

ActivTrades CEO on the power of customer service and education in the online trading world

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One to watch

Alex Pusco CEO of ActivTrades

Reference:

VITAL STATISTICS

Company: [ActivTrades](#)

What it does, in a sentence: Online Trading Broker specialised in Forex, Metals, Indices and Commodities.

Founder: Alex Pusco

Size of team: 211

Your name and role: Alex Pusco, CEO

THE NEED-TO-KNOW

What problem are you trying to solve?

Not so much a problem, but an opportunity and demand which is to bring the financial markets closer to investors from all walks of life and from a host of different countries. We do this by providing leading technology, enabling access to those markets with platforms that are easily manageable by anyone.

Alongside this, comes the need and responsibility to educate those investors, whether it is through the analysis of key data or political movements which affect the markets.

How big is the market – and how much of it do you think you can own?

Increasingly more investors are seeking to take greater control over their personal finances, which means financial trading expands daily. The Forex market alone recorded an average daily volume of \$1.65tn just last year, which of course is hugely significant.

The industry is very competitive, therefore the key to succeeding is anticipating shifts in consumer behaviour and introducing the best technology, product or service to bridge the gap efficiently ahead of our competitors.

It is not a question of how much can I own, but rather how well can the company exceed the expectations of the clients it has? Satisfied customers and growth are inevitably intertwined as ActivTrades sees from its statistics, where 43 per cent of new applicants stated they heard about the company from other traders and where 95 per cent of our clients would recommend us.

If customers are happy with the service they receive and tell others about it, growth is always achievable.

Who's on your team that makes you think you can do this?

ActivTrades is headquartered in The City of London and the team includes highly skilled, multilingual and knowledgeable individuals, with a wealth of experience in the financial industry, client services and an understanding of different cultures and client behaviour.

Their commitment to achieving the overall company objectives has made the company the success it is today, something of which I am very proud.

The company employs a total of 211 individuals, working across its four offices in London, Milan, Dubai and Sofia. They cover key areas of the business such as customer service (a multilingual team serving over 14 different languages), marketing, compliance, finance, risk management and IT among others.

The high-quality standards of our team is evident from the various globally recognised awards we have won, including Best Online Trading Services and Best Forex Broker for 2017. Our Customer Service has been also awarded by international accolades and we were recently included in the Sunday Times Profit Track 100 list in 2017 for our large profit growth.

What do you believe the key to growing this business is?

Satisfied clients are obviously crucial for any good business which wishes to grow. Often, business leaders forget this – without clients or customers, there is no business, no income, no profit. To do this, we must ensure we are providing competitive products and excellent support as well as add-on services. Clients will go away if they feel they are handled better or can get a better deal elsewhere.

We are proud to be the preferred broker for more than 50,000 clients around the globe and generate a monthly trading volume of more than \$87bn on average. These figures show me that we are in the right path to improve our results for 2017, just like we did in 2016 where we achieved an annual turnover of nearly £35m (an increase of more than 11 per cent compared to the previous year).

Constant innovation is another key for growth – this is something we always strive for and have recently introduced our own web and mobile trading platform, ActivTrader, to help us provide a better service to clients.

A caring and supportive client service team, as mentioned previously, is vital. The team not only know how to properly deal with customers via phone, live chat and email; have the tools to

respond around the clock, but are also knowledgeable enough to resolve issues within a short time-frame as revealed by our internal statistics where email requests are picked up within the hour and resolved on the same day.

Being governed by a respected regulatory body is also essential, **ActivTrades** is regulated in the United Kingdom, and of course we also adhere with the various regulatory rules in the different markets we operate in. This obviously gives clients assurance, and that we are dedicated in terms of compliance.

What metrics do you look at every day?

With client satisfaction and growth being a cornerstone for how we judge ourselves, one key metric we monitor is the number of new clients that have shown an interest in using our products and services.

With more than 20,000 demo leads last quarter, we make sure that each of them is treated carefully and they are provided with the tools, education and support they need not only before they become real account holders but also afterwards, during their entire trading journey with us.

We work hard to retain clients but all businesses must have an ethos that new ones must be attracted, and then looked after in exactly the same way as the person who has been a client for the last five years.

We also look for trends in daily traffic on our website for all territories. This gives us a macro view of interest as well as affording us information on what countries or regions need focus. We currently hold a healthy daily traffic of 14,000 visits on average which gives us a fantastic leverage to show all we need to offer to our potential clients.

And of course, another key metric is the number of active accounts – that is the number of clients who are regularly trading on the markets via our platform, with more than 13,000 active traders today.

What's been the most unexpectedly valuable lesson you've learnt so far?

One key lesson which I would urge other business leaders to heed is that one should never take anything for granted. Recent events like Brexit, which defied the predictions of experts and polls alike, or the elections in the USA where Donald Trump did very much the same by beating the odds to get into the White House, has showed me that you need to be always ready for the unexpected, embrace change and adapt quickly.

There are too many big brands which have led their markets one day only to collapse inwardly under the weight of complacency. The brands which survive are usually the ones which do not take customers for granted and do not rest on laurels, be that with regards to service or innovation and tech.

What do you think is on the horizon for your industry in the year ahead?

The industry evolves – it has to - as a result of regulatory changes across Europe and of course, Brexit. These events present a range of challenges for ActivTrades.

To maintain our passporting rights, we are exploring the option of opening an office in Dublin. This will resolve the potential issue of recruiting staff in the EU, which is so vitally important to our business and what ActivTrades is about.

We support changes from regulators as they give peace of mind and protection for traders, while also helping strengthen the reputation of a solid broker like ActivTrades. But we are ahead of the curve when it comes to putting systems and checks in place to help our customers. Recently the

Germany regulator passed a new rule on Negative Balance Protection, we have had the same safety net in place at ActivTrades since 2013.

There is huge growth potential in this industry with more retail clients showing an interest in financial trading. This growth is unlikely to slow down in this decade as technology keeps evolving and online trading is more and more accessible to traders all over the world.

That means we have a responsibility to make sure they have access to not only the best platforms, but the best financial education resources to help them with their trading journey.