

CASE STUDY 01 | EXECUTIVE PROOF

Creating a Market Before the Market Was Ready

GreenWorks Sustainable Solutions | Saint-Gobain Building Distribution | 2011–2016

Marcus built a national sustainable-construction proposition that made new technology easier to understand, specify, sell and install—turning a knowledge gap into customer confidence and commercial growth.

CREATE CAPABILITY

Practical training and technical advice for colleagues, customers and partners.

CONNECT TO DEMAND

Linked learning, product choice, specification confidence and branch fulfilment.

SCALE THE MARKET

Used national brands and supplier partnerships to accelerate adoption.

The market challenge

Sustainable construction was moving from policy ambition toward commercial reality, but the market was fragmented. Products existed; confidence did not. Builders, installers, merchant colleagues and specifiers faced unfamiliar technologies, changing standards and a shortage of practical knowledge. Simply adding more products to the catalogue would not create dependable demand.

What I saw

- The real constraint was capability: customers needed confidence that a solution would perform, comply and be installed correctly.
- Training had to be practical and commercially connected—not a classroom exercise detached from branches, products and live projects.
- No single brand could solve the whole problem; the opportunity required collaboration across merchant businesses, manufacturers, technical specialists and industry bodies.
- Sustainability would scale only when it became easier for customers to act, not merely more important for them to discuss.

The proposition I built

- Created GreenWorks as Saint-Gobain Building Distribution's customer-facing sustainable-construction proposition, bringing together renewable, energy-efficiency and low-carbon solutions.
- Developed the GreenWorks Training Academy as a hands-on environment where customers, colleagues and partners could see, compare and work with technologies before committing to them.
- Connected technical learning to commercial action: advice, product selection, supplier expertise, branch availability and project support.
- Built supplier and industry relationships that widened the proposition beyond any one product category and created a credible national learning platform.
- Positioned the academy as a capability-building asset for the wider sector as well as a route to growth for Saint-Gobain's merchant brands.

Delivered evidence

Evidence	What it demonstrates
35% growth	Increase in renewable and sustainable product sales during Marcus's GreenWorks leadership.
10,000+ people developed	Colleagues and industry partners supported through training and technical capability building.
£500k academy investment	A 15,000 sq ft practical training facility launched with backing from multiple Saint-Gobain merchant brands.
50,000+ training hours	Publicly reported delivery by 2012, demonstrating early scale and market appetite.
National platform	A proposition spanning Jewson, Graham, Gibbs & Dandy, Minster and supplier partners.

How the commercial model worked

Barrier	GreenWorks response and commercial effect
Customer uncertainty	Practical demonstrations and impartial technical learning reduced fear around unfamiliar solutions.
Capability gap	Structured training equipped colleagues, installers and partners to recommend and apply solutions with confidence.
Fragmented supply	Multi-brand and supplier collaboration connected learning to a credible product and fulfilment route.
Commercial adoption	Better-informed customers could move from interest to specification, purchase and successful installation.

Leadership reach demonstrated

- **Venture and brand creation** — moved from market insight to proposition, investment case, launch and national operation.
- **Commercial education** — translated regulation and technology into practical customer decisions and product demand.
- **Ecosystem leadership** — aligned competing priorities across brands, suppliers, training partners and customers.
- **Capability building** — left colleagues and customers better equipped to make decisions without dependence on one individual.

Why it matters

GreenWorks established a repeatable Marcus principle: when a market is changing, growth comes from reducing the customer's uncertainty. Build capability first, connect it to a commercial route to market and demand follows with greater confidence.

The connection to Build Aviator

GreenWorks proved that advisory capability could change customer behaviour. Build Aviator took that learning further—moving from education around individual solutions to ownership of the complete project journey, from design and compliance through estimating and materials procurement.

Evidence boundary: delivered commercial outcomes are drawn from Marcus Jefford's retained leadership records and approved CV. Public reporting corroborates the 2011 academy launch, multi-brand sponsorship, practical 15,000 sq ft facility, £500k investment and 50,000+ training hours by 2012.