

# Gala dinner at Contact Centre 'Oscars'

North East contact centres are being urged to support this year's industry dedicated awards and attend the gala dinner.

Following a highly successful debut, the North East Contact Centre Awards have returned for a second year and organiser, Tyne and Wear Development Company has reported strong interest.

With the number of call and contact centres in the region nearing 100 and employment figures standing at approximately 35,000, the sector has become one of the most buoyant and productive in the UK, attracting significant investment from both national and international businesses. Unlike other contact centre commendations, the awards

seek out and reward individual frontline staff that have contributed significantly to the outstanding success of today's North East contact centre industry.

The awards have attracted sponsorship from Contact Centre Professional (CCP) and director, Shona Harper, who will also be a member of the judging panel, says: "The awards last year were a phenomenal success with the quality of entries second to none. This year we hope to build on that success by attracting an even larger entry from contact centres right across the region. In addition to our team oriented categories we have an exciting new award for this years event – North East Contact Centre of the Year 2004."

Backing for the awards also comes from Northern Recruitment Group (NRG), which is sponsoring the 'Biggest Contribution to Business Success' commendation.

The accolades consist of nine 'Oscar' like categories for companies operating a call or contact centre in the North East.

The official awards ceremony and gala dinner will be held at the Hilton Newcastle Gateshead Hotel on October 29. Call 0191 516 9099 to book a table.

# New guide to investment hot spot

A new investment guide was recently launched to give developers and inward investors all the information they need about Tyne and Wear.

Following the success of last year's 'Investors Guide to Tyne and Wear', the publisher - Tyne and Wear Development Company - has produced a second, updated version.

It remains the region's only definitive business information guide and has been produced as part of a larger campaign of activity aimed at promoting Tyne and Wear to property developers and investors.

The 'Investors Guide to Tyne and Wear' was devised to be the best information resource of its kind. It puts up-to-date information on one of Europe's leading investment hot spots at the fingertips of

property developers. The comprehensive guide provides potential inward investors, property end-users and public and private sector partners with up-to-date demographic and economic data. The Guide also provides detailed information on regional infrastructure and financial support networks. This information is not available from another single source in such a clear and concise format.

As well as providing information on the people of Tyne and Wear, their employment structures and their work ethic, the Guide gives detailed information on the region's transport networks and its business and industrial sites. It gives an overview of some of the financial support available to investors in the region.

The Guide is being distributed to regional support organisations, property agents, professional service firms and others involved in attracting investment to the region.

Tim Evans, of international property consultants Knight Frank, said: "The Investors Guide has proved an invaluable tool for property professionals in Tyne and Wear. This information was never available before. Collecting and assembling accurate information on the region for potential investors has always proved an onerous task, but this latest Guide will give us the information we need to make a strong business case for Tyne and Wear."

## Property showcase for Tyne and Wear

The second Tyne and Wear Commercial Property Show is to be held early next year.

Following the success of the first Tyne and Wear Commercial Property Show, organised by Tyne and Wear Development Company early this year, a similar event is to be held at St. James Park on March 18 2005.

The first event attracted local business investors, entrepreneurs and start-ups requiring new or larger premises.

Due to strong interest this year, potential exhibitors – both regional and national companies and organisations – are being encouraged to register now.

Tracy Skinner, marketing officer at Tyne and Wear Development Company, explained: "The event allows businesses looking for new premises in Tyne and Wear to discuss their requirements with a variety of agents and also receive help and support from the economic development departments of the five local authorities.

"Visitors and exhibitors alike acknowledged that the first event was a success and that next year's show will be larger and even better attended."

For more information call Tyne and Wear Development Company direct.



## For assistance or information

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# the investor

## NewLogic investment ahead of schedule



represented a £3m investment with the promise of at least 150 jobs.

Since becoming operational in May, the company has recruited 110 permanent staff and 10 part-time workers. A further 70 are to be recruited within the next six months.

Neil Shotton, chief operating officer at NewLogic, explained: "Business is going better than forecast. We have picked up a number of major blue chip contracts which means we have to accelerate our growth plans.

"The response to recruitment has been strong and the quality of staff has been very encouraging."

The Boldon Business Park facility offers a fully integrated in-house database, contact centre and a direct marketing production unit. NewLogic's investment provides the latest technology and

A growth in new business means investment and jobs recruitment are well underway at NewLogic, which located to South Tyneside several months ago.

NewLogic, a leading customer management group, took over a previously empty 55,000 sq ft facility on Boldon Business Park in South Tyneside. The move

## Tyneside environmental firm expands

Tyneside environmental engineering and waste management company, Safety and Ecology Corporation (SEC) is to become the international headquarters of its US-owner as it embarks upon ambitious growth plans.

Tennessee-based safety and environmental remediation company, Safety & Ecology Holdings Corporation, is strengthening its North Tyneside operation, SEC Ltd – resulting in further investment and job creation.

Jack Macrae, president of the Tennessee-based parent group, has relocated to the UK to set up home in Newcastle to oversee the expansion. The 14-strong consultancy based at Royal Quays, North Shields is set to create 20 specialist jobs over the next two years as it grows in the UK and expands onto the Continent.

Assisting in this expansion is Tyne and Wear Development Company, which, along with local

accountancy firm UNW, helped SEC Ltd submit a successful RSA grant application to One NorthEast.

The Company began working with SEC last year when it started negotiations to acquire the assets of Gateshead-based Environmental Technology Consultants (ETC), a division of Motherwell Bridge Nuclear, which had gone into administrative receivership. SEC Ltd secured a £100,000 RSA grant, which helped safeguard former ETC jobs and secure the position for further growth.

Jack Macrae, managing director of the former ETC business, now called SEC Ltd, explained: "The acquisition of the Tyneside business takes SEC into a new field of work and provides us with a huge opportunity to diversify and expand into international markets. We now have two significant bases of expertise - one the nuclear market in the US and the other in contaminated land and remedial work here in the UK."

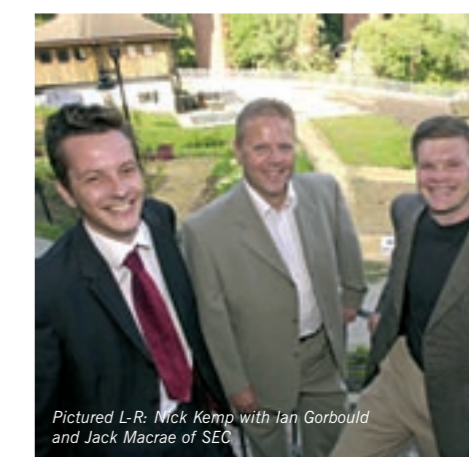
software, enabling its staff to deliver clients a totally different offering.

The investment has been made possible thanks to support from Tyne and Wear Development Company, South Tyneside Council and One NorthEast. The council provided significant financial support and One NorthEast contributed with a Regional Selective Assistance grant.

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "Having worked with NewLogic since the initial enquiry we are delighted that the whole deal came together and is now developing ahead of schedule. NewLogic is another high quality business investing in the region, providing a good mix of skilled jobs."

Neil Shotton added: "The assistance from local suppliers and business support organisations like Tyne and Wear Development Company has been fantastic and truly first class.

"Tyne and Wear Development Company have kept the project on track and Paul Buie has been a tower of strength. They have been invaluable on a number of issues and we look forward to maintaining the relationship."



Nick Kemp, of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "We are delighted to have assisted such a high quality, international-focused consultancy. SEC not only safeguarded local jobs but promises to more than double employment in the coming year. This is a high quality operation with world-class prospects."

## New UK HQ for Tyneside

Plans are near completion for heavy machinery importer HM Plant to relocate to South Tyneside and establish its new £5m UK headquarters.

Earlier this year the company, the UK's official distributor of Hitachi Construction Equipment, announced it was relocating from its base in Bridgewater, Somerset.

HM Plant is moving into a 60,000sq ft purpose-built super-depot on Monkton Business Park, Hebburn creating up to 100 new jobs.

The company recently started a major recruitment drive looking for paint sprayers, admin staff and heavy plant workers.

Gateshead-born HM Plant chairman, John Jones, has hailed the area's "highly skilled and adaptable workforce" as its "greatest asset", and revealed that it was the key factor behind the decision to relocate.

North East workers have a proven track record when it comes to productivity, with Nissan in Sunderland being ranked the most productive car plant in Europe for seven consecutive years. As well as this, the annual level of staff turnover is less than 8.5 per cent and the absenteeism rate is also low at 2.2 per cent – the lowest figure in the UK.



"Employees in this area are generally characterised as flexible, loyal and reliable," said Mr Jones. "These factors have played – and will continue to play – a huge part in the success of HM Plant."

"There was also the fact that our biggest supplier – Hitachi Construction Equipment – opened a new factory near Amsterdam in Holland. During our early visits to the Dutch site, it quickly became

apparent that Hitachi's move was targeted at providing a seamless logistical process from the main European manufacturing plant to the UK, and other key markets."

Investment officers at South Tyneside Council and Tyne and Wear Development Company, which helped broker the move are delighted at HM Plant's imminent arrival.

Nick Kemp, business development officer at Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "We began a site location search for HM Plant across the different premises in the region, which culminated in John choosing this site."

"We are delighted at the arrival of an engineering firm in the borough. This will make use of the traditional and advanced skills that exist in the region – there is a ready-made workforce here and John is fully aware of that."

HM Plant bosses examined all the options as they looked for the most cost-effective and efficient sea route for shipping Hitachi's new range of Zaxis excavators before deciding that the east coast, and Monkton Business Park in particular, offered the best location.

## Automotive giants set to visit Sunderland

Leading international motor industry experts will once again gather in Sunderland this October to discuss issues and opportunities facing the industry.



The seventh International Automotive Conference, organised by Ultima Media with the City of Sunderland, will focus on procurement strategies throughout the automotive world. This year's event is supported by Nissan and sponsored by TRW, along with the University of Sunderland and Tyne and Wear Development Company.

Taking place at the University of Sunderland, on October 20 and 21, the conference will feature senior representatives from many of the world's top automotive organisations. These will

include Ford, Nissan UK, Renault, Johnson Controls, BMW Mini, Peugeot Citroen, Toyota, and MG Rover. Last year's successful conference attracted delegates from around the globe, including Germany, the USA and France.

The conference will be held at the University of Sunderland's St Peter's Campus and this year delegates will be given the opportunity to attend plant visits to Nissan and TRW.

For further information visit the website [www.iacsunderland.com](http://www.iacsunderland.com) or to register call Yvonne Szuca on 020 8987 0902.

## Industry showcase going strong

North East manufacturing companies are being invited to showcase their products and services at the region's premier engineering solutions event.

Still going strong after nine years, Northern Manufacturing is a technology led exhibition, serving the needs of local industry and providing an opportunity to source professional products and services from over 200 suppliers.

Over the years, Northern Manufacturing has built up an enviable reputation and this year is expected to attract an audience of some 2000 buyers from across the North East, Scottish Borders and Yorkshire.

The manufacturing industry remains a strong force in the region with a number of major inward investors who work in manufacturing related fields including Nissan, Swan Hunter, Sanofi Synthelabo, TRW, Atmel and Nestlé.

For those involved in design, production, plant or procurement, Northern Manufacturing 2004 is an event not to be missed. The two-day exhibition is scheduled to take place on October 20 and 21 at the Metro Radio Arena in Newcastle and will include FREE advice clinics and seminars.

With backing from Tyne and Wear Development Company and the region's five local authorities, the event promises to be both the largest and best attended of its kind in the North of England.

Tyne and Wear Development Company is keen to hear from any companies that are interested in exhibiting at the event. Please contact Tracy Skinner on 0191 516 9099 or email [locations@tyne-wear.co.uk](mailto:locations@tyne-wear.co.uk) for further information.

## City gets a taste for the Canaries



Pictured L-R: Edward Lennie with Nick Kemp

Tyneside is leading the way in gastronomic delights in the UK with the recent opening of a Canarian restaurant. The innovative Mojos, in Newcastle, is the idea of husband and wife team Edward and Lisa Lennie.

The restaurant, adjacent to the Tyneside Foyer, on Westgate Road, features authentic dishes from the Canary Islands. It is thought to be the first Canarian restaurant outside of the islands – and has created 12 new jobs.

The project has been made possible with support and help from Tyne and Wear Development Company, which assisted with the business plan and introduced other support agencies including Business Link and Newcastle City Council.

Up until 18 months ago Edward and Lisa had been living in Tenerife with their two young sons.

"This has been my dream for 15 years," said Edward. "As soon as I was introduced to Canarian chicken and Mojos sauce I knew that I wanted to set up my own business in my hometown."

He mastered the art of cooking authentic Canarian dishes by working in a restaurant in Tenerife for five years. While he was out there he also ran his own bar for a long period.

Edward explained: "Tyne and Wear Development Company has been very supportive and offered a lot of sound, practical advice, which has proved critical to our successful opening."

Nick Kemp, of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "It is great for the City to be attracting a new, innovative food business and to be leading the way in the UK. We are delighted to have offered some direct support and signposted Edward and his team to Business Link and Employment Services."

## Fashion brand set to hit the streets

Fashion conscious young people around the UK may soon be wearing a new brand – Scruffy Urchin – designed and launched in Tyne and Wear.

Entrepreneur Steve Watts recently established his own screen-printing business, Butterfly Promotions, on Sedgely Industrial Estate, Sunderland.

From here he produces printed t-shirts and other clothing accessories for a range of clients. Many of these are printed to order and feature logos that are requested.

But Steve explained: "There are two sides of the business, with the real growth potential in the successful development of my own brand label – Scruffy Urchin."

"Working with a local designer we came up with the concept and have already secured some distribution outlets to sell our own t-shirts. The aim is to find other distribution outlets across the region

and UK, while continuing our other screen-printing business for mainly promotional clients."

The hope is that Scruffy Urchin will become a must-have label among those young people whose lifestyle is based around surfing, skateboarding and other outdoor leisure pursuits.

Steve only recently returned to his native North East after selling up a successful coffee shop business chain in the south of England.

He approached Tyne and Wear Development Company for business advice and assistance in locating appropriate premises for his new venture. The Company also provided financial assistance through the Tyne and Wear Small Business Grant, which allowed Mr Watt's to purchase essential equipment.

Nick Kemp, of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "We very much believe that Butterfly Promotions has the potential to develop



Steve Watts

and grow. Steve has an entrepreneurial background and the ability to identify a market opportunity which can lead to future job creation."

Butterfly Promotions was also signposted to Business Link which helped provide financial assistance for marketing consultancy and website design.