

ESRI maps out growth

A world leader in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) is expanding its operations in Tyne and Wear after six successful years in the region.

ESRI UK has doubled the size of its office space to 1700 sq ft after investing in state-of-the-art premises at Gateshead's new Waterfront development. The £40 million turnover firm, which has its head office in Aylesbury, was previously based at the Imex Business Centre in Durham and sees the move as part of a push for growth.

ESRI arrived in the region in 2000 and has seen its regional workforce grow to seven thanks to a range of contracts with local and central government, utilities and private sector customers.

The move was assisted by Tyne and Wear Development Company, which used its extensive knowledge of the region to identify a base that could match the company's future needs.

John Clayson, programme manager at ESRI, explained: "Our North East base has performed strongly over the past five years and we'd really outgrown our previous home. We've enjoyed a successful start to life in Tyne and Wear and this gives us the platform to expand and meet future orders.

"The Waterfront is an ideal base, both in terms of location and facilities, and we have to thank Tyne and Wear Development Company for its support. They were quick to recognise our business needs and to identify suitable premises in no time at all."



John Clayson from ESRI with Deborah Fletcher

ESRI specialises in the delivery of GIS solutions and software packages across the world. In the UK its products have become the leading mapping system across a broad range of market areas.

Deborah Fletcher, information officer at Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "ESRI has made big strides in the region in a short time and the move is a natural progression for them."

Vanguard moves on

Tyne and Wear Development Company has helped one of the region's leading business systems providers to invest in new premises as it pushes for growth.

Vanguard, which provides bespoke software, accountancy systems, networking and contact management solutions to businesses across the North East, plans to double its turnover in five years and has moved into larger premises in Gateshead.

It has set up home at the Kingsway Centre on Team Valley after taking advantage of Tyne and Wear Development Company's comprehensive investor support programme to identify the right property and secure a deal.

Set up in 1994, Vanguard is an authorised business partner of Sage and Microsoft and sees its new larger premises as a key component of its growth plans. It recently developed a bespoke Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS)

software package for specialist retailers.

Jo Reiling, general manager at Vanguard said: "We'd looked for new premises for quite a while without finding what we wanted, so we were very grateful when Tyne and Wear Development Company were able to step in and help us.

"With the expertise they have, they were able to guide us through the process in no time, locating the right area, a fantastic base and even arranging all the meetings with letting agents. Team Valley is one of the North East's flagship business sites and an ideal location from which to grow our business."

Deborah Fletcher, information officer at Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "Vanguard is a successful and well established North East business that operates at the forefront of one of the region's fast-growing industries. This investment will help them to achieve their plans for future growth."

Conference calls on contact centres



The first North East Contact Centre Conference which took place at the Sage Gateshead earlier this month has been hailed a success.

Hosted by Tyne and Wear Development Company in association with One NorthEast and the Contact Centre Advisory Board, the conference attracted many guests including key industry figures and business support organisations.

The sector is one of the fastest growing in the region, with more than 53,000 people employed in over 150 contact centres. The conference was held to develop a blueprint for the industry's future with the intention of securing fresh investment and new jobs.

Chairman of One NorthEast Margaret Fay headed an impressive list of guest speakers that included Julie Jaglowski, from Npower, and Amy Watson, from twenty4help.

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "While we can be justifiably proud of North East contact centres, which are recognised around the world for their skills and productivity, this is a highly competitive industry and we cannot afford to stand still.

"The conference has been an important stepping

stone towards the development of a workable, long-term plan for the industry and its workforce."

Peter Shields, business services sector manager at One NorthEast said: "To have held the first North East Contact Centre Conference is another step forward to ensure that our contact centres stay at the forefront of the industry in the face of growing competition from abroad. We need to ensure that access to best practice and technology is available as well as making sure the workforce is the most skilled around."

Other highlights on the day included a talk from Pen Hadow, one of the world's leading polar explorers, who talked about his missions and improving performance. Top motivational speaker, trainer and comedian Kenny Harris was also on hand to discuss the concept of 'headsurfing' – a creativity programme designed to encourage more creative thinking among teams and individuals.

David Allison, director of business and development at One NorthEast added: "This is a key sector in the region and it is important that we don't rest on our laurels but seek to work together to actively grow business performance and give the North East a competitive advantage to secure new jobs and prosperity for our region."

For assistance or information

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Investing in people

It's been a successful start to 2007 for Tyne and Wear Development Company which has been rewarded with Investors in People (IIP) status.

The company was granted the mark earlier this month after successfully matching all the criteria laid down by IIP, which is widely regarded as the UK's leading benchmark for measuring improvements in working practices and performance.

Having celebrated its 20th birthday last year, Tyne and Wear Development Company remains the major facilitator of business investment within the region.

It was able to maintain its IIP status for another three years thanks to its strong programme of staff training and development. The mark demonstrates the company's willingness to match support for local business investment with investment in people.

Carole Clark, office manager at Tyne and Wear Development Company said: "This is good news for the company and for local business investors, who rely on us to provide a quality service. That's why we place such a strong emphasis on ensuring staff are equipped with first class skills.

"IIP is a widely recognised industry standard and we're happy to have the stamp of approval for another three years."

For more information about the support available to investors from Tyne and Wear Development Company, please visit www.tyne-wear.co.uk or call 0191 516 9099.



GE Money creates new jobs

GE Money is creating over 400 new jobs in Tyne and Wear as part of a multi-million pound investment in new office space.

The company is expanding its operations at Cobalt Business Park in North Tyneside with the construction of a purpose built facility that will accommodate up to 1000 people.

The investment continues to build on the success of its current operation, which opened in 2005 and currently employs 450 people. Construction of the new building has begun and is due to be completed in 2008.

Tyne and Wear Development Company is again supporting GE Money with its investment plans. Having led the investment team that helped to attract GE Money to the region, it has provided ongoing assistance with the latest phase of growth. It will also provide help with future recruitment and training.

Stewart Macphail, CEO, GE Money Cards UK said: "This multi-million pound investment represents the biggest investment in property GE Money has ever made, and reinforces our commitment to growth and job creation in Tyne and Wear. The



Paul Buie (right) with Bev Chapman from GE Money

new development will create over 400 new jobs – taking our local workforce to over 800."

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "This is excellent news for the region. GE Money is a world class employer

and this investment underlines its long-term commitment to the area.

"GE Money has enjoyed significant success here and the skills, productivity and high retention rates of the local workforce have played a key role in that."

Property show a good bet for investors

Businesses looking to invest in new premises are encouraged to visit this year's Tyne and Wear Commercial Property Show. The event will take place on Thursday March 29 at Newcastle Racecourse and is being organised by Tyne and Wear Development Company.

It is the fourth time the event has been held and it has rapidly grown into the region's largest commercial property event. Last year's show at Sunderland's Stadium of Light attracted over 300 visitors and 30 exhibitors from across the UK.

A list of top names including Knight Frank, Sanderson Weatherall and stores: ssp have signed up to exhibit at this year's show and will highlight the region's growing portfolio of property opportunities.

Deborah Fletcher at Tyne and Wear Development Company said: "The region

is blessed with an abundance of high quality business parks and commercial premises and that is reflected in the success of the show.

"Investing capital in new premises is a major decision and the property show can make life that bit easier. It's a good opportunity to find out what's on offer, the support that's available and discuss individual requirements with agents."

UK Land Estates and Estates Gazette are sponsoring the show together with the five local authorities of Tyne and Wear – Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

Anyone interested in attending should contact Tyne and Wear Development Company on 0191 516 9099 or visit www.commercialpropertyshow.co.uk All visitors who enter online will be entered into a free prize draw.

MSSL gears up for growth

An Indian manufacturing firm is making its home on Tyneside with support from Tyne and Wear Development Company.

Automotive supplier Motherson Sumi Systems Ltd (MSSL) arrived in the region last year when it stepped in to buy Gateshead based ASL – a manufacturer of wiring systems for commercial vehicles.

Such has been the success of the move that MSSL, India's leading supplier of cable harnesses and electronic control systems, is already looking ambitiously to the future.

Tyne and Wear Development Company assisted

the firm with its relocation plans and has continued to provide support as it settles in on Tyneside, helping the company on a range of issues as well as introducing key regional contacts including Gateshead Council's Business Team who advised on housing and schools in the area.

Head of operations at MSSL, Anurag Gahlot, said: "Gateshead is a key centre for us and we've got an ambitious target of doubling sales in the next five years.

"We couldn't have asked for more support from Tyne and Wear Development Company. They've

been fantastic both in supporting individual employees and the growth plans of the company as a whole."

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "Tyne and Wear has a strong manufacturing heritage, particularly in the automotive sector.

"It's encouraging to see major global names like MSSL choosing to invest in the region and tap into the skills base that we have here. We've been able to use our extensive contact base to help the company and its employees settle into life in the region as quickly as possible."

Hanseatic sails into Tyneside

One of the world's biggest shipping management companies has chosen Tyne and Wear as the site for its Northern European headquarters.

Cyprus based Hanseatic Shipping Company Limited has opened an office at Orion Business Park in North Tyneside. Currently employing eight staff, it expects to create up to 20 new jobs over the next three years.

Hanseatic is part of the Shulte Group and has offices in Cyprus, Athens, Singapore and Hamburg, providing a full range of management services including technical, quality, safety services and crew provision. It was Cyprus's first shipping management company.

Hanseatic has chosen Tyne and Wear as its Northern European base to be close to the operational area of the majority of its ships in the North Sea and the Baltic.

It has been supported in its move by Tyne and Wear Development Company and Gladman Developments and picked the area in a straight choice between Newcastle and Rotterdam.

Philip Harwood, Hanseatic's technical manager said: "The North East won hands down because of the availability of experienced and skilled labour in the maritime industries.

"The primary function of our regional offices is to



(L-R) Phil Harwood, Jane Stonehouse (GVA Lamb and Edge), Jonathan Sykes (King Sturge) and Paul Buie

improve our client services by locating well qualified staff closer to the vessels they manage, enabling them to visit the ships more frequently, so when we were looking for new office accommodation around Newcastle, good communications and ease of access were paramount.

"Hedley Court came up trumps because of its proximity to the airport and the good road links via the Tyne Tunnel and A19. We're particularly grateful to Tyne and Wear Development Company for its support."

Paul Buie, manager, Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "Hanseatic is an internationally recognised name and its arrival reflects the area's ongoing ability to attract big name inward investors who want to take advantage of the excellent skills base and facilities available throughout the region."

Hanseatic bought its 2,250 sq ft office building at the popular Hedley Court speculative office scheme from Gladman Developments.

Tanfield lands upright

One of Tyne and Wear's leading manufacturers has created 400 jobs as part of a deal to revive a flagship business site.

Tanfield Group has moved to the former LG Electronics plant in Washington with the support of Tyne and Wear Development Company after buying Irish firm UpRight Powered Access.

Tanfield Group was able to move production to the facility after Tyne and Wear Development Company helped to identify the vigo250 site as a suitable venue. Regional development agency One North East provided a Selective Finance for Investment (SFI) grant of £1.95 million.

Deborah Fletcher, information officer at Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "It's good to see a regional manufacturer that is prospering and expanding at a time when the world manufacturing market is more competitive than it's ever been.

"The vigo250 site is one of the biggest and best

in the region and needed a high profile occupant. It matches the current and future needs of Tanfield Group and we're delighted to have helped out."

The acquisition of UpRight - which manufactures global access platforms, more commonly known as cherry pickers - is Tanfield Group's biggest to date.

As part of the deal, Tanfield gained sales and spare parts distribution centres in the UK, United States, China and Japan, along with an extensive independent global dealership and distribution network for UpRight products.

Roy Stanley, chief executive and chairman of the Tanfield Group, said: "Our vision is to build a global manufacturing business with the North East as its heartland.

"Vigo Centre is a fantastic base for the new operation and we'd like to thank Tyne and Wear Development Company for pulling out all the stops to support us."



Roy Stanley with Deborah Fletcher

HB set to grow



Paul Buie (left) with David Snell

A start-up bio-science company looks set to expand after support from Tyne and Wear Development Company.

HB Innovations (HBI), headed by David Snell – a PhD graduate from Sunderland University with over a decade's academic and business experience, has been set up to sell research and development expertise across the globe.

Specialising in in-vitro diagnostics, HBI is based at the Medical School at Newcastle University and has ambitious plans to grow its workforce from three to more than 25 over the next three years.

HBI will supply research and development services to diagnostics companies around the world. It also plans to build a portfolio of its own innovations and new products to be offered to other SME companies unable to commit to their own development programmes.

David, who is the managing director, said: "Diagnostics is a specialist area with a growing global market. We intend to use the skills we have in the North East to meet the demand for research and development expertise across the globe.

"For many firms, research and development gets overtaken by the commercial demands of product sales and marketing. We can help overcome this conundrum by providing specialist skills as and when required."

Tyne and Wear Development Company has supported David and his colleagues throughout the development of the business – using its network of contacts to identify sources of funding and potential facilities.

David added: "Tyne and Wear Development Company has been a massive help over the last six months, helping to turn our business plan into a reality with sensible advice and by putting us in touch with the right people."

Paul Buie, manager at Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "HB Innovations is one of a growing number of bio-science companies beginning to put Tyne and Wear's name on the map as a hot-bed for innovative research and development. We're delighted to be working with them to help the business takeoff."

New face for investment team



New business development officer Jim Malloy

Tyne and Wear Development Company has recruited Jim Malloy as its new business development officer.

His role will be to work closely with the region's local authorities and economic development agencies to support local businesses with investment plans and attract new investors to the area.

Jim joins Tyne and Wear Development Company from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) owned Defence Diversification Agency (DDA). Here he was responsible for brokering two-way technology transfer between exploiters of technology – particularly in UK industry - and the MoD's own research and technology base.

He has a strong track record in inward investment having also worked in sector development for Regional Development Agency One NorthEast. He began his career with Sony, working at its manufacturing plant in South Wales for 10 years before returning to his native North East.

Jim said: "Tyne and Wear has been very successful at supporting inward investment in recent years – with new hi-tech industries emerging alongside our important traditional sectors.

"My role will be to continue this process by working with my colleagues to support potential investors across all sectors. I know the patch very well and am looking forward to catching up with regional contacts and supporting local businesses."

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "Jim is well known within the region and understands the issues facing local businesses and those looking to relocate here.

"His appointment is a major asset for us and will help to continue our success in supporting business investment and growth in Tyne and Wear."

Pipe firm moves to Gateshead

A company that specialises in environmental protection systems is moving to the North East and creating 11 jobs.

German firm epros is investing in premises at Follingsby Park in Gateshead after benefiting from the support of Tyne and Wear Development Company.

Founded in 1992, epros is a key player in the international pipe and sewer repair market and has developed a patented technique for repairing pipes without digging holes.

Gateshead will become the company's UK base and will employ a range of technical and sales staff. epros exports to over 42 countries and the international business will now be based out of Gateshead as opposed to Germany.

epros was able to tap into investment support from Tyne and Wear Development Company to relocate to the region. Through its property search team, the agency was able to identify a number of properties which matched epros's needs.

Danielle Colligan, operations manager for epros in the UK, said: "Tyne and Wear is an excellent base for us. The facilities here are good and we have access to a ready-made workforce with first class skills."

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, added: "This is another shot in the arm for the regional economy and shows Tyne and Wear remains an attractive proposition for inward investors. It's important we are able to attract investors of the calibre of epros, capable of creating skilled jobs."