



THE BRITISH
CHAMBERS OF
COMMERCE



CHAMBER AWARDS 2006
Regional Winners Press Pack
North East

The crème of the North East's businesses recognised by British Chambers of Commerce

BCC announces the regional winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 in the North East

17th October 2006 – The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) and Microsoft today announce the regional winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 in the North East. Now in its third year the Chamber Awards was developed to recognise outstanding business achievement within the UK business community.

There are seven different categories of awards nationally and Accredited Chamber members were permitted to enter as many as they wished. The award categories and winners for the North East are detailed below.

Award	Sponsor	Chamber	Winner	Nature of Business
Microsoft Award for Innovation Through Technology	Microsoft	North East	OpSec Security Limited	Anti-counterfeiting technology
Business of the Year	Composite Legal Expenses	North East	Mitchell Trucking Company Ltd	Logistics
Most Promising New Business	BT	North East	Comesys Europe Ltd	Designs and manufacture of "drive by wire" control systems for automotive industry
Award for Skills and Workforce Development	The Telegraph Business Club	North East	Powder & Liquid Products Limited	The market, manufacture and distribution of household cleaning products
Entrepreneur of the Year	Yorkshire Bank	North East	Glen Hall - The Write Research Company Limited	Executive research consultancy
Exporter of the Year	UK Trade & Investment	North East	Gate 7	Manufacture specialist components for the off road industrial vehicle industry

NB: For more information on each of the different categories and winners please refer to relevant media alert below.

Peter Mileham, President of the BCC, said:

"I am delighted the Chamber Awards provide an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the success of businesses across the country. Those who have got this far are already recognised as

outstanding within their own regions and I congratulate them. It will be tough to pick the national winners from such a high calibre of regional winners.”

Each of the regional winners received a certificate and they will all now go through to the national round of judging and the chance to win the top prize of £25,000. This prize will be awarded to the company that the judges agree should win the overall Award for Outstanding Business Achievement courtesy of Microsoft. Last year this was won by Anthony Alan Foods Ltd from Barnsley Chamber of Commerce, South Yorkshire, which has the UK licence to manufacture cakes under the Weightwatchers brand. Using innovative and ground breaking technology, the company was able to produce a range of products that became instant market leaders and have remained so ever since. This is despite fierce competition from existing incumbents in the market, all of whom are household names.

Natalie Ayres, Microsoft’s Senior Director Small and Medium Solutions and Partners Group added;

“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. We wish all the winners the best of luck in the national judging.”

The National Winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 will be announced at a Gala Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London on the 23rd November 2006.

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For further information or requests for interviews please contact;

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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.

About Microsoft

- Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq “MSFT”) is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realise their full potential.

MEDIA ALERT:

BCC and Microsoft announce the North East winner of the Microsoft Award for Innovation through Technology

OpSec Security Limited, a member of the North East Chamber of Commerce, has been announced as the regional winner of the Microsoft Award for Innovation through Technology in the North East for the Chamber Awards 2006. The business (an anti-counterfeiting technology and tracking manufacturer) won the Microsoft-sponsored award as judges recognised they had made amazing advances in technology that would have significant impact on business, security and the reduction of criminality. OpSec recognised that by developing a cost effective configurable tracking system they could enhance their service to customers beyond just the provision of anti-counterfeiting labelling.

Natalie Ayres, Microsoft's Senior Director Small and Medium Solutions and Partners Group said; "In an ever more competitive market, businesses are on the hunt for anything that can give that all important competitive edge. The most innovative are looking closely at their technology investment to identify, not just where they can streamline their business processes but how they might enhance or create products and services. We are proud to celebrate the best of these ideas."

OpSec Security Limited will now go through to national judging and the chance to win the top prize of £25,000. The National Winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 will be announced at a Gala Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London on the 23rd November 2006.

Peter Mileham, President of the BCC, said;

"Technology now touches all businesses. It is often the difference between success and failure. OpSec Security Limited has made its technology investment work. They have looked closely at how their businesses could be made better, not just more efficient, with technology."

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MEDIA ALERT:

BCC and Composite Legal Expenses announce the North East regional winner of the Business of the Year Award

Mitchell Trucking Company Ltd, a member of the North East Chamber of Commerce, has been announced as the regional winner of the Business of the Year Award in the North East for the Chamber Awards 2006. The company (a total logistics company) won the Composite Legal Expenses-sponsored award for the clarity of its business plan and strong long term expansion strategy. The judges were also impressed by the impact of the company's recent introduction of a UK-wide pallet delivery system that dramatically contributed to its 150% increase in turnover in the last three years.

John Mullin, Managing Director, Composite Legal Expenses, commented;

"This award is reserved for the very best businesses across the country. Congratulations to Mitchell Trucking Company Ltd, you join a very small and elite band of businesses that exemplify this pinnacle of achievement. In all areas of your business you illustrate a level of skill for all business people to learn from."

Mitchell Trucking Company Ltd will now go through to national judging and the chance to win the top prize of £25,000, courtesy of Microsoft. The National Winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 will be announced at a Gala Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London on the 23rd November 2006.

Peter Mileham, President of the BCC, said;

"Mitchell Trucking Company Ltd is a business that really stands out from the crowd. The competition was fierce. Making it to the short list is tough and winning is reserved for only the very best. Congratulations."

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MEDIA ALERT:

BCC and BT announce the North East regional winner of the Most Promising New Business Award

Comesys Europe Ltd, a member of the North East Chamber of Commerce, has been announced as the regional winner of the Most Promising New Business Award in the North East for the Chamber Awards 2006. The company (a designer and manufacturer of “drive by wire” control systems for the automotive industry) won the BT-sponsored award as judges recognised the huge potential of their product range. As stricter environmental controls take effect internationally the company is driving demand for its precision control systems particularly for diesel vehicles. The judges were also impressed by the turnover growth of the company and its projections for 2007 along with the management team’s commitment to ongoing product development.

Andrew McGregor, Head of Marketing & Strategy at BT Business, commented;

“Starting a new business is daunting enough, but to take it successfully through its’ first few years needs courage, talent and tenacity. BT is delighted to recognise this success and applauds those entrepreneurs for their determination and achievement.”

Comesys Europe Ltd will now go through to national judging and the chance to win the top prize of £25,000, courtesy of Microsoft. The National Winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 will be announced at a Gala Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London on the 23rd November 2006.

Peter Mileham, President of the BCC, said;

“Success in business is always the result of very hard work on the part of the founders. So many businesses fail to make it past their first let alone their third year. Comesys Europe Ltd is an inspiration to all of us in business.”

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MEDIA ALERT:

BCC and the Telegraph Business Club announce the North East regional winner of the Award for Skills and Workforce Development

Powder & Liquid Products Limited, a member of the North East Chamber of Commerce, has been announced as the regional winner of the Award for Skills and Workforce Development in the North East for the Chamber Awards 2006. The organisation (it markets, manufactures and distributes a range of household cleaning products) won the Telegraph Business Club-sponsored award for its clear commitment to workforce development coupled with a strong investment in its continuous improvement plan for management and staff. The judges were impressed by the organisation's considered approach and recognition of the role that a combination of staff and management development can have in improving efficiency and business performance.

"Every week the Business Club page in the Daily Telegraph reveals the 'Secrets of Success' of an exceptionally talented entrepreneur," says David Sumner Smith, programme director of the Telegraph Business Club. "And in the vast majority of cases that 'secret' relates directly to the performance of their staff team. The winner of this award provides another strong reminder of the positive impact on business performance resulting from investment in the development of your workforce's skills."

Powder & Liquid Products Limited will now go through to national judging and the chance to win the top prize of £25,000, courtesy of Microsoft. The National Winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 will be announced at a Gala Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London on the 23rd November 2006.

Peter Mileham, President of the BCC said,

"The BCC has long been an advocate of the importance of investing in the skills development of your workforce. A strategic skills and workforce development programme will be one of the most effective investments any business can make. The winner of this award sets a standard we should aspire to."

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MEDIA ALERT:

BCC and Yorkshire Bank announce the North East regional winner of the Entrepreneur of the Year Award

Glen Hall (The Write Research Company Limited) a member of the North East Chamber of Commerce, has been announced as the regional winner of the Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the North East for the Chamber Awards 2006.

Glen won the Yorkshire Bank sponsored award in recognition of his excellent vision and competitive attitude. Glen attributes his business success to a simple philosophy of 'sustainable profitable growth' which he believes has enabled him to achieve 100% growth in turnover year on year and 122% growth in profits over the past five years. The Write Research Company has expanded under his leadership to three offices in Newcastle, Leeds and London and in the last 12 months he has extended the service with a public sector brand (Smart Public Ltd) and a global offer (Write Research Global).

Brian Colquhoun, Head of Integrated Financial Solutions, Yorkshire Bank said,
"Just as they say there is a novel in us all, everyone thinks they can spot a business opportunity and create a successful company. This is not true. Entrepreneurs are rare. This award recognises the achievements of the best."

Glen will now go through to national judging and the chance to win the top prize of £25,000, courtesy of Microsoft. The National Winners of the Chamber Awards 2006 will be announced at a Gala Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London on the 23rd November 2006.

Peter Mileham, President of the BCC said,
"Entrepreneurs are the pioneers of the modern age. They take risks. They spot opportunities when most of us see barriers. The finalists of this award are members of an all too small elite club in this country."

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MEDIA ALERT:

BCC and UK Trade & Investment announce the North East winner of the Exporter of the Year Award

Gate 7, a member of the North East Chamber of Commerce, has been announced as the regional winner of the Exporter of the Year Award in the North East for the Chamber Awards 2006. The organisation (a manufacturer of specialist components for the off-road industrial vehicle industry) won the UK Trade & Investment sponsored award for its successful expansion into the USA, its very impressive export figures and ambitious plans for further expansion. The judges were also impressed by Gate 7's achievement of a Queens Award.

While Gate 7 had seen year on year growth since 2000, their decision to consolidate their existing customers across Europe and expand into the USA saw sales jump by 24% in 2002 and then 87% in 2003. They are now capitalising on the opportunity represented by the booming construction industry in the USA with the launch of Gate 7 LLC, a Delaware registered corporation which provides their products to the USA market.

Andrew Cahn, Chief Executive of UK Trade & Investment commented:

"I am delighted that UK Trade & Investment is sponsoring this award, and congratulate Gate 7 on becoming regional winner for the North East region. Exporters like Gate 7 make a crucial contribution to the economy and it is good to see them receiving recognition for this. I wish them all the best in the national competition.

Gate 7 will now go through to national judging and the chance to win the top prize of £25,000, courtesy of Microsoft. The National Winners of Chamber Awards 2006 will be announced at a Gala Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, London on the 23rd November 2006.

Peter Mileham, President of the BCC said,

"Making a success of your business in your local community or the UK is tough enough – extending that into international markets takes courage and skill. Congratulations to Gate 7. Export markets are all too often an untapped business opportunity. You have shown what can be achieved."

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Note to the editor:

UK Trade & Investment is the lead government organisation that provides support for UK companies looking to develop international business. It also provides support for overseas companies wishing to invest in the UK. UK Trade & Investment has a wide range of services, backed-up by a network of trade advisors around the UK and worldwide who can provide market intelligence, advice on regulations, sales leads, and financial and practical support.