

- CRAIG STEWART BIGNELL -

Head Of Retail Currency Exchange (Forex)

20+ years of successful experience leading & developing large dynamic multi-site, multicultural sales & operations teams in FX Retail, Travel, & Hospitality in uniquely challenging situations.

P&L up to \$700M | International Teams of 650+ | 32% Revenue Growth in 1 Year

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An incisive, highly adaptable solutions-orientated senior leader with a distinguished record of achievement in all aspects of currency exchange operational & sales orientation. Recognised for a collaborative leadership style, proactive approach, & keen ability to effectively translate complex operational concepts into concrete action plans. A proven leader with a strong executive presence, capable of blending big-picture vision with tactical considerations to inspire high-performing sales & operations teams, enhance productivity, build trust, cultivate & foster lucrative client relationships & deliver organisational & performance excellence to shareholders & senior stakeholders. Extensive International currency exchange experience across Europe & the Middle East, noted areas of expertise include:

- Large Multi-Site FX Sales & Operations Management
- Business Process Improvements / Growth Initiatives
- Restructuring / Cost Control / Overhead reduction
- Launching New Products, Markets, Technology & Customer Innovation (NPS)
- Solutioning Complex Commercial Negotiations
- Performance Excellence / Continuous Improvement
- Budgeting / Forecasting / P&L / Analytical mindset
- Reliable, Ethical & CBUAE Compliant
- Customer Service, Relationship, & Key Account Management
- Leadership, Coach & Mentor to Area Managers

DRIVING ORGANISATIONAL & PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Gamifier Group FZ LLE, UAE • Head of Retail & Optimisation

01/2021 – Present

Results-driven Foreign Exchange Management Consultant. Proven versatility in diagnosing & marshalling change & innovation, integrating operational & sales excellence disciplines, cultivating teamwork, & customer relations while strengthening business agility & viability for multinational global currency exchange organisations to local GCC businesses – **ideating solutions with 98% positive feedback.**

- Solved & delivered team engagement, sales & operational strategies which produced notable commercial, customer service, operational & sales performance growth: **+6.8% in NPS scores, +10.5% improvement in KYC error rates, +23% LFL transaction growth & +12.2% uplift in employee engagement.**
- Identified & created operational excellence processes, resolving client's objectives by designing & implementing an entire ecosystem of performance management frameworks, delivering high-quality outcomes & results: **An +11.4% increase in NPS scores, a 14.4% uplift in employee engagement reducing staff attrition by 9.5%.**
- Orchestrated industry best practice change initiatives & strategy shifts for a multinational Fintech that increased revenues by **1.2M\$** & built dominance in various target FX corridors, previously considered a "dead-end" market.
- Identified opportunities within client organisations to improve productivity, team engagement & operational efficiencies by developing a bespoke SaaS platform in which clients measured team members' KPI improvements.
- Repeatedly delivered cost reductions to clients through implementing Lean principles & improved scheduling via resource loads & volume analysis, yielding savings of more than **3M\$.**

Travellex LLC, UAE • Head of FX Retail Dubai & Regional Airports

08/2017 - 05/2020

Mandated to set the strategic direction for Travellex's 700M\$ flagship currency exchange retail network of 50+ stores, 40+ ATMs & 650+ colleagues. Championed the global best practices agenda, including the design & implementation support of a new target operating model to address currency exchange disruption, focusing on customer centricity, employee engagement, omnichannel mix, talent retention, operational excellence & financial risks.

- Tripled the size of Dubai Airport FX operation & grew EBITDA by **+31%** via critical KPI expansion & strategic pricing initiatives led through localised marketing campaigns, gamification engagement, sales & performance management, & tactical business development B2B & B2C strategies.
- Effectively negotiated new airport, shopping mall & downtown market entries. Increased market share by **+12%** & prepared the UAE FX retail network for the next stage of organic growth.
- Restructured the UAE operation, improved workforce optimisation efficiencies & reduced operational costs by over **1.5M\$**.
- Improved compliance standards by **+8%** & quality of service NPS rating by **+12%** through high visibility leadership, taking immediate, decisive action to address underperforming stores.
- Bid for, won & managed multiple million-dollar concessionaire contracts & played a pivotal role in negotiating the exclusive provider of cash VAT payments (PLANET PAYMENT) across the UAE network, increasing currency exchange transactions by **1.2M** per annum, yielding a sales profit growth of **3.8M\$**.
- Created the UAE & International Wholesale Banking facility, reduced dealer margin costs by **800K\$** & implemented an international currency exchange recycling process.

Travellex Ltd, United Kingdom • Regional Sales & Operations Manager

02/2016 - 02/2017

Based at London Heathrow Airport, accountable for the P&L of a multi-site estate of 30+ FX retail stores with an aggregated turnover of £182m & an operating profit of £2.9m.

- Assembled a dynamic high-performing team through active & engaging front-line leadership. Exceed targets by **+9%** vs budget & **+16%** on the prior year.
- Reduced vendor costs by **22%** via tactical pricing negotiation while enhancing service-level agreements.
- Championed continuous improvement initiatives on inventory & process optimisation, delivering an upside of **£150k** in profitability.
- Built solid & effective relationships across all levels – team, peers & senior business stakeholders, developing & supporting a cross-functional culture of continuous improvement in customer satisfaction (NPS) **+9%**, & staff engagement surveys **+11%**.
- Nominated as a strategic member of the Global Retail Round Table – A forum to reshape the future of the FX retail business, redefining & executing Retail Excellence.

Quicksilver – Talarus, United Kingdom • Area Business Development Manager

02/2015 - 02/2016

Accountable for 18 flagship hospitality venues & a team of 250+, generating a turnover of £75m per annum & an operating profit of £7.2m.

- Developed strategy, direction, & tactics at regional level. Segmented the estate & introduced a low-cost 'No Frills' operating model to improve profitability reducing deficits by **£279k** in year 1. I closed 5 marginal overlapping venues, increasing profitability by over **30%**.

- Grew profitability by **32%** on the prior year & only one of two Area Managers (Out of 12) achieved sales & profit double-digit growth.
- “Top of table” Area manager for customer satisfaction (NPS) through high visibility leadership & taking action to address underperforming venues, providing discipline & performance feedback.
- Achieved **100%** compliance across my region, ensuring best practices were followed in safety, legality, corporate governance & operational compliance.

Cash Converters Retail Franchise, United Kingdom • Regional Sales Manager

02/2014 - 01/2015

Accountable to Franchisees & local Business Partners for the P&L of 17 B2C retail branches, 250+ sales staff & an EBITDA of £5.5m with a brief to grow the franchised operations.

- Opened 3 new stores, identified underperforming locations & delivered on change projects. Directed all aspects of the operation & revived the business from a loss-making franchise to a turnaround success story.
- Provided high visibility leadership, supported managers to exceed sales & managed bad debts. Exceeded targets, **9%** vs Budget & **17%** on the prior year.
- Led a workflow optimisation project underpinned by the 3Rs (Right People, Right Place, Right Time) & maintained a scalable & stable workforce reducing operational costs by **22%**.
- Introduced new operational & omnichannel processes that improved efficiencies & reduced shrinkage by **225%**, delivering **£120k** to the bottom line.

Money Mart, United Kingdom • Regional Manager

02/2013 - 01/2014

Accountable for the P&L of 16 B2C retail stores, 150+ staff & an EBITDA of £3m, mandated to maximise sales growth & operational efficiency.

- Supported retail managers to drive sales & manage bad debts & delivered incremental profits of **11%** YOY.
- Reduced cash variances by **£32k** YOY by introducing new internal reporting processes.
- Improved overall customer satisfaction scores (OSAT) by **6.9%** YOY to **86.4%** ‘delighted’, driven by an 8.2-point gain in associate knowledge of products & services via improved learning & development support.

Change Group International, Europe • General Manager

05/2008 - 11/2012

Led the sales & operations of the Northern European enterprise comprising 50+ currency exchange retail outlets & 400+ sales colleagues.

- Project managed the launch & deployment of multiple new products, including a fully integrated Travel Money Online platform with lucrative white-label propositions generating net profits of more than **£450k**.
- Masterminded an organisational cultural overhaul transformation project that led to the development of a dynamic multicultural management team. Within 12 months, I delivered a **1m Euro** EBITDA turnaround.
- Managed the acquisition of 9 new FX stores from Global Change & completed a successful RFP of Helsinki Vantaa Airport, including the TUPE of 120+ Travelex & Nordea Bank Teams. A milestone success for the organisation.
- Developed & managed positive embryonic relationships with key business partners, notably; Airports, Seaports, Landlords, & International Banks, & secured a 5-year expanded contract for Tallinn Airport in 2012.

Thomas Cook, United Kingdom • Head of FX Operations Heathrow (4-month contract)

02/2008 - 05/2008

Headhunted by British Airport Authorities Heathrow to spearhead the operational setup of 10 Bureau de Change units, including (20+ ATMs). Governed all projects (Opex, Capex) & infrastructure within a tight 4-month timeline in preparation for the grand opening of Terminal 5 Heathrow.

International Currency Exchange, United Kingdom • Head of FX Retail Operations Heathrow

03/2005 - 02/2008

Accountable for the P&L performance of 250+ colleagues & a multi-site estate of 22 currency exchange retail stores, & 50+ ATMs. Grew the operation from 14 stores to 22 & introduced Heathrow's first foreign currency dispensing ATMs, deploying more than 20 across the airport estate, which increased profitability by over 30%, increasing market share by 18%.

Thomas Cook LTD, United Kingdom • Regional Sales Manager FX & Travel

06/1999 - 03/2005

Responsible for the P&L achievement of 40+ foreign exchange HSBC bank implants & 25 travel retail stores, maintaining effective relationship management between tenants & landlords for a business exceeding £500M turnover. **I was awarded for delivering the best financial performances in 2003, 2004 & 2005 & acknowledged for the Regional Sales Manager of The Year award for three consecutive years at the annual conference.**

EDUCATION & PERSONAL INFORMATION

Qualifications: Archbishop Tenison's University Croydon, A-level Business Economics & 9 GCSEs.

Courses: Advanced Negotiation, Global Business Leadership, Improving Performance through business planning & Elevate, all of which are ILM Accredited Programs

Nationality: British (United Kingdom)

Driving License: International (UAE)

Languages: English (Native)

Interests: I have a passion for travel & enjoy the gym, golf, running, reading & socialising. I enjoy providing mentorship & coaching to senior managers & budding new potential leaders.