

REPAIR BUSINESS GIVEN A LIFT

A GROWING TYNESIDE TRANSPORT REPAIR BUSINESS HAS BEEN GIVEN A LIFT AFTER INVESTING IN NEW PREMISES AS IT EXPANDS ITS OPERATIONS.

A+M Wyness, which specialises in the repair and installation of transport lifting equipment, has opened a new workshop on Team Valley, Gateshead.

The company was formed in 2007 by experienced lift and hydraulics engineer Alan Wyness and his wife Michelle. Originally a mobile business run from their home, it has grown steadily and now employs six people. The new workshop will provide the space and facilities the company needs to carry out major repairs and store its vehicles.

The expansion was facilitated by Gateshead Council and Tyne and Wear Development Company, which helped A+M Wyness to identify the site and provided support through the Council's Regeneration Grant scheme, part of the Enterprise and Innovation Fund which aims to stimulate business growth.

Michelle Wyness, finance director, said: "The new workshop is fantastic and is in the perfect place. It's close to the A1 which logistically is very important for us and our customers."

Michelle added: "Finding the right site was challenging. Our repair vehicles offer a mobile and very flexible service

(L to r) Laura Woppett (A+M Wyness), David Pattison (Tyne and Wear Development Company), Michelle Wyness, Alan Wyness and Steven Henderson (all A+M Wyness)



for clients but we needed somewhere to undertake more major repair work. This needed to be in a central location, have great transport links, space for our equipment and have high doors to allow our vehicles to enter – so it wasn't straightforward.

Tyne and Wear Development Company and Gateshead Council have been superb. They went far and above

the call of duty to help as we'd looked at several sites beforehand and couldn't find anywhere that matched our needs."

IN THE NEWS...

"On the ground, NGI and Tyne and Wear Development Company both do a great job lobbying and promoting inward investment, but these efforts need to be brought together with the role of the new local enterprise partnerships (LEP)."

Fergus Trim, Quorum Business Park
rebusiness magazine, July 2011

topic for each meeting. Some of the key issues covered so far include improving customer satisfaction, people management, training, using technology to improve communications and managing staff absence.

Customer satisfaction is clearly a hot topic as it generated the highest number of attendees who actively participated in a lively discussion on the approaches adopted by companies both large and small.

A number of workshops have also proved useful in helping contact centres look at new ways of improving their performance. Newcastle University ran one particular session looking at the principles of continuous improvement and how this could be applied to contact centres to standardise and improve working practices.

Alma added: "This was a particularly good event as it included a case study from one of our major contact centres, which demonstrated how Six Sigma can be used, not only to ensure consistency of performance but also to problem solve, motivate and retain staff.

"We have held 10 sessions so far and look forward to maintaining the impetus going forward so would be delighted to hear from new members with further topics to discuss or best practice to share with their peers."



Alma Harrison, Tyne and Wear Development Company

Tyne and Wear Development Company Ltd is a controlled company within the meaning of Part V of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The relevant authorities are Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside MBC, South Tyneside MBC and Sunderland City Council.



THE INVESTOR

realise your potential...

LIFE SCIENCES COMPANY EXPANDS



(L to r) Barry Hextall, Cllr Michael Clare, Ken Samson (One North East) and Jim Malloy

A NORTH EAST LIFE SCIENCES COMPANY IS DOUBLING THE SIZE OF ITS OPERATIONS IN THE REGION AND EXPECTS TO CREATE 50 NEW JOBS BY 2013.

Immunodiagnostic Systems (IDS) is investing in an extra 20,000 sq ft of production and office space next door to its current base on Boldon Business Park as it gears up for rapid growth in the US and Europe.

The expansion will allow the medical diagnostic firm, a world leader in vitamin D testing kits, to consolidate several key functions in one site and has been assisted by Tyne and Wear Development Company.

The business support agency has been working with senior management at IDS since late 2009 to keep the investment on Tyneside, evaluating the company's needs and identifying possible expansion sites and sources of funding.

Regional development agency One North East backed the project with a grant of £245,000 from the Grant for Business Investment scheme, with additional funding provided by South Tyneside Council.

IDS, which saw revenues grow over 35 per cent to £50m last year, has been based in South Tyneside since 1990 and also has a manufacturing facility in Belgium as well as other European operations. 110 of its 290 strong workforce are based in South Tyneside.

The AIM listed company has seen demand for its products grow as vitamin D testing is used to treat an increasing number of medical conditions. It hopes to boost sales beyond £100m in five years by selling its latest product in the US.

Barry Hextall, deputy finance director at IDS, said: "This is a major step for IDS and it couldn't have come at a better time to coincide with the US launch of our automated testing system. We've enjoyed significant growth since we floated back in 2004 as demand for vitamin D and other specialist diagnostic testing grows globally but the US is the biggest market in the world and this is creating huge opportunities.

"The advice from Tyne and Wear Development Company in evaluating our needs and helping us find a solution has been invaluable. Along with the funding from One North East and South Tyneside Council it means we can continue to operate from our existing base in the long-term."

Jim Malloy from Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "This is an important expansion for IDS and the support the company has received ensures it will keep its headquarters in Tyne and Wear.

"The company has a number of European operations so there was serious competition from each of these sites, particularly Belgium. It's been a long process but we're delighted that the advice and support package we've been able to put together with our partners will enable IDS to meet its growing order book from the same location."

CONTACT CENTRES PREPARE FOR AWARDS

THE STARS OF THE NORTH EAST CONTACT CENTRE INDUSTRY WILL TAKE CENTRE STAGE WHEN THE ANNUAL INDUSTRY 'OSCAR' AWARDS ARE HELD IN NOVEMBER.

Entries are now open for the North East Contact Centre Awards 2011 which will take place at Sunderland's Rainton Meadows Arena on Friday November 4th.

The awards, which are always popular and well attended, recognise the achievements of the region's 60,000 contact centre employees with a variety of team and individual awards on offer.

Tyne and Wear Development Company is organising the awards in association with NRG. The closing date for entries, which are judged by an independent panel of industry experts, is September 16th.

This year's sponsors are NRG, Avanta, BQ Magazine, GEM Premium People Recruitment, Sunderland City Council, Quorum Business Park, Contact Centre Professional and Sinclair Voicenet. Call Centre Helper is the event's media partner.

Further information about the awards is available at www.contactcentreawards.co.uk or by emailing enquiries@contactcentreawards.co.uk.

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BRIGHT FUTURE FOR MULTI-LAB



(L to R) Ken Samson, Ron Jackman and Jim Malloy

A FAMILY RUN NEWCASTLE MANUFACTURER HAS INVESTED IN NEW PREMISES AND CREATED AT LEAST 12 NEW JOBS AS IT GEARS UP FOR EXPANSION ON THE BACK OF A MAJOR NEW PROJECT.

Multi-lab, which is based in Newburn, is one of the world's leading specialists in fabricated quartz glass and ceramic technology for industrial applications.

Thanks to support from Tyne and Wear Development Company, it has invested in a new 26,000 sq ft property at Newburn Riverside Business Park backed by funding of £36,000 from One North East. It is also

investing in new CNC machines and a carousel manufacturing system.

The move will enable the company to develop and supply quartz glass housings for a new, high efficiency plasma lamp. Eventual orders for the product could run into several million units.

Ron Jackman, managing director of Multi-lab, said: "The market is very strong at the moment, particularly the solar and semi-conductor sector, and we've enjoyed a successful past 12 months.

"We've recruited eight new staff in this time to meet our growing orders and the existing site is operating at capacity so we need to move on.

"The investment will provide the space we need as well as world class facilities and technology. It will also help us to reduce running costs and achieve significant production efficiencies."

Multi-lab, which employs 70 people across the UK, boasts around 90 per cent of the UK fabricated quartz glass market and is one of the top three firms in Europe.

Ron Jackman, group sales director, added: "These are exciting times for the company and we're delighted to be involved in so many excellent projects. The support from Tyne and Wear Development Company and One North East has been extremely useful and will help to underpin a successful future for Multi-lab."

Tyne and Wear Development Company assisted Multi-lab with its initial property search and also advised the team on sources of funding available for capital projects.

AIR TREATMENT SPECIALIST GROWS

A SPECIALIST AIR TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY COMPANY IS EXPANDING AFTER INVESTING IN NEW PROPERTY WITH SUPPORT FROM TYNE AND WEAR DEVELOPMENT COMPANY AND GATESHEAD COUNCIL.

Independent Air Treatment Technology Ltd (IATT), which was set up last year and has grown its workforce to 12, has moved into new premises in Gateshead.

The company specialises in filtration, air and gas treatment technologies. Initially focussing on the service and repair of compressed air and gas, it has seen demand growing in the food and chemical sectors for the supply of its turnkey compressed air products.

It has now moved into a new 3,000 sq ft site at Neilson Road in Gateshead having received support from Tyne and Wear Development Company which was able to secure support grants from Gateshead Council towards the business rates and capital costs.

Trevor Clark, managing director of IATT, said: "Most

factory processes rely on compressed air somewhere along the line, so the market's quite broad, although the food and chemical sectors are key areas for us.

"In recent times, given the state of the economy, there's been a reluctance to invest in new technology so there's been more demand for servicing and repairs. However, we're optimistic that a two pronged attack is the best way forward, and expect to enjoy growth in our supplies business.

"The facility we now have in Gateshead is very impressive and fits the bill perfectly for a growing company of our size. It's modern and has lots of space so we're very thankful to Tyne and Wear Development Company and Gateshead Council for helping us to identify the property and contributing towards the costs for kitting it out."

David Pattison, who is seconded to Gateshead Council from Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "When Trevor approached us with his business plan, we could see the potential of the company, and were quickly able to help him locate an excellent site and access a number of grants provided by Gateshead Council to support start-up and young companies."



Trevor Clark (left) and David Pattison



Prof Ian Purves, CEO; Richard Hall, chief operations officer; Sharon Smart, director of clinical knowledge

CLARITY HAS CLEAR VISION

A NEWCASTLE-BASED BUSINESS WHICH PROVIDES DATA FOR DOCTORS AND SURGEONS HAS CLEAR PLANS FOR GROWTH AFTER HELP FROM TYNE AND WEAR DEVELOPMENT COMPANY.

Clarity Informatics is set to target growth in the Middle East and create new jobs after doubling its turnover and moving into bigger premises.

The firm, which started as a Newcastle University spin-out a decade ago, saw turnover rise from £2.5m to £5m last year.

It expects sales to increase by a further 50 per cent in 2011 – creating 20 new jobs – following a series of major contract wins with the NHS and a healthcare provider in Saudi Arabia.

To pave the way for the anticipated growth, Clarity has invested in bigger premises at Clayton House in Newcastle complete with an additional 2,000 sq ft of space and state-of-the-art IT infrastructure.

Clarity's chief executive Professor Ian Purves said: "With the constant advances in medical science, no one can keep abreast of medical developments without easily accessible, evidence based support, and that's the core of our business.

"Until 2010 we worked exclusively for the NHS and many of our products were developed in partnership with the NHS. Step changes in the way that the Department of Health and the NHS commission

services prompted us to remodel our business proposition and look further afield for new clients."

Tyne and Wear Development Company advised the firm on the project, helping to identify potential premises for expansion and securing growth funding. The challenge was to identify a site close to Clarity's old base in Newcastle city centre.

Jim Malloy from Tyne and Wear Development Company said: "Clarity is a fast growing local business in a niche market. It has developed an innovative portfolio of products and is now ready to embark on the next phase of its development following several key business wins.

"The move and the investment will help to provide the platform and resources the firm needs to realise its rich potential."

IN THE NEWS...

"Tyne and Wear Development Company has worked hand-in-hand with developers to deliver thousands of new jobs and we very much hope there is further investment in their important role in economic development."

Tim Evans, Knight Frank Journal, June 29th

NEW INVESTOR WEBSITE

TYNE AND WEAR DEVELOPMENT COMPANY HAS LAUNCHED A NEW WEBSITE TO PROVIDE EXTRA SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS INVESTORS.

The new site, developed by Urban River Creative, offers investors instant access to a broad range of detailed information about Tyne and Wear in one place.

At the click of a finger, investors can access information on property, sites, finance, key regional industries and labour. It also details the services provided by Tyne and Wear Development Company including its property search facility which allows users to request a search of all available office, industrial and warehouse facilities in Tyne and Wear to match their specific requirements.

For more information visit www.tyne-wear.co.uk

NEW LOOK FOR ALIZONNE

A PRIVATE MEDICAL CLINIC OFFERING A RANGE OF NON-SURGICAL WEIGHT REDUCTIONS HAS EXPANDED INTO TYNE AND WEAR.

Alizonne, which operates a chain of private clinics across the UK in London, Leeds and Cheshire, has moved into a new facility at the Silverlink Business Park.

The company specialises in the latest non-surgical treatments and sees Tyneside as the perfect location to develop its client base in the North and Scotland.

It has moved to Silverlink Business Park with the support of Tyne and Wear Development Company and North Tyneside Council, investing in a 3,000 sq ft building with state-of-the-art treatment facilities, office space and car parking.

Alizonne will initially employ 12 trained medical, clinical and administrative professionals at its new base and anticipates this will rise to around 30 over the next three years as its customer base grows.

Chris Matthews, managing director Alizonne North East, explains: "We're delighted to be opening our first centre in Tyne and Wear. There's a growing market for non-surgical weight loss and Tyneside is a good location to grow our client base across the North."

Tyne and Wear Development Company has supported the move acting as an advisor to the company for over a year since its initial enquiry early last summer. Chris approached the company for assistance with planning applications and help in identifying sources of investment support within the region.

He added: "We have to thank Tyne and Wear Development Company for being so supportive and helpful. It's over a year since we first approached them with our project so we appreciate the effort and skill they brought to the table to get things completed – particularly around the various planning regulations we had to meet.

"We knew we wanted to move here but relied a lot on their knowledge of the area and contact book to get things done and guide us through some lengthy negotiations."

Jim Malloy from Tyne and Wear Development Company said: "We're happy to welcome Alizonne to Tyne and Wear. The company is at the forefront of a range of innovative treatments and we wish them every success in building their brand here."



Chris Matthews, managing director