised it was buoyant and the demand for Gala products overseas could increase turnover by 50 to 100% over the next 3 years. The campaign began, Jason sent a few test emails to overseas companies who supply the event industry introducing himself, the products and service. The response was positive many already knew of the brand and had enquired to be a distributor previously but systems were not in place to offer this service. Jason soon sealed a few starter orders offering free delivery to Europe as a sales hook, however the order must be £10,000 to qualify, somehow Jason knew this was a magic number and a serious commitment from potential client. The pitch was successful and Gala products are now sold in Ireland, Netherlands, France, Denmark, Czech Republic and recently Germany, there are more negotiations moving forward already for 2012 for distributors in Norway, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Belgium, Italy and Poland. Armed with this information Jason set up an international department and promoted Sean Kershaw to international sales manager with a target of £250,000 for 2011. Sean takes his position seriously and working alongside Jason the target was smashed within 9 months. Sean's target for 2012 is 1m, and this will see the international department grow and create more positions in the company.

Gala Identify New Gap in Market

Jason saw another untapped market after the Showman's Show as over the past 10 years there are many established marquee hire company successfully hiring out the entry level steel pole marquee which is mass produced by Gala Tent, however, this product is limited to a 6m span and clients needed to offer a 9m x 9m structure to expand their range and to increase revenue and take their

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business forward. The only product available was the high end modular systems, which at around £6,000 were just too expensive for a 9m x 9m marquee. If Jason could come up with a structure strong enough to span 9m and retail at £2000 then he believed there would be a huge demand. Jason flew to China with ideas and drawings of how to achieve this and spent hours with factory engineers finally coming up with a structure, which shared components from the entry level Gala Tent and from the high-end modular system. The result was the Gala Tent Fusion, which Gala has applied for patent due to the novel design. This product ticked all the boxes, price, storage, distribution and usability and was a massive hit at the Showman's Show Exhibition.

Innovative Event Table Concept

Furniture continues to be an increasing product line for Gala so plans to expand this range are in discussion. A well-known table in the event industry is the wooden topped banquet table used at wedding to seat 10 people but it's difficult to store in warehouse racking, and impossible to distribute in single orders as these tables can be over 6ft in diameter and won't fit on a pallet. After some research in the market it seems other companies who sell this item sell them in a minimum order of 10 this is how they get round the distribution problem as 10 tables on a pallet would over hang but would stack up as a volume order which would cover the extra cost the carrier would charge for this service. The next problem was the tables are round and when importing a 40ft container there would be lost space, which is a huge cost. Another problem was they don't come in a carton, just shrink-wrapped. So faced with all these obstacles Jason started work and come up with a very simple solution and couldn't believe nobody had ever thought of this before. So what did he do? Simple, cut the table in half and stacked one on top of the other making a perfect rectangle, added the foldaway legs wrapped into a cardboard carton as a build it yourself table. This simple innovative solution again ticked the box of storage in warehouse racking, tables could be sold individually, and most of all no space was lost in the container in fact on the contrary this doubled the space from 200 to 400 tables on a 40ft container bringing the landed cost down to make the tables very affordable and opened the doors in Europe as you could now fit 20 tables on a pallet or send one table in the post, this concept is also patent protected. Jason says "think inside the box the answer is already there."

Innovative Event Chair Concept

Along with expanding the banquet tables a complementary banquet chair was required, the dominant products on the market where the fixed position dining chairs you see in hotels and restaurants but these also pose similar problems to the banquet table in storage, distribution but also the cost of the chairs has to be cheap due to the quantity required. So what is the answer? Jason flew to China again to visit a furniture factory who supplied all the major companies in Europe and the US hoping to see a suitable chair from stock...no such luck, nothing ticked the boxes. Jason knew the design he wanted, it was the ballroom style chair but foldaway. The factory boss was stumped he couldn't help he had a foldaway banquet chair in stock but you could only load 1150 on a 40ft container which would make the retail price around £35.99 and the normal fixed position chair will load in 1250 which would result in a retail price of £34.99 so this just didn't stack up as an investment and no real unique selling point above what was already available. Faced with a similar problem with the table, Jason took a very simple looking chair from the showroom and says to the factory boss "how many of these can you load on a 40ft container? The factory boss said "2800" Jason picked another from stock and repeated the question the boss replied 1250. Jason said "I want this chair design with this chairs' features, basically a similar idea of taking two products and cherry picking the best features to fulfil the needs. The factory boss smiled and agreed, and after a few loading calculations the loading quantity would be 2400 that's 1150 more chairs on a container bringing the landed cost down even further. After prototype products and an innovative patented bracket the concept was complete: a flat pack banqueting chair was manufactured the first of its kind with a retail price of £24.99, £10 cheaper than its rival product.

Marketing Department



In an interview with Claire Mason who had applied for a sales position Jason noticed Claire had a degree in marketing and film, on questioning Claire about this she replied there were no jobs in the north that would benefit from her skills and she would be forced to move to the south to further her career. Jason saw an opportunity again and offered Claire a 3 months trial as marketing manager to see what value she could offer Gala. Jason knew exactly what he wanted as he had been studying PR and marketing, Claire proved to be a serious asset to the business model and a key member of the team arranging PR and Marketing for the expansion of Gala Tent, marketing the first Gala Event Show, creating a grand opening day for the recent investment in the Park View Sports Bar along with press releases for the new innovative product range.

The First Gala Event Show 2011 in the North of England

Jason invested in an old run down working men's club based in Swinton, Rotherham for £58,000. The club was called The Park View Social Club, not a very cool name in today's community, so the name was changed to the Park View Sports Bar & Restaurant and 30k was spent on refurbishments and sporting memorabilia. The property is set in the heart of Swinton Park with a football field to the right, beautiful landscape views to the rear and benefits from huge children's play centre on the left. Jason saw great potential and opportunity, not only could this be a great business but there was also plenty of land to host exhibitions and outdoor events plus the property was located just a few miles away from the new Gala HQ. All the major event shows are held in the South so Jason thought why not be novel and host a show in the North, so plans were put in place for a beta version and the first show took place on 7th and 8th September 2011. Again a lot of Jason's colleagues doubted this would work, however this show turned out to be a surprising success with £30,000 in sales and quotes of a further potential £120,000 sales on the two days were the largest ever recorded at a show. The Gala Show is now entered as part of the business model as a bi-annual 4-day event for 2012. The Park View has been

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recently valued at £150,000 and the average bar taking on food and drink are between £5000 and £8500 per week not a bad investment and with 3 years accounts is estimated to be worth over £300,000. This has also created much-needed full time and part jobs in the area. Jason also has further plans for 2012 to erect a 30m x 40m marquee for wedding and major events.

Star Quality

Gala Tent sells over 10,000 structures a year and 90,000 optional extras which include flooring, heating and lighting and believes it is Britain's largest mail order marquee business. Gala products have been used at parties run by the Beckham's, Liz Hurley, former Wimbledon champion Boris Becker and chef Marco Pierre White. The firm works with events management companies who also provide equipment to the stars.

Guiding Principles

Jason's four guiding principles have remained the same from the day he founded the company in 1999. Firstly, provide customers with a quality product at a competitive price. Secondly, listen to customers and act on their advice. Thirdly, design and develop innovative products, identifying new markets. Fourthly, work ceaselessly to make the Gala Tent shopping experience as simple, transparent and enjoyable as possible.

Charity and Community Projects

Jason is currently working on community projects with the Lifewise Centre Hellaby, The Interchange Project, Chamber Council, Peter Jones Academy and Rotherham Ready. Gala also sponsor Yorkshire Lightweight Boxing Champion Andy Townend, other active sponsorships include the supply of Marquees to Islamic Relief and Haiti for the earthquake disasters, Barnsley Hospice, Help for Heroes, Cystic Fibrosis, feeding the homeless. Helped the Christian and Muslim community join forces for the first time at Christmas to help the poor and needy, and the recent donation £6900 to the Dun Street Play Centre, Swinton, Rotherham; along with many other local charities and events which you can read about on reviews all over the internet.

Business Awards 2011

Due to new systems, clever innovative products, and talented staff Gala Tent has increased turnover in 2011 by 1.3m and on Friday 21st October Gala Tent Ltd took away two awards. The Business Awards which included The Business Growth Award and Entrepreneur of the Year Award, which were presented to Jason Mace, Managing Director. Jason joked, "It's about time I won an award, however this is the first time that Gala Tent has entered"

Plans for 2012

Jason is still high from the awards and has already vowed Gala will be the winner of Best Business Award for 2012. Further plans are also in place for the development of a commercial cooler box, a Gala Porch and a weight to anchor structures to the ground made from recycled rubber. Jason says "Gala Tent has a bright future ahead with many plans for expanding sales overseas and the development of new and exciting products for the event industry"

Valuation

Gala Tent was recently valued as a concept company for 14m, this valuation did not include stock, machinery and buildings, which is currently estimated at over 4m