



beat is the UK's leading charity supporting people affected by eating disorders. Back in 2003, it had a new, ambitious chief executive, who wanted to increase its impact. She approached Impetus as a funder that would provide both financial and management support. From 2005 – 2009, Impetus supported **beat** to raise its profile and significantly increase the number of people it helps.

Eating disorders are a serious mental illness, which affect over a million people in the UK. When Susan Ringwood became Chief Executive of the Eating Disorders Association (EDA) as it was then called, it was only reaching about 2% of the estimated number of sufferers. Susan recognised that in order for it to scale up successfully it would need both expertise and funding.

“The charity desperately needed to expand but we did not know how to get to the next stage. We had received big donations before but it didn’t move us forward. What was different about working with Impetus was, yes they offer money, but crucially they offered us capacity building.”

Susan Ringwood, Chief Executive, **beat**

Susan approached Impetus and in early 2005, the partnership began, with a support package of £330,000 of strategic funding and £356,000 in the value of pro bono expertise.

Rebranding to reach many more young people

Young people are most at risk of eating disorders, but EDA had not been successful in increasing the proportion of young people it reached. Impetus introduced EDA to William Barnard, a management consultant with extensive experience in rebranding, to address this issue. He worked with the team at EDA and they found that the problem lay in both EDA's name and its approach. EDA had begun life as a parent-support organisation and it needed to alter its offering if it wanted to meet the very different needs of young people. Impetus also introduced **beat** to an advertising agency whose suggestion for a new name proved to be the final choice.

The response to the rebranding was overwhelmingly positive. In the first year after the relaunch, 83% more people contacted **beat** for support.

*“The rebranding was very important for **beat**. Without Impetus we would not have been able to find or afford the kind of help that their experts provided.”*

Sir Laurie Magnus, Chair, **beat**

Developing a sustainable funding base

Impetus also worked with **beat** to increase its earned income, so it was less dependent on ad-hoc income streams. Impetus corporate partner OC&C Strategy Consultants reviewed **beat**'s commercial activities and concluded that **beat** could generate substantially more income from advertising and the conferences and training courses it ran. Impetus helped **beat** split its income generation in two, as different approaches were needed for the more traditional fundraising and its commercially earned income.

Two Impetus experts then helped develop **beat**'s financial systems and controls, which previously had been quite basic. More sophisticated cash flow forecasts and budgeting were introduced, along with a profitability analysis and systems for tracking and reporting on restricted grant income.

Hands-on management support to drive change

Throughout the relationship there were monthly meetings between Susan and Impetus Investment Executive (and Co-founder) Stephen Dawson. These meetings were a forum for Stephen to give Susan operational support and to ensure that progress was made against the pre-agreed objectives. Contact was also made on an informal basis between meetings, with Stephen acting as a sounding board for Susan.

beat exits the portfolio transformed

The four-year partnership ended as planned in 2009, with **beat** having exceeded its targets. It multiplied manyfold the number of people helped, with a clear strategy going forward. With its strengthened management team and increased income, **beat** is well positioned to continue reaching more people each year.