

CASE STUDY : KEYLINK HELPS CHOCOLATE ALCHEMY THRIVE



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Peter Gardner, a self-styled chocolate alchemist from Loughborough, is a shining example of the value of Keylink's unique support and expertise, outstanding equipment and top quality products.

Peter opened Chocolate Alchemy, Loughborough, in January 2010 having trained himself to make chocolates using Keylink's series of on-line instructional videos – entitled "Working with Chocolate". Peter had no previous knowledge of chocolate having spent 10 years in the hospitality industry but wanted to do something different that combined his passion, creativity and flair for new tastes and flavours. His own business offering individual hand-made chocolates, boxed selections, chocolate courses and a coffee shop was the solution.

Peter explains: "I spent around three-four months learning about chocolate techniques and developing my skills from Keylink's "Working with Chocolate" on-line demonstrations. I literally watched every module, over and over again and practised until I was perfect. Now I make all my own ganaches, chocolate bars and a dry hot chocolate mix and I have an increasing number of corporate clients. The videos were easy to follow and learn from, and did not cost me a penny! I owe a lot to Keylink because my business is based on them!

"In addition to utilising the Keylink videos, I purchase 90% of my equipment, products and packaging from Keylink. All my equipment comes from KeyChoc and I have a purpose-built workshop containing two KeyChoc CH melting tanks, a KeyChoc RC Series Refrigerated Display Cabinet and a Dedy Praline Cutter. I have found all my KeyChoc machines to be reliable, good value and efficient.

"I also have two Ciocchino machines from Keylink. We have a steady stream of clientele – from students to shoppers – who come in to enjoy the deliciously chocolatey taste of Ciocchino. We use Guayaquil, a 64% dark chocolate, and serve Ciocchino as either a dipping (or sipping?) chocolate, a base for traditional hot chocolate or as an iced chocolate drink. If there is any left over, I use it to make a delicious chilled mousse for the next day.

"My next venture is to offer chocolate courses for up to eight people demonstrating tips and techniques for making chocolates. Everything I demonstrate originates from the Keylink Working with Chocolate videos! Ultimately I want to develop the Chocolate Alchemy franchise and open many more shops using my brand equity."

Keylink's instructional videos – Working with Chocolate – are also available as a DVD. The videos are presented by Mick Burke, a senior lecturer at Sheffield College, and are broken down into a series of 14 individual technique and product instructional videos that run to well over two hours. Copies maybe ordered from Keylink, priced at £45 each