



NEWS FOR SPONSORS

WINTER 2008



ENCOURAGING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Colbea has been actively working with social enterprises in and around Colchester in an attempt to identify needs, provide business advice, and act as a contact point from which they can network and gain support. Social Enterprises are those that benefit the community through delivering products or services that help the area in which they operate.

Part of this project has been the delivery of a website, facilitated by under-graduate, Ian Pack, from the University of Essex, who joined Colbea for 8 weeks this summer as part of the 'Shell Step' scheme.

Shell Step gives undergraduates a chance to get hands on experience in small and medium sized businesses and community organisations whilst they are studying. Ian, who is reading for a degree in Computer Science, joined Colbea in June this year and worked closely with Jane Green, Colbea's project's manager.

The Shell Step Awards evening was held on 28th August at the Colchester Town Hall and Ian was thrilled to be named the winner of the Website and Database design award. The website is due to be launched in the near future.

Below: Ian Pack and Jane Green at the Shell Step Awards Evening.



THE NEW ENTERPRISE CLUB

A partnership has been signed between Colbea, the Essex Chambers of Commerce and the Professional Training Centre at Colchester Institute, to provide a comprehensive range of services for local businesses.

The three partners all provide services to the SME sector, which mostly complement each other; for example, the local Chamber of Commerce offers a range of seminars teaching essential business skills; Colbea offers training to business start ups and is about to launch a range of courses aimed at established businesses, and the Professional Training Centre at Colchester Institute offers vocational training, apprenticeships and NVQs, as well as business and professional development.

Denise Rossiter, Operations Director at Essex Chambers of Commerce, was guest speaker at Colbea's Sponsors' Evening on 24 July when the Enterprise Club was launched. She said: "There is a great deal of synergy between our organisations and by pooling resources we can publicise and deliver these services to a great number of local businesses."

Bob Baggalley, Chief Executive at Colbea, said: "The launch of the new Enterprise Club brings an exciting new offer that will guarantee clients first class services to local businesses. We see this as particularly important in the current economic climate which is creating new challenges for business owners and managers and the ability to turn to one source for advice and training and networking will be of great benefit to them."

Above: Bob Baggalley, Denise Rossiter from Essex Chambers of Commerce, Deputy Mayor Henry Spyvee, and Philip George, Chairman of Colbea's Board of Directors.

SUPER START FINALISTS

Five finalists and two winners of Newsquest's brand new Super-Start Competition were clients of the Colbea.

The competition, which was sponsored by Larking Gowen, Fisher Jones Greenwood and Barclays Commercial, took the form of a 'Dragons Den' interview. The finalists, each of whom had to put together a business plan, had to present that plan to a panel of judges who grilled the contestants about their work on the business and their plans for the future.

From the five finalists, four are previous clients of the Colbea and one of those four is an existing tenant in the Colchester Business Centre. The two winners, who each

received a financial prize and the opportunity to meet potential investors, were Mr Brad Seaborn of Violent Delights, an online fashion retailer, and Ms Amanda Ruiz, who also trades online selling Peruvian knitwear for children and adults. Two of the remaining three finalists received advice from Colbea in the early stages of their businesses; they were Ms Sandi Moon, who has started a 'green' business called EasyMaps, and Miss Wendy Irwin from 'GODS' (Girls on Doors), a security business.

CREATING THE RIGHT IMAGE

A COLBEA SUCCESS STORY

Alan Jones and Karen Bury always dreamed of providing a more modern and relaxed style of school photography by starting a business that provided not only a good income, but also a better quality of life for themselves. After coming to Colbea they gained enough confidence to take the big step of setting up "A" Grade Photography.

With a proven track record and experience in school photography, but with little knowledge of setting up or running his own business, Alan sought advice from Colbea. Sessions with the business advisers and the Start In Business Course provided him with the opportunity to plan the business in partnership with Karen. As Alan explains, "With the help of the training courses at Colbea we now have our ideal jobs!" Further advice was provided on a 1-2-1 basis as Alan and Karen launched their business.



Based in Little Clacton, "A" Grade Photography now provides photography for several schools in the Essex and Suffolk area. "A" Grade Photography: 01255 860513.

THANK YOU TO NEW SPONSORS

We have been overwhelmed with the support of our sponsors over the last few months.

Almost all of our existing sponsors have stayed with us and many have increase their contributions to the work of the Agency. We have also been delighted to welcome new sponsors, Mamut Software, Data Partners, The Lemon Tree Restaurant, and Alpha Design Studios.

At a time when many businesses are making cuts it is even more gratifying that businesses in and around Colchester remain willing to support the growth of the economy through the work we do with start up businesses.



EXTENDED SERVICE FOR ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES

EasyPlan is Colbea's new service for businesses that are already trading.

The new EasyPlan service provides advice and mentoring to businesses whether they are in their first few months or have been established for many years.



EasyPlan helps business owners and managers address challenges, grow their businesses and overcome difficulties - a particular need at this point in time when the threats to small businesses are very real.

The advice on offer is practical, and down to earth; our business advisers work with clients to get results...fast!

Here's the comment of one business after seeking advice from EasyPlan:

"My adviser took a bird's eye view of my business. With years of business experience under his belt, he helped me to crystallise the direction in which I needed to take my company."

COLBEA WELCOMES...

...Jim Addison and Denise Rossiter to its non-executive board.

Mr Addison brings with him expertise in education that promises to be of immense value to Colbea as it seeks to reach students and young people in vocational training or considering self-employment, as well as those who hope to become young entrepreneurs. A magistrate since 1990, Mr Addison has held a management post at Colchester Institute for almost 20 years and, since 2004, has been a non-executive director of the local acute hospital Trust.



Ms Rossiter is Operations Director at Essex Chambers of Commerce and brings her passion for customer service and communication to Colbea's board. Her experience includes management in the wine trade and the pharmaceutical industry, as well as running her own business. She is one of Essex Chambers' two executive directors and a member of the Chamber's Finance & Remuneration Committee.

NEW LOGOS

The eagle-eyed among our readers will have spotted that this issue of the sponsors' newsletter has a different logo on the front page. This is part of an update of Colbea's brand to reflect the new services and products on offer.

The logo you see on this newsletter is our overall corporate identity, but look out for similar logos which promote individual services such as EasyPlan, the Business Incubation Centre and our EasyStart Guide - the new version of which will be published later this month.