



CEO INSIGHT

"It is difficult to balance a personal life with running businesses. You could easily be focused on work 24/7, so you must learn to switch off to spend time with family. I enjoy travelling and sports to keep fit – especially tennis, which I play three times a week. I love learning new things, and I'm always on the lookout for what the next 'thing' will be for me. I get a kick out of helping people to learn, earn, and grow. My team are my stakeholders in the business, and thus, they are my extended family."

Adrian Sciberras

CEO, BUSINESS
CONCEPT
INTERNATIONAL

"REACH FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE: IF YOUR DREAMS
DON'T SCARE YOU, THEY'RE NOT BIG ENOUGH."

SINCE IT WAS FOUNDED BY CEO ADRIAN SCIBERRAS IN 2012, BUSINESS CONCEPT INTERNATIONAL PLC (BCI) HAS EVOLVED FROM A SINGLE-PERSON ENTITY INTO A GROUP OF COMPANIES THAT LEADS A VARIETY OF SECTORS WITHIN MALTESE INDUSTRY. WITH A TARGET TURNOVER OF €2 MILLION AT THE CLOSE OF THIS YEAR AND A TEAM OF 25 PROFESSIONALS, BCI TODAY CONTINUES TO OFFER A HIGH-QUALITY, EFFICIENT, FAST AND PERSONAL SERVICE TO ITS MANY SATISFIED CLIENTS.

As a self-employed accountant, Adrian Sciberras was travelling between clients by car by day, and working from his home office by night. Then came the moment when he knew he must decide between continuing as a solo entity or creating something bigger – and, in choosing the latter, he planted the seeds of a Group of companies that would go on to become a leader in the local industry.

"At that moment in 2012, when I saw that I had peaked as a freelance self-employed accountant and couldn't take on more clients, I knew that I faced the opportunity of learning to grow once again," Adrian explains.

"I wanted to create a structure, so I founded Fairwinds Management Ltd as a corporate services provider, and shortly later added Accounting Services Ltd to the set. Then came employing people in the company – something I had never done before. I found it very difficult to employ the first person, as it meant committing to a monthly salary and offering them job security. As time went by, I realised we were improving, and we started getting more people and more work. I contacted my sister, who was working in marketing, and asked if she would be willing to join me in creating a brand-focused company. We continued to grow, so in 2016 we opted to structure all the companies under a holding company, BCI."



I have multiple roles. I am very much involved in the strategic part of the business, but my priority is guiding my team, and encouraging them to take the initiative and to be autonomous. By micromanaging, you become a bottleneck in the company. I believe that, to do well, you must build a team around you that has unconditional faith in you and believes in your vision. Then that knowledge and trust must go both ways.



The establishment of BCI was by no means the end of Adrian's passion for creating businesses that tap into up-and-coming local industries. The Group has diversified even further since, with the establishment of A+A Assurance Services Ltd, Delivering Homes Ltd, the General Properties Company Ltd, Admin Genie Ltd and Abacus Consulting Co Ltd. "Apart from the corporation services and bookkeeping, we now also have a property portfolio, to diversify the business and open it to other sectors," Adrian continues. "The idea is to create a bigger structure and give something back to the employees. This is an innovative concept for Malta, as family businesses tend to keep shares in the company themselves. But, every year, we give out shares to our team members to make them feel part of it, and to show them that they have value in the company."

In fact, Adrian sees the team of 25 people now working across the companies within BCI as pivotal both to his role as CEO, and to the ongoing success of the Group. "I have multiple roles. I am very much involved in the strategic part of the business, but my priority is guiding my team, and encouraging them to take the initiative and to be autonomous. By micromanaging, you become a bottleneck in the company. I believe that, to do well, you must build a team around you that has unconditional faith in you and believes in your vision; then that knowledge and trust must go



Quick-fire Questions... with Adrian Sciberras

What was the first thing you did this morning?
I took a shower.

What's your favourite thing in your office?
The paintings, especially the ones
by The Connor Brothers.

What excites you most about working in your sector?
The unpredictability.

Gourmet dining or homemade cooking?
Gourmet dining.

If you could have any superpower, what would it be?
To stay healthy.

What's something you'd still like to learn?
Catering, or the art of being a barista.

**What's the best thing about
running a business in Malta?**
It's fun!

And the worst thing?
The long hours.

Which is your favourite spot on the island?
Coral Lagoon in Mellieha.

Book, film, series, or music?
Series – particularly The Walking Dead.

What's your favourite app on your phone?
A game called Clash Royale, which helps me to relax.

Where do you read your news first?
The Times of Malta.

**If you weren't in this career,
what would you be doing?**
I'd be managing a restaurant.

Where do you hope to see the world in five years?
I hope it's a warless world, with politicians fighting
less, and trying harder to stop complicating things
and ruining people's lives.

How do you hope to spend your retirement?
Travelling, or living on a boat and touring the world.

Outlook for 2020: positive or negative?
Always positive.

both ways. I am always positive, and I try to instil that positivity in my team by mentoring them to bring out their abilities and encouraging them to follow their gut and not to be afraid to do anything in life. Reach for the impossible: if your dreams don't scare you, they're not big enough!"

Adrian's positive and open-minded approach to managing his team has also helped him to pursue yet more of his own dreams, which revolve around his continuous hunger to learn and to grow both as an individual and as a business leader. "It's very satisfying to have managed to juggle work and studying for a law degree, as well as my family life, but it's thanks to the excellence of my team that I'm able to do it." Besides reading for a Bachelor of Law Honours degree, Adrian also pursued and completed a Masters of Advocacy degree, and has also recently fulfilled another bucket list item by opening a local restaurant.

Apart from his team and his constant ambition and drive for success, Adrian also attributes BCI's success to its unusual focus on high-quality marketing. "We are one of the few companies in this sector that has a budget for marketing, as many accounting or law firms don't tend to focus on it. However, in this, we have become a trailblazer again, and we receive enough repeat business and new clients to prove that prioritising marketing works, and works well."

This targeted awareness of the local business market has also served BCI particularly well over the past year. "Malta is a very good business hub, and there are a number of foreigners who want to set up in Malta. At Fairwinds Management Ltd, especially, this creates lucrative, profitable business, so we have built on that in order to offer these clients a holistic one-stop

shop service, from the creation of their company, right through to maintaining it. In fact, that's what enticed me to read the law degree, to be able to offer more ancillary services."

While, in previous years, Adrian has been focused on raising capital to fund the company's continued growth and keeping abreast of new rules and regulations, in the near future he foresees both opportunities and challenges for Malta's financial sector. "We have seen the sector evolve a lot, and in the next five years Malta as a financial services sector will have much to offer, particularly with more quality clients coming to our shores. The challenge we face is with banking – it's almost easier to open a company than it is to open a bank account. It can be a culture shock, so we are always adapting, evolving, and doing things better to better serve our clients. Our company has the possibility to offer new services with a higher level of quality, stepping up the game yet again."

The next five years are also expected to be a period of ongoing success for BCI in general, with Adrian characteristically pursuing the constant improvement of the business and more specialised services. "Our drive for 2020 is to establish new KPIs that we believe are achievable by our excellent team. We also hope to expand – not just in terms of the services we offer, but also in terms of our offices themselves, by continuing the construction of a new head office and adding another floor to double our existing office size. This new area will accommodate our clients better by offering them more meeting rooms, as well as an exclusive 'coffee shop' to add extra comfort and style to each visit to us.

"And that gives me the perfect excuse to pursue my next dream: to train as a barista!" ●