



# The Winning Proposal



## Live Bid Support

Even the most successful bid teams sometimes just don't have the capacity necessary to handle the new "must win" bid. So, do you pass on the opportunity or press on regardless and submit something that in your heart-of-hearts you know will never cut the mustard? Our live bid support services help you deliver your proposal on time and to the exacting standards demanded by your prospect. Meaning that you win more.

### Ever Been Here Before?

Is this a situation that you recognise ... your Bid Team has been maxxed out for months, your best guys are staggering like zombies from one bid to the next, there's been no time to sit down and learn from recent projects when suddenly you're asked to deliver "the must win" bid?

Let's be honest, you just don't have the internal resources nor the time available to develop a head-turning proposal at the desired quality standard. What are your options?

**Well, you could simply "No Bid" and wave goodbye to the opportunity ... if only the boss would let you!**

Or you could just do the best you can under the circumstances ; which you know isn't good enough and could have ramifications for your organisation's reputation and even your own career trajectory.

Alternatively, you could call in the bid experts and invite us in to

assist in the creation of The Winning Proposal.

We'd like to think that this last option is your best option, but how exactly do we help in this sort of situation?

Our core Live Bid Support services include:

- Win Theme Development and Differentiation
- Leadership and Control
- Project Management
- Crafting the Executive Summary
- Bid Writing
- Graphics Creation
- Shortlisting Presentation
- Bid Strategy and Planning

These services are designed to give you full control over the proposal development cycle.





In six weeks they helped grow our funnel by £65m, £31m of which became closed business within four months - a fantastic achievement!



*Strategy and Marketing Director*

### Win Themes (Differentiation)

The Winning Proposal invariably has just three to five killer win themes that put very clear water between you and your competitors, and which consistently serve as the “golden thread” across all of your proposal materials.

Your Bid Team and other contributors will be facilitated to arrive at the very best win themes and be guided to correctly deploy your win themes consistently through your entire proposal.

### Leadership and Control

Would your Bid Team and Manager benefit from an external - but approachable - expert who is able to give oversight and objectivity at the strategic level for your bid? The Winning Proposal is ready to provide you with such expertise and offer the guidance required to raise the quality of your proposal.

### Bid Project Management

Perhaps your greatest challenge is getting everything done on time? When strong and timely execution of the essential steps to complete your bid to the necessary quality standards is crucial, our Project Managers can instil the tactics and discipline required to meet your plan.

### Crafting the Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is right up there with your Financials section as the most important element of your proposal – you’ve simply got to get this right.

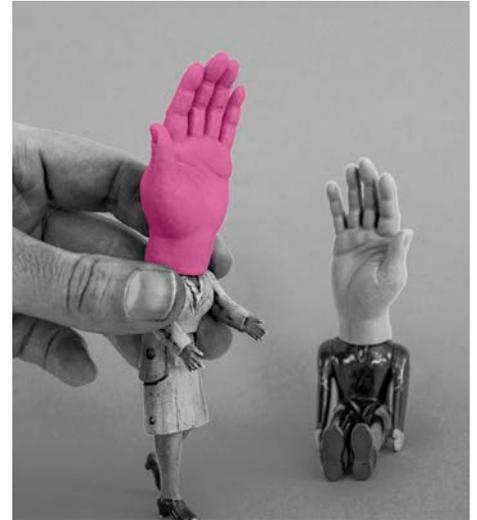
If you don’t get the Exec Summary sorted it’s very likely that your proposal will fail.

Following your brief we create (or re-work) the Executive Summary for you. A professional Executive Summary additionally helps serve as a “yardstick” which is then applied to the rest of your proposal documentation. This ensures consistency of flow and keeps your readers focused on the unique, differentiated benefits that only you can bring to them.

Or a service that you might value even more ... we will show your team exactly how we do it, so that you can develop fantastic Executive Summaries in the future completely independently.

### Bid Writing

Has one of your bid writers gone down sick (perhaps with the stress of recent workload?!), or perhaps you just don’t have enough manpower available to meet your bid deadline?

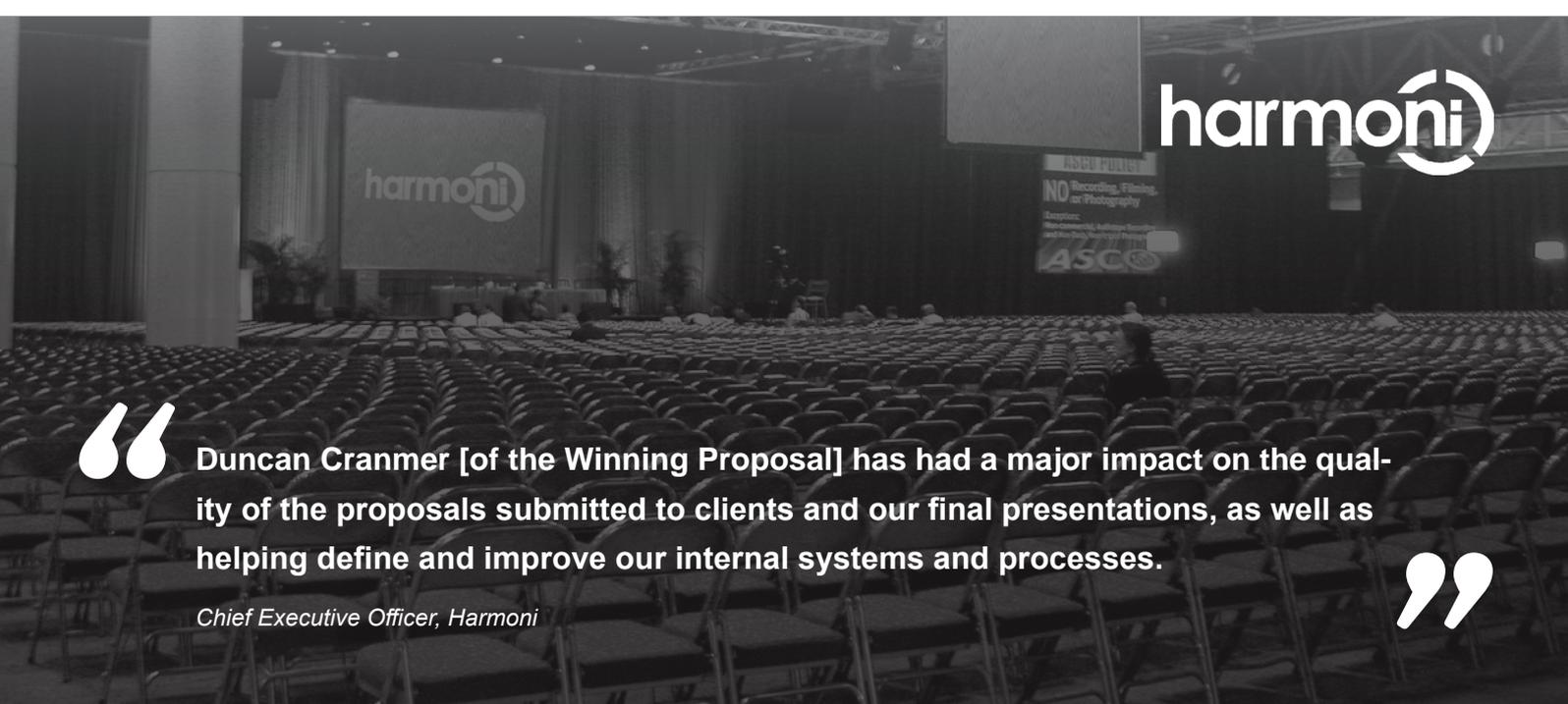


Outsource the problem to us!

We’ll write the sections you ask us to ... or even do the whole thing.

### Graphics Creation

We live in an era when we need to get the message across really quickly, at a single glance. Just think about how you operate yourself. If you don’t “get” a new idea straightaway then aren’t you very likely to move on to something more interesting and rewarding? In your intended readers’ case this might be your competitor’s bid.



harmoni 



Duncan Cranmer [of the Winning Proposal] has had a major impact on the quality of the proposals submitted to clients and our final presentations, as well as helping define and improve our internal systems and processes.

*Chief Executive Officer, Harmoni*



# When the slog of bidding gets too much - or you need to make specific, targeted improvements - we are here to turn your next proposal into the Winning Proposal.

A picture paints a thousand words (as the time-honoured cliché goes), but a great picture also keeps the word count down!).

The Winning Proposal takes your complex, important ideas in raw text (and even verbal) form to re-create them as stimulating and intuitive graphics that are instantly grasped by your readers and reviewers ... your buyers!

## Shortlisting Presentation

Getting the bid out of the door and to your prospect on time always brings a mighty sense of relief, but the workload doesn't end there, of course.

High value proposals and tenders necessitate attendance at one or more shortlisting presentations.

Unfortunately, some of the people that you want to involve in the shortlisting presentation may have had only limited – and potentially zero – involvement in the development of the proposal itself. Yet you cannot afford the risk of all the effort that you have put in so far going to waste at the final hurdle.

The shortlisting team must be brought to the point where they are all “on the same page” ... and that “page” must be visual, compelling and different.

Working with your nominated team we will develop a powerful presentation for your forthcoming shortlisting meeting (usually in Microsoft PowerPoint).

And yet a wonderful shortlisting presentation alone will not suffice.

Even the most experienced directors and knowledgeable operations personnel, for instance, can trip up during the Q&A (Questions and Answers) session that

follows the shortlisting presentation.

So we get your team to the point where that won't happen (yet without the team appearing “unnatural” or “rehearsed”).

By the time your dreaded shortlisting meeting comes around you can be confident that everyone is going to shine and really impress the selection panel.

## Strategy, Planning and Training

The Winning Proposal's core Live Bid Support services get your bid over the line, on time and at a higher quality standard than would have been possible

using only internal bid resources.

But take a step back ...

... are you consistently struggling with bids? If so, perhaps a more fundamental solution is required?

A new and more systematic approach will make you fundamentally stronger and better-prepared for all future bids.

So, if you want to strengthen your organisation's overall proposal capabilities you might also wish to consider our Strategy and Planning Services and our Training Services.

## Our Live Bid Services - Putting you Back in Control



Win Theme Development and Differentiation



Leadership and Control



Project Management



Crafting the Executive Summary



Bid Writing



Graphics Creation



Shortlisting Presentation



Bid Strategy and Planning



**Canon**



They took my outline ideas for the presentation and created a version that was visually very impressive and thoroughly engaging for the audience. A job well done!

*EMEA Project Director, Canon Europe*



**The Winning Proposal's core Live Bid Support services get your bid over the line on time and at a higher quality standard than would have been possible using only internal bid resources.**

-  TWP @ Quantum IGL, Kemp House, 152 - 160 City Road, London, EC1V 2NX, England, UK
-  +44 (0) 203 815 8020
-  hello@thewinningproposal.com
-  thewinningproposal.com





# Proposal Strategy and Planning

If your win rate is consistently less than one in three then, depending on your market, there may be something fundamentally wrong with the way in which you are bidding.

The fix might be really simple or it might be more involved. Either way, the Winning Proposal team will help you leverage a more strategic approach to enjoy improved win rates.

## How Stubborn is the Issue?

Problems behind low win rates can be relatively easy to solve ... are you just bidding for too many opportunities or pursuing opportunities that you are never realistically going to win because there are far stronger providers out there than you?

But how are you going to choose the best opportunities with the highest chance of winning?

Or is a more far-reaching solution required to eliminate endemic blockers to bid success?

**Our aim is to see you win more business. Make your next proposal the Winning Proposal.**

## How can we Help?

The Winning Proposal can help set your proposal strategy and create plans for future proposal success via services which include:

- Proposal Review and Benchmarking
- Value Proposition definition
- Supporting Collateral creation
- Process Definition and Optimisation
- Content library creation
- Sales Process and Alignment
- Bid Qualification Tools
- Live Bid Support
- Training, Coaching and Workshops

Each of these services is geared towards improving your win rates and make the process of bidding easier and more streamlined.





In six weeks they helped grow our funnel by £65m, £31m of which became closed business within four months - a fantastic achievement!



*Strategy and Marketing Director*

### Proposal Review & Benchmarking

Honestly, how good are your proposals ... and how can you know for certain where your proposals sit on the excellence spectrum?

We always encourage Bid Teams to get as much feedback as possible from the prospect at the end of the bid cycle when you have lost a bid (as well as when you have actually won).

However, even where you are able to solicit feedback on unsuccessful bids it can often be both shallow and noncommittal; meaning that there is very little that you can realistically use to build a practical action plan to get better next time.

The Winning Proposal team brings objectivity and experience to assessing bids, allowing us to rigorously assess the quality of your current and past tender documents. In some cases we can assess the relative merits of your bids against

those developed by other organisations (where available, with confidentiality absolutely assured). This is proposal benchmarking.

**There is no reason for us to hold back and, arguably, our being rather direct and even blunt leads to the very best and fastest improvements in your proposals.**

### Value Proposition

There is an interesting (yet frequently misunderstood) relationship between Win Themes for your bid and your Value Proposition (VP) for your service offering or product set.

Can you consistently articulate a strong and plausible Value Proposition that resonates with all of your audiences in all sales situations? If you can then you are in a good place since you have something valuable that you can use in many – potentially every - sales situations.

Win Themes are not just the same as your VP. **Win Themes are bid-specific.** If your competitors in a tender situation share many of the elements of your Value Proposition it isn't particularly sensible to bang on in your bid about the exact same things that your competitors are also writing about ...

**... much better to find your true differentiators and highlight these in your bid as your key Win Themes.**

But only too often the underpinning Value Proposition itself isn't strong enough. And since Win Themes often spring from the Value Proposition a flabby, unfit VP leads to weak Win Themes which, in turn, means poor, non-compelling bids.

**In our Value Proposition workshop we work with your people to get under the bonnet of your offer from the perspective of the prospect (i.e. come to a clear understanding of what your prospective clients truly value).**



Whether the blockers to proposal success are relatively trivial or endemic, our team can devise strategies and plans that lead to improved future success with bidding.



A stronger VP consequently underpins stronger future proposals.

### Supporting Collateral

More formal procurement processes may demand that relevant supporting materials be provided in parallel to the main answers supplied in the tender (frequently as separate PDF attachments).

When under duress it can be so tempting to provide a standard product brochure or a few slides from a recent sales presentation as part of the submission.

And whilst we do understand this temptation consider this: how impressed will your prospect be if, instead, they are reviewing supporting collateral with their

own logo in there addressing topics that are relevant to them, and only relevant topics? In other words, how might your audience feel about receiving supporting collateral that is just for them and just right for them?

Equipping yourself with tailored collateral that clearly and directly appeals to your current audience and scorers is a wonderful point of differentiation.

### Process Definition & Optimisation

We have yet to have a client who admits that they don't have a bid process, but we have been party to plenty of really flaky processes, many of which have never been documented, so they are really difficult to scrutinise and therefore

improve. At The Winning Proposal our start point is this:

**If the proposal process isn't clearly documented and open to review then you are very unlikely to have a process in place that is fit for purpose.**

Our workshops bring together key personnel to agree and shape the right bid process for you, whether that means starting from scratch or improving what is already in place.

### Content Library

"Ermm, I'm sure we've seen this question before and we've already answered this ... but for the life of me I can't remember which bid it was".



**We sought a strategic business partner able to quickly understand our needs for development and to help define our top level plan for future success ... throughout Duncan [the Winning Proposal] impressed us with his thoughtfulness, professionalism and dedication.**

*Group Marketing Director, benenden group*



benenden

**When you are grinding out proposals day after day it can be easy to lose perspective. This is the value add that we bring to bid teams needing stronger strategy and plans.**

Does this sound familiar? If so, the core Bid Team and domain experts contributing to your bids are probably having to spend time at vital moments looking for proposal content that has already been generated in the past. And then, when you find something that looks pretty good, is it actually the best content for the particular question that you are now being asked?

Issues like version control, following approved sign-off protocols and rapid content search are rarely issues that set the pulse racing! But if these types of issues are not addressed head on then too much energy is wasted on searching and reinventing the wheel – energy that should be going into making your current bid special and better than everyone else's.

We know about proven protocols and Content Management Systems (CMS) – from the rudimentary (fast to implement) to the sophisticated and slick – that can make the life any bidding organisation much, much easier.

#### **Sales Process and Playbooks**

One of the hottest topics right now is Sales and Marketing alignment. Most commentators agree that any company's ability to generate new revenues is maximised when the Sales and Marketing functions are properly aligned to work well together.

Where does your Bid Process fit? Is bidding ultimately the responsibility of

Sales? Or what about Marketing? Both? Perhaps another department entirely?

The most effective and successful bids are undertaken by Bid Teams working to a clear bid process within the broader context of the Sales Process and Sales Plan. Such considerations might appear somewhat esoteric when you are focused on getting the next bid out of the door on time, but an inability to see the bigger business picture may be hampering business success.

**Which is why we help clients refine their sales process to fully align with their bid process and its resource requirements.**



The sales proposals and presentations that they developed with us were outstanding. The underlying messages were simple and crisp, appealing directly to our targeted audiences. Their role in delivering key sales wins in London and in the South West was absolutely invaluable.

*Chief Commercial Strategy and Marketing Officer, DoctorLink*

**doctorlink** 



Visual, interactive playbooks can really bring this alive for Bid Managers and Writers and secure their on-going commitment to follow the steps essential for superior, sustained win rates.

### Qualification Tools

Working on proposals can sometimes make Bid Team members feel like headless chickens as they stumble from one bid to the next with reduced energy and rising sick leave rates serving as a pretty accurate barometer of the health of the team and – indirectly – the likely quality of your proposals. Whisper it quietly – because some people will hate hearing this – but submitting fewer bids to a higher level of quality is associated with higher win rates and better, more profitable business. This, however, assumes that you know how to select the right bids to go for and the right ones to avoid. And this is the rub. How on earth can you make such big calls accurately 100% of the time, especially when you've got the Sales Director or the CEO telling you to get as many proposals out there as you can physically (and mentally!?) handle?

If this dilemma is one you recognise what you may need is an intelligent qualification matrix tool that everyone buys into – including your Sales Director, Managing Director and CEO; a new qualification tool that can be trusted to arrive at correct Bid / No Bid decisions and which ranks the relative attractiveness of the bids you want to proceed with. Our qualification tool helps you allocate your bid resources in the most optimal way for your company.

### Live Bid Support and Training

Best-in-class Bid Teams have clear strategies, plans and processes primed and ready for action in their competitive marketplaces. There's every chance that you already know that you've got to sort out your strategy and processes but you don't have the time right now to fix these things ... there's a live bid that has to be pulled together first. If this is the situation that you find yourself in right now then your immediate need is best addressed by our Live Bid Support services which are focused on getting your current bid over the line on time and to a high standard.

## Strategic and Planning services for proposals

Proposal Review and Benchmarking



Value Proposition definition



Supporting Collateral creation



Process Definition and Optimisation



Content library creation



Sales Process and Alignment



Bid Qualification Tools



Live Bid Support



Training, Coaching and Workshops

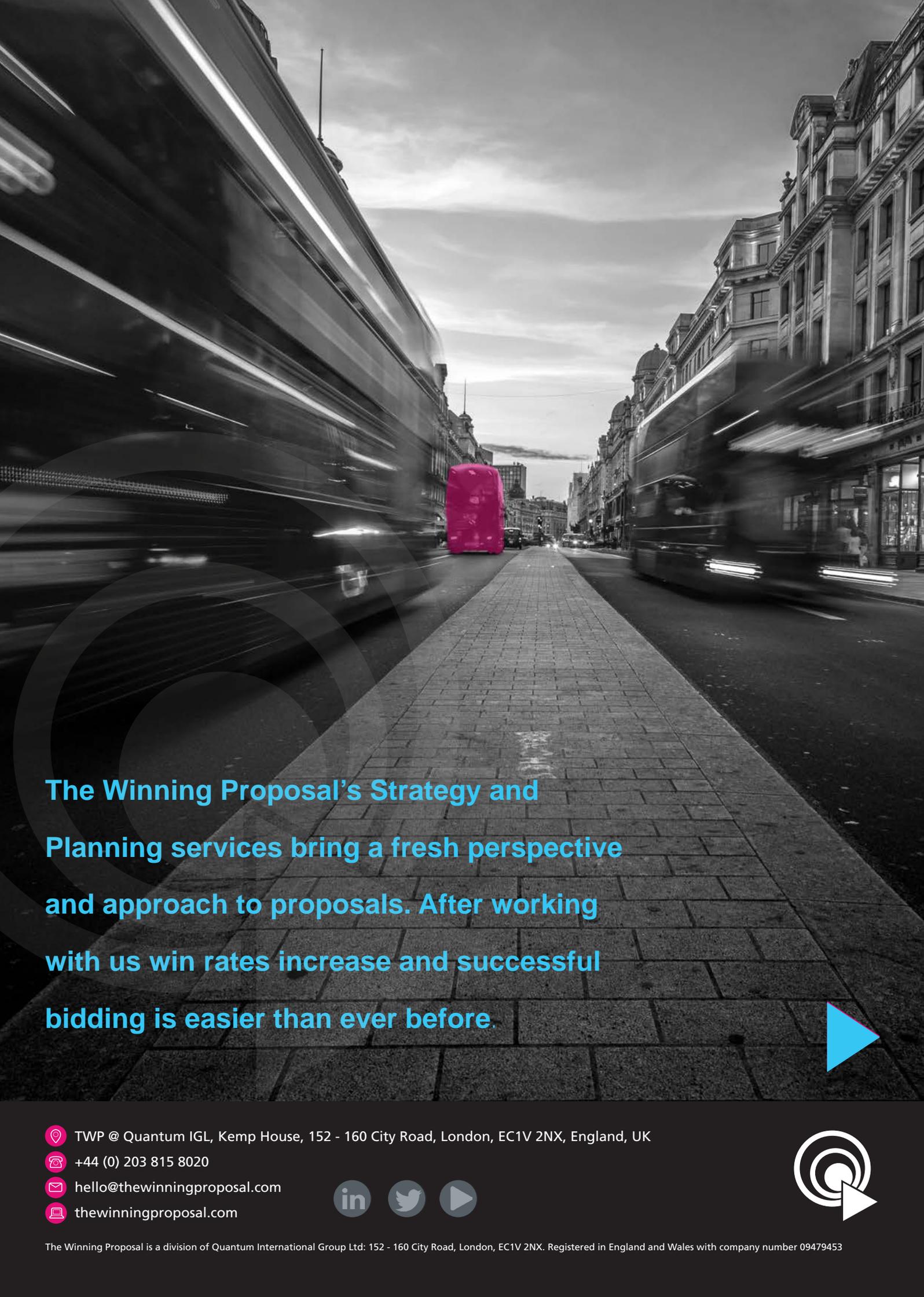


They've had a major impact ... helping define and improve our internal systems and processes.



Chief Executive Officer, Harmoni





**The Winning Proposal's Strategy and Planning services bring a fresh perspective and approach to proposals. After working with us win rates increase and successful bidding is easier than ever before.**



 TWP @ Quantum IGL, Kemp House, 152 - 160 City Road, London, EC1V 2NX, England, UK

 +44 (0) 203 815 8020

 [hello@thewinningproposal.com](mailto:hello@thewinningproposal.com)

 [thewinningproposal.com](http://thewinningproposal.com)

