



THE BRITISH  
CHAMBERS OF  
COMMERCE



# **CHAMBER AWARDS 2005**

**National Winners Press Pack**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**



Date: **25<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

Release time: **IMMEDIATE**

THE BRITISH  
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### **Anthony Alan Foods wins £25,000 at BCC Chamber Awards 2005**

*BCC announces the winner of the Microsoft Award for Outstanding Business Achievement at the 2005 Chamber Awards Ceremony*

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) and Microsoft today announced the winner of the Microsoft Award for Outstanding Business Achievement. The award and prize money of £25,000 cash was presented to Anthony Alan Foods Ltd at the national ceremony held at the Royal Courts of Justice in London on the evening of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

In the four years since its foundation in 2001, Anthony Alan Foods has grown its turnover by 7,600% and its profit by 1,000% whilst continuing to invest in product development and marketing. It has developed an impressive range of over 53 products including some which achieve the “holy grail” of the food industry by reducing fat content without losing flavour. Anthony Alan Foods puts its success down to its strategy of outsourcing all production and placing responsibility for stock management and ownership with suppliers. This allows the company greater operational flexibility and increased cash flow without any debt.

Natalie Ayres, Microsoft’s Senior Director Small and Medium Solutions and Partners Group commented: “Microsoft is dedicated to supporting business and society on a national and local level, in supporting the economy and providing the technology to drive real prosperity in the UK. Our involvement in the BCC Awards is an important part of our consistent, extensive efforts to support small businesses and their ongoing growth and success.

“The standard of entries received for this year’s Chamber Awards has been incredibly high. We have been more than impressed by the commitment, enthusiasm and success of so many British companies. They all deserve recognition and reward for the contributions they make to their industries, to their customers and to the country. Anthony Alan Foods Ltd is an amazing business and really deserved to win the award of Outstanding Business Achievement. We wish the company every success for the future.”

The prize money from Microsoft is believed to be one of the most generous amounts given for a business award and should provide a welcome injection of cash into the business.

Tony Moloney, Managing Director of Anthony Alan Foods said: “It would be easy to find a home for £25,000 however we would not use this money for our business, but for the benefit of the community. As a company we have benefited greatly from the quality of personnel that we have been able to draw from the local area. Tomorrow’s entrepreneurs are today’s school children and we believe that an interest in business, fostered at an early age, is not only a benefit to the child but to community as a whole. Our aim would be to use this money, within local schools, to provide resources to facilitate and encourage active business education.”

“We believe that it’s not the company that wins an award, but it’s the people that have worked so hard to make the company such a success. Being recognised for their achievements at such a national level is going to create an immense ‘buzz’ within the business. When people are not only empowered but highly motivated then we believe that they can achieve anything”

Anthony Alan Foods was not the only company to have cause to celebrate as there were also eight other awards were presented as follows:-

<b>Award</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Chamber</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Nature of Business</b>
Microsoft Award for Innovation through Technology	Microsoft	ngb2b - Newport and Gwent Chamber of Commerce	Ontracks.co.uk	Internet model and hobby retailer
Business of the Year	Barclays	Barnsley Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Anthony Alan Foods Ltd	Food production
Most Promising New Business	BT	Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce	NAC Comms Ltd	Telecoms and IT company
Business Commitment to the Community	BUPA	Nottinghamshire Chamber	Building Blocks Solutions Ltd	Social enterprise organisation
Export Communicator of the Year	CILT	Sussex Enterprise - the Chamber of Commerce for Sussex	Genesis Forwarding Group	Freight forwarding company
Award for Skills and Workforce Development	Learning and Skills Council	Shropshire Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise	Lyreco UK Ltd	Supplier of office products
Entrepreneur of the Year	The Telegraph Business Club	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Industry & Shipping	Karen Finch, The Hearing Care Centre	Service provider for the hard of hearing
Export Business of the Year	Travelex	Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Jointine Products Ltd	Paper processing business

Bill Midgely, President of BCC said: "I am delighted the Chamber Awards provide an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the success of businesses across the country. The national winners of the Chamber Awards 2005 are all outstanding businesses and I congratulate them. Anthony Alan Foods Ltd is an exceptional business and really deserved to win the £25,000 prize money from Microsoft for Outstanding Business Achievement".

**ENDS**

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**Notes to the editors:**

- The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) is the authentic voice of British businesses.
- The BCC sits at the heart of a powerful nationwide network of Accredited Chambers of Commerce serving business across the UK, which employ over five million people.
- Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realise their full potential.
- More information on each of the different categories and winners can be found on the Chamber Awards web site – [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk). Photographs taken at the award ceremony can also be viewed and downloaded from this website

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### **BCC and Microsoft announce the national winner of the Microsoft Award for Innovation through Technology**

Ontracks.co.uk, a member of *ngb2b* - Newport and Gwent Chamber of Commerce, has been named as the national winner of the Microsoft Award for Innovation through Technology at the BCC Chamber Awards 2005.

Ontracks.co.uk is one of the UK's leading internet model and hobby retailers. Since its foundation in 1999, technology has been central to the company's success. In the last two years, Ontracks.co.uk has migrated its entire website to modern "shopping basket" technology as well as investing in bespoke software linking its website and accounts system to eliminate the need for manual administration from its back office order processing. As a result, sales volumes have increased by over 300% in 4 years. Orders are processed within 1 hour and staff have been freed up from manual data entry to focus time on adding value to the services ontracks.co.uk offers.

Natalie Ayres, Microsoft's Senior Director Small and Medium Solutions and Partners Group said: "Microsoft is passionate about technology and the effect and benefit that it can bring to people's lives, whether at home or at work. For small businesses our goal is to develop products and services that help them realise their potential and enable them to compete and succeed in today's economic environment.

"We looked for companies that clearly exploited every opportunity that technology could bring to their businesses either to achieve specific goals or to enhance overall business performance. Ontracks.co.uk is not just a great

advertisement for the use of technology but great exemplar for their industry and other online businesses too.”

Fiona Mulhall, Founder of Ontracks.co.uk commented: “Winning the Microsoft Award is a massive boost to our team. It confirms that they are making a significant difference to our customers and that we are really performing against some of the best British companies operating today.”

Ontrack.co.uk saw off competition from nine other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

Bill Midgely, President of BCC said: “Ontracks.co.uk is a prime example of how a niche player can exploit technology and revolutionise its business. The company really deserved to win and I hope others will follow their lead.”

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### **BCC and Barclays announce the national winner of the Business of the Year Award**

Anthony Alan Foods Ltd, a member of Barnsley Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has been announced as the national winner of the Business of the Year Award at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2005. Anthony Alan Foods is a food production company which within its range of products, manufactures Weight Watchers cakes. The company won the Barclays-sponsored award for its commitment to product development and for the incredible financial success and market share achieved by the company. In the last four years the company has enjoyed a turnover growth rate of 7,600%. The judges also commented on the modern approach to manufacturing and excellent logistics that the company adopts.

Angela Potter, Head of International Trade & Cash Solutions at Barclays, said: "Anthony Alan Foods Ltd has displayed outstanding growth and profitability over a short period of time. This success has been driven from having a clear strategic direction and creating a clear scalable business model both now and in the future. It is a dream scenario for any small to medium enterprise to develop so rapidly and positively. The panel were unanimous in naming them as business of the year."

Tony Moloney, Managing Director of Anthony Alan Foods, commented: "We believe that it's not the company that wins an award, but it's the people that have worked so hard to make the company such a success. Being recognised for their achievements at such a national level is going to create an immense 'buzz' within the business. When people are not only empowered but highly motivated then we believe that they can achieve anything. We have already

achieved much in only four years, winning this award will help us on our way to achieving much more in the next four.”

Anthony Alan Foods Ltd saw off competition from nine other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

BCC President Bill Midgley said: “To be selected as the national winner of the Business of the Year award takes something extra special. Anthony Alan Foods has demonstrated not only all-round excellence in their field but convinced the judges that it has smart strategies in place to drive future growth. It is an extremely impressive business.”

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- Anthony Alan Foods Ltd also won the overall award for Outstanding Business Achievement and was presented with a cheque for £25,000.
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### **BCC and BT announce the national winner of the Most Promising New Business Award**

NAC Comms Ltd, a member of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, has been announced as the national winner of the Most Promising New Business Award at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2005. NAC Comms, a telecoms and IT business, won the BT-sponsored award for the success it has achieved over such a short period of time. Turnover in the first year reached £600,000 with a profit margin of 28%. The company has made excellent progress in the private healthcare market and has recently been approached by the NHS as a result of this success. The judges agreed that the company clearly has a very promising future.

Andrew McGregor, Head of Marketing & Strategy at BT Business, commented: "We are proud to sponsor this category and delighted to see such fantastic entrepreneurial activity from companies using IT and communications to bring new products and services to market. This bodes well for the health of UK PLC, and we are really pleased to be part of it."

Mark Boyde, Director, NAC Comms Ltd, said: "Winning this national award is a cast iron validation of the customer service policies we have put into place from the beginning, and of course the sheer effort that our staff put into their work every single day. It's a win for them and makes my constant nagging about the importance of polite and professional service, seem almost worthwhile."

NAC Comms Ltd saw off competition from nine other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

BCC President Bill Midgley said: “The success of NAC Comms Ltd proves that people should not be afraid to start their own business. Even in the most competitive markets it is possible to realise great success but it takes courage and sound business sense. NAC have shown they have ample of both.”

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### **BCC and BUPA announce the national winner of the Business Commitment to the Community Award**

Building Blocks Solutions Ltd, a member of Nottinghamshire Chamber, has been announced as the national winner of the Business Commitment to the Community Award at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2005. Building Block Solutions, a social enterprise organisation, won the BUPA-sponsored award because of the way the whole business centres on supporting its local community. Building Blocks Solutions provides a range of quality services to adults with enduring mental health needs and emotional difficulties. In addition to their support services they also provide comfortable accommodation for meetings and training for voluntary organisations, companies and courses.

Steve Flanagan, Commercial Director of BUPA, said: "We were looking for companies that have developed creative and innovative projects or programmes that have had a positive impact on their local community or environment. Building Block Solutions is an extremely impressive organisation that is making a huge contribution to those with mental illness."

Gill Gardiner, Director at Building Blocks Solutions, commented: "Working with clients in the community, as we do, often means that you fail to see the bigger picture of the impact of your work. As we support people in making their lives more sustainable, it is all too easy to get caught up in the day to day difficulties that people face. Winning this award means that someone external to our organisation has been able to see and acknowledge the positive impact that our services have made on individuals' lives."

Building Blocks Solutions Ltd saw off competition from nine other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

BCC President Bill Midgley said: “This award recognises those who have tried to make a real difference to their local community. Despite the strong competition in this award category, Building Blocks stood out as organisation that was going the extra mile and really making a difference.”

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### **BCC and CILT announce the national winner of the Export Communicator of the Year Award**

Genesis Forwarding Group, a member of Sussex Enterprise – the Chamber of Commerce for Sussex, has been announced as the national winner of the Export Communicator of the Year Award at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2005. Genesis, a freight forwarding specialist, won the CILT-sponsored award for impressing judges with the way it develops a rich understanding of the cultural aspects of trading in its key markets. The company has had particular success in China where there are strong cultural differences and many different dialects to contend with.

Isabella Moore, Director, CILT, the National Centre for Languages, commented: “Genesis Forwarding Group has met the challenges of the macro forces in international trade with its insightful communications strategy, based on outstanding research and preparation to meet new markets. It is a case study of excellence in approaching the Chinese market, demonstrating excellent practice in the management of language and culture issues.”

Doug Currie, Chief Executive, Genesis Forwarding Group, added: “Winning this prestigious award is a fantastic compliment to the service provided by our diligent staff and praise that we greatly appreciate. Awards such as this one place Genesis on another level where the quality of the service becomes more important than the price.”

Genesis Forwarding Group saw off competition from six other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

BCC President Bill Midgley said: “Doing business abroad not only requires the right products – it requires an ability to understand and bridge cultural and language difficulties. Companies that invest in the ability to communicate effectively in new markets will definitely create more opportunities to grow. Genesis Forwarding Group has proved how great the reward can be.”

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### **BCC and LSC announce national winner of the Award for Skills and Workforce Development**

Lyreco UK Ltd, a member of Shropshire Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, has been announced as the national winner of the Award for Skills and Workforce Development at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2005. Lyreco, a supplier of office products, won the LSC-sponsored award for its innovative approach to workforce development. The company does not use professional trainers but people who were previously successful in the role. This approach ensures all Lyreco's development activities are focused towards achieving its vision and mission.

Jaine Clarke, Director for Skills Strategy and Planning at LSC, said: "Lyreco was a clear winner of the LSC Award for Skills and Workforce Development. They demonstrated a high level of dedication in developing the skills of their employees and a clear recognition that by investing in the skills of their staff they will improve the company's overall performance and profitability. Lyreco should be seen as an example of best practice to other organisations."

Ian Lawson, Training & Development Director at Lyreco, added: "We have invested in our people to grow the business and this has worked. Winning this award is fantastic recognition from the judges that we have got it about right. Developing our people is a journey and not a destination, winning this award would be acknowledgement that we are well on our way."

Lyreco UK saw off competition from seven other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

BCC President Bill Midgley said: “Access to staff with the right skills remains an ongoing challenge for many businesses. Lyreco UK have shown the importance of investing in their workforce, and I hope other businesses will follow their example.”

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### **BCC and The Telegraph Business Club announce the national winner of the Entrepreneur of the Year Award**

Karen Finch, founder of The Hearing Care Centre Ltd, a member of Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Shipping, has been announced as the national winner of the Entrepreneur of the Year Award at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2005. Karen won the Telegraph Business Club-sponsored award due to her determination and persistence in making the Hearing Care Centre, which provides services for the hard of hearing, a success in a very competitive market. Despite significant investment costs in areas such as training, the company's gross profit is impressive.

Richard Collins, Head of the Daily Telegraph Business Club, said: "It was so encouraging to see so many 'new breed' entrepreneurs rising through the ranks and doing so well, despite challenging economic times. However, Karen really stood out from the crowd as she had the vision and determination to take her business to extraordinary heights. It really is an amazing story."

Karen Finch added: "What this award provides for me, in fact for us all at the Hearing Care Centre, is the recognition and approval of other business people. There is nothing more satisfying than hearing words of praise from those who are in the know; those who understand the trials and tribulations, the fear, the loneliness and self-doubt suffered by anyone who wants to start up in business."

Karen Finch saw off competition from eight other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

BCC President Bill Midgley said: “Karen is an inspirational figure. The success of her business despite the difficult business environment she operates in is truly amazing. She is definitely worthy of winning the national award.”

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### **BCC and Travelex announce the national winner of the Export Business of the Year Award**

Jointine Products Ltd, a member of Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has been announced as the national winner of the Export Business of the Year Award at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2005. Jointine, a paper processing business, won the Travelex-sponsored award for increasing its export sales to 82% of its turnover since its formation in 1999 to markets as diverse as the United States, India and Italy. The judges were particularly impressed with the level of the company's e-communications.

Tony Wilson, Director, Commercial Foreign Exchange EMEA at Travelex, said: "It takes guts to enter foreign markets but it takes greater skill and determination to make a success of it. Jointine Products Ltd is an enthusiastic company with great potential. It was particularly good to see that they were trying to do as much as possible to enhance sales exports and improve customer service. It's no wonder that they have enjoyed such success in a relatively short period."

Terry Coffey, Managing Director, Jointine Products Ltd, said: "Jointine makes a significant contribution to 'UK Ltd', and has shown that quality goods, bearing the legend 'Made in England' are still very much sought after in today's world. Winning this award is a great honour and we want to encourage other small to medium business enterprises that they too should embrace the concept of global marketing."

Jointine Products Ltd saw off competition from eight other finalists in this award category. More information on these finalists can be found in the regional winner press packs on [www.chamberawards.co.uk](http://www.chamberawards.co.uk).

BCC President Bill Midgley said: “Doing business abroad not only presents a great opportunity for growth – it also creates a number of challenges for business. Jointine Products embraced their hurdles and have gone to great lengths to have solutions in place to overcome them. They are very worthy winners of this award.”

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