

Chamber Chatter

The Voice of local business in Taunton Deane

January 2011

TAUNTON
CHAMBER
of
COMMERCE

Business and Tourism Master Classes

Somerset College level 3 Btec students recently experienced two enterprise days organised by Wendy Horton of Young Enterprise South West, and Jane Burden of Taunton Chamber of Commerce which were hosted by two Chamber of Commerce Members and funded by Strand 7.



The first day for 1st year business and tourism students at Somerset County Cricket Club where the students enjoyed the Club's hospitality. The Club's Marketing Manager Guy Wolfenden gave the students a tour and talk to set the scene for their task. The students were then asked to form companies in groups and were given the brief of trying to encourage the 12-19 age groups to attend cricket matches, making a 5 minute presentation at the end of the day to three members of the SCCC staff, with the Cricket Club generously presenting pairs of tickets for a 20/20 match to each winning team member. This task really tested their teamwork, communication skills, presentation skills, initiative and business enterprise. The group of winners have now been asked if they would like more work experience at the ground as they impressed the Marketing Manager so much.

The second day for 2nd year business students was held at the Holiday Inn with a similar format. All the students dressed to impress and were a very professional looking group who were a credit to the College and their tutors. Neil May, Deputy General Manager gave the students a tour of the hotel and presentation on the history of the company and their corporate branding. The students' task was to form a company and provide solutions on how to improve on current food and beverage sales by encouraging locals and young families into the hotel to use the bar and restaurant. The students at the end of the day had to make a 5 minute presentation to Neil May and ????, again with the Holiday Inn generously awarding the winning four students with a prize of a pair of 'swim and food' passes to use in the hotel. The Deputy Manager was so impressed that he increased the prize to a pair of 'swim and three course meal' passes for each winning team member. Again the students enjoyed the hospitality of The Holiday Inn, including hot lunch, the fabulous prizes together with the support of their staff as goodwill.



The students felt that they gained an enormous amount from these master class days by seeing that the managers had valued and respected their ideas, with a possibility that a couple of ideas might be incorporated into their marketing plans and also by knowing that these businesses had invested so much into these days for their benefit.

As a way of providing students with experience of a genuine problem to solve in a real life business situation, these master classes have proved very beneficial to the students for their course work and also for their own personal development. The experience will also be an advantage to them to reflect on when applying for jobs or university places to draw out the skills they used and as evidence of these skills on paper and in an interview situation.

INTRODUCING NEW MEMBER

Matt Rowntree — PR Consultant

*** Guest Speaker at our
January lunch ***



Do you have a business? Do you have customers, clients or suppliers? Do you talk to them other than when they're in your shop or paying for your service? Where do they hear about what you do? What do they think of you? In turn, what are they saying about you to their friends, clients and customers?

Do you talk to your local, trade and business media to tell them what you're doing so potential customers and industry peers understand what you offer and how good you are at what you do? Do you have a newsletter, blog, Facebook or Twitter account for your business? What are you saying on them and how often are you saying it? What are other people saying about you and how do you respond?

Do these things well and you will see your business flourish – I've helped businesses exceed sales targets by more than 400% in a single year with no additional support beyond public relations.

Do these things badly and you will seem out of touch – you may struggle to get new business through your doors and your attempts to broaden your customer base may go to waste.

With over 12 years experience in public relations I can talk you through some simple activities you can undertake that will help you improve your bottom line, with no ongoing obligation, and it's better value than you might think.

You can contact me at mattrowntree@hotmail.com or 07768 378 109

Event boosts drive to low carbon future



National consulting engineers Peter Brett Associates hosted a special networking event together with the Genesis Centre at Somerset College in Taunton recently, to help highlight the drive towards a low carbon future.

Business people from around the South West, involved in all aspects of construction, were invited by the Taunton branch of Peter Brett Associates. The company's Director of Sustainability Paul Maryan, told guests the whole construction industry needs to build, maintain and take forward new approaches to energy. This would help householders and commercial occupiers live more easily in a low carbon world.

Phil Sharratt, of the Genesis Centre, told guests how Genesis, a £2.5 million educational resource for sustainable construction, was unique in the UK as an award winning building and was now launching a new environmental technologies and training facility. It would be open to trades people to see how to use new technologies, and its training rooms are expected to be a model for training providers.

The Genesis Centre recently saw the launch of the £750,000 Knowledge Exchange at Genesis (KEG) project, with funding secured from the European Regional Development Fund and South West Regional Development Agency. Its aim is to increase sustainability in the built environment throughout the South West and beyond.



L to R: Chris Mitchell, Chairman of Taunton Chamber of Commerce, Chris Lacey, Head of Construction and Technology, Somerset College, Richard Harper, Environmental Technologies Manager at the Genesis Centre

INTRODUCING NEW MEMBER

Pro-Act Marketing

Pro-Act Marketing takes a pro-active and fresh approach to your marketing and PR needs. Whether you want to grow your business, retain your existing customers, launch a new product – or if you're unsure what you need – Pro-Act Marketing provides the marketing support you need on a contract or ad-hoc project basis.

At Pro-Act Marketing we're passionate about what we do – and we're committed to generating tangible results through a no-nonsense, yet thorough and comprehensive approach.

Our services include:

- Marketing planning
- Campaign management and delivery
- PR
- Market research
- CRM planning
- Event planning and management
- Copywriting
- Marketing administration

We work with organisations of all shapes and sizes, predominantly within Somerset and Devon, and we have experience within many business sectors including the following: IT, healthcare, renewable energy, publishing, hospitality, financial services and healthcare.

Katie Sanders, the driving force behind Pro-Act Marketing, is a Chartered Marketer with over 10 years' marketing and sales experience.

Give us a call on 01884 250066 or drop us an email at marketing@pro-act.co.uk if you have any questions or for a no-obligation estimate. More information can be found on our website www.pro-act.co.uk



FORTHCOMING EVENTS for 2011 - Members and Guests Welcome

JANUARY

Weds 26th - Networking Lunch at The Holiday Inn
Guest Speaker: Matt Rowntree, PR Consultant - "Top PR tips to help your business"
Booking form attached

FEBRUARY

Weds 16th - Business Breakfast with Porter Dodson Solicitors and Advisers
Guest Speaker: Stephen Wray, Partner - "Paperwork: Help or Hindrance"
Further details to follow

MARCH

Thurs 24th - Business Breakfast at St Margaret's Hospice sponsored by Pardoes Solicitors
Further details to follow

NB: These events may be subject to change or cancellation at short notice so please keep an eye on the Chamber of Commerce website for regular updates.



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GOES "MOBILE"

There are now more ways than ever to contact your Chamber of Commerce office, with the addition of a mobile number:



07808 776244



To contact us: call: 01823 353353 or 07808 776244
Email: office@taunton-chamber.co.uk
Write to: First Floor, 12F Fore Street, The Orchard Centre, Taunton TA1 3TP

Data Protection

The Chamber has your details held in a database that has been compiled from volunteered information.

If you no longer wish to receive E-communications from the Chamber please email Jane Burden. We will continue to hold your remaining details unless you specifically indicate otherwise in writing.

If you would like a colleague to receive these e-mails direct, please let us have their details and we will add them to our database.