

GIBSON INDEX NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2012 – Issue No. 85

Your Monthly e-Newsletter on British Enterprise and Innovation

Welcome to the UK's most comprehensive and best-read Newsletter on Small Technology Companies, Academic Enterprise and Latest Innovation

Is the shortage of women on boards of listed companies the real issue?

A great deal of media coverage has been given to the news that very few women are currently present on the boards of LSE-listed companies. While that may seem an obvious unfairness, the presence of very large number of women as founders and co-founders of masses of smaller companies and startups is perhaps far more relevant.

Sectors such as biotech and pharma, food & drink, fashion, consumer goods, healthcare, local government, and the creative industries are increasingly known in the US as 'velvet jungles', entirely due to the predominance of women at all levels of the workforce.

In the UK our research shows exactly the same pattern: there are much larger numbers of women entrepreneurs than is generally imagined. In our 48,000-SME database we record whether a woman has been the founder or co-founder of the company. This is true for at least 25 percent of the companies, and the true figure is much higher.

The pattern is common, and obvious: the woman founder has the initial idea and takes a lead role for the first few difficult years of the company's existence, and then takes time out to have a family. When the company reaches maturity the front-of-house figure is often a male MD, seemingly in charge, but the woman involved is often taking a strategic and controlling role behind the scenes. As a result her role can often neglected and under-recognised.

Some examples of successful SME entrepreneurs including **Julie Kenny CBE**, MD of **Pyronix Ltd** in Rotherham, **Denise Harrison**, co-founder of software firm **Liquidlogic**, in Leeds, or former medical illustrator **Margot Cooper** who founded body simulation models company **Limbs & Things Ltd**, in Bristol.

With the declining number of serious manufacturing firms in the UK – there are only 94 manufacturing firms employing more than 1,000 staff – why would talented women want to spend most their time on an LSE board – handing out hundreds of P45s?

www.gibson-index.com

The Newsletter is compiled and edited by **Marcus Gibson**, former *Financial Times* technology correspondent, who has been covering enterprise and innovation for more than 20 years. The Newsletter aims to highlight developments in at least 100+ companies each month. It is derived from the wide-ranging news-gathering operation that produces the [Gibson Index SME database](#), which now contains profiles on more than 48,000 UK-based technology SMEs.

To subscribe to the newsletter: please go to www.gibson-news.com/subs.html

COMPANY OF THE MONTH	4
Family firm Stormsaver helps the UK save 'over 10 billion litres of water'	4
SME NEWS – ENGINEERING, ELECTRONICS, TELECOMS	5
Third Dimension Ltd's GapGun device breaks into international markets	5
Offer Controls named Exporter of the Year at the annual Private Business awards	6
Aurox Ltd aims to make 3D microscopy accessible and affordable	6
iGeolise wins UK leg of the Global SatNav Competition	7
Robotics firm PC Moulding & Automation emerges in Dewsbury	7
Manchester spinout firm buys into the German market	8
Bus manufacturer Alexander Dennis wins 'biggest ever order'	8
End of the track for Lola Cars International, racing car maker	9
TrackaPhone celebrates 10 years of vehicle and asset monitoring	9
Martek Marine notches up seven-fold rise in profits to £1m	9
Scottish firm Paradigm Drilling Services secured £250,000 of TSB funding	10
Subsea engineering and training firm expands operations in Aberdeen	10
SME NEWS – CHEMICALS, MATERIALS & ENVIRONMENT	11
Metalysis develops process to create useful metals – from beach sand	11
Interplas Coatings Ltd grows from one to 30 staff in 'less than one year'	11
Pollyanna Fine Bone China Ltd moves to large factory having won new funding	12
Glofume's ceramic filter technology wins energy award in Vienna	12
Cambustion celebrate 25 years at the forefront of engine emissions research	12
Wood recycling company has earmarked £18m to expand its operations	13
Enval developed method for recycling laminated plastic and aluminium packaging	13
SME NEWS – IT, SOFTWARE, SERVICES & INTERNET	14
Sales at postal operator Secured Mail leap 41 percent to £68m	14
Digital startup Blue Badge Style launches app after support from UCL Advances	14
Blur Group plc offers SMEs a new creative and IT 'project marketplace'	15
Data management firm 1Spatial plc agrees contract with US Government bureau	15
IT services firm adept4 moves to new HQ after doubling its staff	16
Cloud-based software business KashFlow continues growth drive	16
SME NEWS – BIOTECH, PHARMA & MEDICAL SCIENCES	17
Manchester-based Zilico secures a further £750,000 investment in November 2012	17
Holloway Immunology hopes to bring new vaccine technology to market	17
ProtAffin wins Most Innovative European Biotech SME at EuropaBio Awards	18
Nottinghamshire firm BPR Medical continues as UK's fastest-growing medical firm	18
FUNDING & INVESTMENTS	19
Entrepreneur Dr Mike Lynch launches a new investment firm	19
TSB to helps SMEs involved in 'a broad range of manufacturing competences'	19
Processing industry innovation to receive £7 million of TSB funding	19

£2.25m business support programme for start-ups and SMEs manufacturing firms	20
£750,000 competition launched for innovative university-industry projects	20
TV Apprentice finalist secures £170,000 for 'food business app'	21
GrowthAccelerator's group of 'growth experts' aim to work side by side with SMEs	21
GENERAL NEWS	21
The SME finalists for the 2012 Lord Stafford Awards are announced...	21
Venturefest Bristol exhibited 30 companies at the Innovation Showcase.	22
Companies celebrate at the 19th Manchester Evening News Awards	23
Daresbury innovation campus spawns '125 new products and services during 2011'	24
Money saving website reveals 'SMEs say 'NO' to graduates'	24
UNIVERSITY NEWS	25
QUB's Centre for Plasma Physics out to defeat hospital superdrugs	25
Bristol and Lancaster Universities join Euro consortium – NEMIAC project	25
£92m National Automotive Innovation Campus to be built at Warwick	26
Strathclyde becomes exclusive European partner in Korean R&D programme	26
Cardiff University spinout company i2LResearch Ltd buys Baltimore firm	26
York biologists a step nearer to solving the Parkinson's conundrum	27
OxeHealth is the latest venture by Prof Tarassenko in his IT-cum-bio data quest	27
Loughborough spinout claims ability to 'find small amounts of explosive particles'	28
LATE DATES FOR NOVEMBER 2012	28
AND FINALLY...	30

COMPANY OF THE MONTH

Family firm Stormsaver helps the UK save 'over 10 billion litres of water'

And yes, it was co-founded with a woman, sales director **Lisa Farnsworth**, and her husband **Michael**. Since the firm was started in 2000, it believes it has saved enough water to fill over 12,500,000 baths, run 6,451,613 washing machines or make over 3,34 billion cups of tea. The Nottinghamshire firm produces the Monsoon range of rainwater harvesting systems now used by no less than 50,000 people in the UK.

Stormsaver's systems can be found in both domestic and commercial properties including **Sainsburys**, **HM Prisons** and the **Abel Collins Homes** development.

In 1998, while studying design at Nottingham Trent, Michael developed a microwave-sized filtration unit that could make water from a sewage treatment outlet drinkable.

Joined by his wife Lisa, he launched Monsoon Water in 2000, offering a simplified 'rainwater harvesting' product – comprising a storage tank (usually installed underground), filtration unit and pumps – to commercial property developers.

Sadly, the young graduates weren't prepared for the sales challenge that awaited them. Faced with 18-month lead times on the few construction projects they were involved with, and a simple lack of orders, the first company went into liquidation.

Lisa said "At the time, we were both devastated. We lost our house, cars, everything. But we learnt from our mistakes. We stopped being graduates and became business people."

But the appetite for sustainable building products in construction was growing, especially in the public sector. Architects were also slowly becoming more likely to specify rainwater harvesting in their designs.

In 2003, they launched **Stormsaver**, initially focusing largely on the appetite for sustainable buildings among councils and local education authorities. Its domestic systems start at £1,500 and its commercial products range in price from £12-18,000. They claim that owners of a commercial building 'can expect to save up to 75 percent of their annual water bill', said Lisa.

Its systems are all made to order. Its tanks, filters and pumps are sourced from UK manufacturers, while Stormsaver makes its own electronic control systems, having acquired an electrical control company in 2008.

It has a 25 percent share of the embryonic UK market for rainwater harvesting. Revenues remain modest, at around £1.9m last year, but healthy margins produced a pre-tax profit of £350,000. The couple expects to achieve sales of £3m this year, but they will need to overcome a series of obstacles if they are to reach their five-year revenue target of £10m.

Water has low status on the sustainability agenda; in Germany rainwater harvesting systems are installed as standard in new builds.

Product diversification will also form part of the answer, with plans to diversify into recycling domestic and commercial waste water, or 'greywater', as well as photovoltaic and wind powered 'micro-renewable' products.

Recently the firm signed its second contract with **Bombardier Aerospace**, Belfast, for a 15,000 litre, above-ground, rainwater harvesting system to Bombardier as part of the development of its new wing-manufacturing and assembly facility in Belfast.

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

The system will collect rainwater via the facility's 14,800 sq m. roof area, resulting in a significant reduction in the use of Bombardier's mains water supply as well as potential cost savings.

Secondly, the **Canolfan Gorseinon Innovation Centre** in Wales cut its water bills by 65%, cut its monthly water bills to only £175 and is saving £8,000 per annum thanks to a Stormsaver rainwater harvesting system. In fact, the system has helped to reduce water usage so dramatically that, a year after installation, staff were asked by the local water board if they were still attached to the mains water supply. The Welsh centre uses a below-ground, pressurised system, which works by collecting rainwater, storing and filtering it and re-using it in place of mains water, such as in the flushing of toilets.

Contact: www.stormsaver.com

SME NEWS – ENGINEERING, ELECTRONICS, TELECOMS

Third Dimension Ltd's GapGun device breaks into international markets

Third Dimension was founded by **Dr Tim Monks** in the early 1990s, and the company is now making major inroads into the world's aerospace and automotive industries with a ground breaking optical laser device which measures the smallest of gaps, shapes and forms with incredible accuracy.

Third Dimension, based in Filton, manufactures and exports the **GapGun**, a non-contact, handheld and automated precision measurement tool that can be used to measure gaps, welds, seals, scratches and many more during the manufacturing process, in a wide variety of industries.

With a network of distributors already up and running in North America and Western Europe, the company is now turning its attention to developing export markets in China, Eastern Europe, Mexico and S America.

With help from **UK Trade and Investment** (UKTI), says Third Dimension's business development manager **John Kane**: "We wanted to stretch out to new export markets and the best way of doing that was to draw on the expertise of other people. UKTI were excellent in helping us to identify suitable markets and potential overseas partners. At an event we attended last year in China which could result in orders worth around £100,000."

UKTI international trade advisor **Brian Cooper** said: "Third Dimension are not only developing new markets but also looking systematically at their coverage in existing markets. They are appointing additional sales distributors where certain regions of the world are currently under-exploited. The long term objective is to obtain a significant market share in each of the target markets for this product rather than simply having a sales presence in a region."

The origins of the product lie in the earliest stages of Tim's career. After completing a PhD in electronics he started working as a contractor with an engineering technology firm when he was invited to come up with an electronic metrology device.

When he invented the concept of combining a laser and a camera in a handheld device, the client decided not to pursue the project but Tim felt that it was too good a concept to shelve and started Third Dimension to develop the product himself.

Precision engineering has always been dependent on physical measurement devices such as vernier callipers and the feeler gauge because they are cheap, simple to use, tried and trusted. Since its conception, the GapGun has developed almost out of recognition, in terms of both hardware and software, but the fundamental concept remains the same.

Contact: www.third.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Otter Controls named Exporter of the Year at the annual Private Business awards

Buxton-based **Otter Controls**, which designs and manufactures thermostatic cut-out controls for domestic appliances and electric motors, won the award from a strong shortlist that showcased the best of companies who have built a strong presence in overseas markets around the world including **Harris Pye Engineering**, **Innis & Gun Brewing Company** in Scotland and Knutsford, Cheshire-based **Oliver Valves**.

Otter Controls has a long history and was founded in 1946 to manufacture 'snap action' thermostats under a new innovative patent for a three legged bimetal blade which is still in wide use today.

The concept behind the Otter bimetallic switch was developed during the 1940s when Otter's founder first experimented with bimetal controls to provide thermostats for electrically heated flying suits for the RAF. Since those early days Otter has remained independent and has become well known for quality, reliability but more importantly innovative product design.

Otter Controls had to demonstrate current year success in foreign markets but also have credible development plans in place to expand sales and in existing and new markets in order to win the Exporter of the Year prize.

Contact: www.ottercontrols.com

Aurox Ltd aims to make 3D microscopy accessible and affordable

The company is the creator of the 3D high-resolution imaging device for microscopic objects. Aurox Ltd, a company that originally spun-out from research undertaken at the **University of Oxford**, to individual researchers.

Having developed the new technology three years ago, the product is now sold as an inexpensive add-on that can be attached to any standard optical microscope. It has already earned the company almost £1 million in additional revenue since its development.

In 2012 Aurox Ltd won a **Queen's Award for Enterprise** for designing and manufacturing novel equipment for optical microscopy. The new equipment, which is easily added to the camera port of any microscope, provides an economical approach for the high speed acquisition of high quality images of thin sections within thick specimens.

It is particularly useful in applications in the life sciences where high-resolution, artifact-free images of dynamic processes may be obtained with high light efficiency.

In October 2012 it was one of four companies that received the first Innovation Awards from the **Institute of Physics** (IOP) following each company's successful development and commercialisation of a novel technology which has had significant impact in a range of markets.

Professor Tony Wilson, director, has been pursuing research into microscopy, imaging and applied optics for over 30 years. He co-founded **Oxford Optoelectronics Ltd** which sold the first confocal microscope system in 1983. He published the first book on confocal microscopy in 1984.

Dr Rimas Juskaitis, MD, began working in the field of confocal microscopy in 1989 and has been with the Oxford group since 1991. Over this time he has worked on diverse topics, ranging from polarization microscopy to high-NA optics characterization. Rimas has developed a number of new techniques for confocal microscopy, such as fibre optics, laser feedback and structured light illumination. His current interests include endoscopy, diffractive optics and extended depth-of-focus imaging.

Contact: www.aurox.co.uk

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

iGeolise wins UK leg of the Global SatNav Competition

Entrepreneur Charlie Davies and business partner Peter Lilley founded iGeolise in 2009 and today, Travel Time technology provides time-based searches in New York, San Francisco and across the UK. The technology is able to use any map as its base data source and therefore could be used virtually anywhere across the globe.

The iGeolise 'Travel Time' satellite navigation solution is an innovative use of satellite technology, allowing users to search for content according to how much time the journey takes, rather than its distance away.

Using satellite-derived maps overlaid with public transport data, road travel time information and average walking speeds, it can rank and sort several thousand points by travel time virtually instantly (doubling the results of current distance technology).

Have you ever wondered what jobs are available within a 30 minute drive from your home or how many restaurants there are within a 10 minute walk? Travel Time is working to provide all of this information and more.

The UK Satellite Navigation Competition – sponsored by the UK Space Agency – has crowned 'Travel Time' as the best new use of satellite data from this year's competition.

The European Satellite Navigation Competition (ESNC) competition received over 400 business ideas, 77 of which were from the UK – the highest number of any territory. iGeolise were entered into the European competition and came in a close third, only one point behind the two winners that tied for first place.

Catherine Mealing-Jones, Director for Growth, Applications and EU Programmes at the UK Space Agency said, "Peter and Charlie are representative of a key part of the future of the British space sector – providing intelligent, market-driven solutions for every day problems. I want to ensure that the UK Space Agency supports businesses like iGeolise in spotting opportunities, so their experience with space technology can meet the needs of the wider market."

Contact: www.igeolise.com

Robotics firm PC Moulding & Automation emerges in Dewsbury

In April 2012 PC Moulding & Automation (PCMA) is a young player in the injection moulding machine and automation supply market. It offers both new robots and refurbishment of control systems.

The company has found early success with customers in the automotive sector. It has developed a variety of robotics for typical plastics processing tasks: de-moulding, insert loading, sub-assembly or simple sprue picking. Existing robots can also be refurbished for life extension where they are mechanically sound, by replacing the control system with a new off-the-shelf processor.

PCMA was founded two years ago by **Peter Crossley**, technical director, and **Roger Ewers**, technical sales director. The two met as colleagues with a previous employer.

PCMA supplies robots from the American Max company, through a partnership with **Premier Moulding Machinery** (PMM).

Ewers said: "Max is a multinational firm, with its share of the UK market building at the moment. We are looking to take advantage of the current growth in manufacturing by providing automation solutions for all applications."

Contact: www.pcmoulding.co.uk/automation

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Manchester spinout firm buys into the German market

Laser Quantum Ltd has bought an overseas customer as it looks to expand its portfolio of technologies and boost its distribution into German-speaking countries.

The company, a **University of Manchester** spinout based in Stockport, develops and manufactures lasers used by scientists and academics in areas such as DNA sequencing and pharmaceutical research.

It has bought another laser company, **Gigaoptics**, based in Konstanz, Germany. The deal is expected to help £10m-turnover Laser Quantum achieve group revenue growth of 15 percent this year.

Laser Quantum was founded in 1994 by Manchester University physicists **Lawrie Gloster, Alan Cox** and **Steve Lane**. The firm currently employs almost 80 people and won a Queen's Award for Enterprise in the international trade category in 2012.

Gigaoptics have been a customer of Laser Quantum for a number of years, and lasers manufactured by the Stockport firm are a component in all its systems. The company was founded in 1999 by a group led by **Dr Albrecht Bartels** from the **University of Konstanz**, and has around 10 staff. The deal will allow Laser Quantum to sell Gigaoptics' technology through its international distribution network.

Laser Quantum's European sales and marketing director **Andy Wells** said: "This technology has some major benefits and is currently crossing the barrier from research and academia to mainstream applications."

Contact: www.laserquantum.com

Bus manufacturer Alexander Dennis wins 'biggest ever order'

Alexander Dennis has landed what is believed to be the UK bus industry's largest-ever group of contracts after unveiling deals to supply more than 1,000 vehicles worth a total of £220 million.

The deals include the company's biggest overseas order to date, consisting of 532 "next-generation" buses and 109 of its current models for four operators in Hong Kong.

The Falkirk-based firm will deliver the buses over the next 18 months, with some of the vehicles being built in China and others being assembled from chassis and body kits made in Scotland.

The bumper round of orders also includes contracts to supply 175 mid-sized buses to a host of UK operators – including **FirstGroup, National Express** and **Stagecoach** – along with 150 hybrids. A deal to supply 71 coaches to the MoD for transporting troops was also announced.

Earlier, transport giant **Stagecoach** said it would buy 11 of Alexander Dennis' 15-metre long coaches, the biggest in the UK, for its Megabus inter-city routes. A spokesman for the bus builder said that the latest deals would secure 2,100 jobs at the company, including 900 posts in Scotland, although they were unlikely to directly create any jobs.

A consortium of senior figures from Scotland's business community bought Alexander Dennis from the collapsed remains of former parent **Mayflower** in 2004. The investors, who paid £90m to bring the company out of administration, include metal magnate and former Rangers FC owner **Sir David Murray**; Stagecoach founder **Sir Brian Souter**; Souter's sister, **Ann Gloag**; and merchant banker **Sir Angus Grossart**.

Contact: www.alexander-dennis.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

End of the track for Lola Cars International, racing car maker

Administrators **CCW Recovery Solutions** had continued the automotive group's trading activities since May 2012, together with those of its sister firm **Lola Composites**, also in administration, while looking for new owners.

However CCW said it had failed to find a purchaser the Cambridgeshire-based company, founded in 1958 and which built cars for the Le Mans 24-hour race. The last members of staff from the car maker's workforce of 65 are now redundant. Lola Composites continued to trade, CCW said, but 23 staff had lost their jobs, on top of 36 employees made redundant in May.

CCW administrators dealing with the car operation said in a statement: "Following our appointment as joint administrators of Lola Cars International on 21 May 2012, we continued trading the business, on a reduced scale, whilst seeking a purchaser.

"At the end of September, having not received an acceptable offer for the business as a going concern, we considered whether or not we should continue trading."

Contact: www.lolacars.com

TrackaPhone celebrates 10 years of vehicle and asset monitoring

Launching the business in October 2002 the company began by delivering various services such as lone worker protection (LWP), mobile resource management (MRM), vehicle tracking and asset protection.

Year after year, the integration of numerous location, device, mapping and comms technologies drove TrackaPhone to become focused on the development of the technology.

It supplied the tracking solution used by the **BBC** at the **2010 World Cup** in South Africa. **Trackaphone** provided the reassurance and security the BBC needed while working in a difficult environment. The security team could find out instantly from any laptop exactly where their vehicles were – and in the event of an emergency would have been invaluable.

TrackaPhone also supported many charities tracking people, hang gliders, canoeists, yachts, vintage cars, swimmers, trains and runners enabling their sponsors, friends and families to watch their progress live and send messages. Charities supported by TrackaPhone have collectively raised in excess of £500,000.

Contact: www.trackaphone.com

Martek Marine notches up seven-fold rise in profits to £1m

The Rotherham company is one of the world leaders in the supply of safety and environmental monitoring systems for the shipping industry. It supplies ships around the world with innovative products such as marine defibrillators, their Navgard BNWAS system, the Bulksafe Water Ingress Detection System and the Fastcalgas calibration gas supply service.

In the last financial year, the company expanded by 33 percent to post a £6.9m turnover. The business is on course to achieve a £10m turnover for the 2012-2013 financial year.

Paul Luen, chief executive at Martek Marine, said: "Our ongoing strategic expansion and cutting-edge products have enabled us to out-perform the market supported by over 50 sales and service partners internationally. Now exporting to over 80 countries worldwide we are seeking to attract top talent who relish an exciting career in international trade as we continue to buck the trend of recession in the global market and create opportunity."

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Innovation and investment continue to chart the success of Martek Marine which is about to launch a series of new products including electronic chart navigation for ships while Martek has forged a partnership with **Orange** to pioneer telecom technology in ships.

Staff has increased 40 percent to 54 in total in the last twelve months alone.

Contact: www.martek-marine.com

Scottish firm Paradigm Drilling Services secured £250,000 of TSB funding

In what is one of the first few announcements of **Technology Strategy Board's** new Smart awards – Inverurie-based Paradigm Drilling Services, a subsidiary of the Netherlands-based Paradigm Group, will receive the cash for the development of a rotary traction system for use in extended-reach horizontal drilling and in completion applications.

Paradigm Drilling Services are a market leader in the supply of oilfield rental equipment, reporting a turnover of £2.2 million in 2011 and is expected to double this in 2012.

As well as a comprehensive portfolio of rental equipment it offers a wide range of services that include manufacturing, and the repair of API rotary connections.

One unique feature of the business is the in-house design and engineering department that is dedicated to the regeneration of existing stock and the development of new equipment, which they are consistently introducing to the market place.

In April 2012 Paradigm Drilling Services had a strong start to 2012, securing over £1 million of new contracts in the UK and overseas. The recent wins include new manufacture and servicing contracts for stabilizers and hole openers and rental and sales contracts in the UK, Middle East, West Africa and South America. One contract alone is valued at £500,000 for the supply of tools to a client in Mexico.

Contact: www.paradigm.eu/drillingservices

Subsea engineering and training firm expands operations in Aberdeen

JEE Ltd claims to be 'a world-leader in non-trenching, fishing interaction, low-cost connectors and lifetime extension – covering the whole of subsea engineering for the whole of life-of-field'.

In October 2012 it announced two new directors to help drive its strategy of quadrupling turnover to £20 million by the end of 2016. **Trevor Jee**, MD, said: "The Jee team, which is spread between Aberdeen and Tonbridge, in Kent, has already outgrown the current Aberdeen office, having doubled in size this year.

The senior team consists of **Mike Hawkins**, technical director; **Jenny Matthew**, head of courses; **Jonathan Franklin**, engineering manager, and **Jonathan Lindsay**, head of Aberdeen office, who are involved in detailed design, front-end engineering design, integrity management and engineering analysis services.

Mr Jee also said the firm opens an engineering office in central London, with the potential of creating 40 jobs in the UK by the end of 2013 and a total of 150 UK jobs over the next four years."

Mr Jee founded the multi-disciplinary firm in 1988 and it remains independent and privately owned with the Aberdeen office headed up by **Jonathan Lindsay**. He added: "Our biggest growth area has been in subsea projects. A large focus for 2012 has been adding to our subsea engineering team, building on the wealth of knowledge the company already possesses as our client portfolio rapidly increases in this area."

Mr Jee said the company was also helping to address the industry skills shortage, developing engineers

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

from outside the industry into subsea specialists through a conversion programme, creating a bigger talent pool for the sector.

Contact: www.jee.co.uk

SME NEWS – CHEMICALS, MATERIALS & ENVIRONMENT

Metalysis develops process to create useful metals – from beach sand

Metalysis, the Rotherham-based technology innovator for the speciality metals industry, holds the worldwide exploitation rights to the FCC Cambridge process – originally developed by materials genius **Prof Derek Fray** – which sees specialist powder metals created in a simple, cost effective process with significant environmental benefits. The electrochemical reduction process is used to produce titanium, tantalum, and related high value alloys.

Guppy Dhariwal, CEO of Metalysis, said: “Metalysis has spent a significant period of time and resource developing a process that can produce titanium powder from a relatively inexpensive feedstock in a single step. We now expect that our process will have a transformational effect on the metals industry through the production of titanium on a greater scale, at a lower cost and in an environmentally benign manner.”

Now, the investor- and grant-backed **Cambridge University** spinout has worked out how to transform natural rutile sands directly into titanium metal powder ‘in a single step’. Rutile is a naturally occurring titanium ore present in beach sands. The new rutile derived titanium powder, can be used in a variety of new applications to satisfy the latent demand for a low cost, light weight, high strength and corrosion resistant metal.

Metalysis’ FCC process uses less energy than traditional processes as it does not require the melting of metals, and the salt used in producing the metals can be recycled. It also means that innovative alloys can be tailored to have the desired properties for applications within a variety of industries including automotive, marine, electronics, clean energy and aerospace.

Contact: www.metalysis.com

Interplas Coatings Ltd grows from one to 30 staff in ‘less than one year’

The Dudley, West Midlands-headquartered coatings company, which has grown its Sunderland base from one to 30 employees in less than a year, expected further expansion.

Interplas Coatings, which set up its first factory in the North of England at **Pallion Industrial Estate** in Sunderland, is currently expanding its 35,000 sq ft premises by a third because of its rapid growth.

Interplas invested £800,000 in the initial factory set up in the North East and is adding another £200,000 to carry out the expansion, which includes a new warehouse and a four cell robotic line being installed in 2013.

Interplas NE, its North East subsidiary, said it was ‘already making a month-by-month profit’ and expects to achieve £1.6m turnover in its first year, ahead of target.

Interplas’ success underlines Sunderland’s growing automotive sector, whose firms are now attracting suppliers for Jaguar Land Rover and Honda, as well as Nissan locally. Interplas Coatings was started by **Narinder and Jitender Mahi** 22 years ago in Dudley.

Contact: www.interplascoatings.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Pollyanna Fine Bone China Ltd moves to large factory having won new funding

In October 2012 this fine bone china manufacturer in **Stoke-on-Trent** moved to larger premises to meet growing demand after securing a six-figure funding facility.

The firm, established in 1979 and run by MD **Pauline Walpole**, moved to the 22,000 sq ft site in **Burslem** to increase the company's production output. The business, which manufactures giftware and tableware, will use the larger factory to add to the product it currently offers and improve lead times to customers.

The second-generation family business approached **Lloyds TSB Commercial** for the funding support to purchase the new bigger site. The company, which currently employs 20 staff, will use the move to expand and grow its workforce to facilitate the increased production levels.

Pauline Walpole said "At Pollyanna we pride ourselves on manufacturing quality fine bone china from the historic heart of the pottery trade in Stoke-on-Trent. Despite the recession the industry has faced, there is still a large demand for the fine bone china from the region, and we are experiencing strong growth."

Gail Chesters, relationship manager for Lloyds TSB Commercial, added: "The interest in authentic Stoke-on-Trent pottery is still strong as buyers continue to value the quality of the craftsmanship present in the historic region."

Contact: www.pollyanna.co.uk

Glosfume's ceramic filter technology wins energy award in Vienna

The firm took the national UK award at this year's international **Energy Globe** awards in Vienna, which paid tribute to energy solutions from 151 countries in four categories – earth, fire, water and air.

Glosfume MD **Bob Roberts** said "It is good to receive such recognition from the industry on an international scale," added Roberts. In the energy sector innovation is very much the key driver and is indeed at the heart of our business – the whole team is extremely proud of this achievement."

Glosfume won due to its ceramic filters, designed specifically to extract effluent gases and particulates produced by biomass boilers. In October 2012 Glosfume adapted its ceramic filter technology to provide Scotland's **Ladyloan School** with a solution for a biomass wood-fired boiler that was condemned by the local authority – the boiler had serious problems with the potential to threaten children's health.

Bob Roberts added "When biomass wood is burnt it generates fine dust – known as PM10 and PM2.5 – resulting in a 96 percent removal of these particulates. These are inherently dangerous since these small particles can become lodged into the lungs. Our ceramic filters suit most types of biomass boilers and can be retrofitted to existing boilers."

Since then 150 more ceramic filter systems ranging from 50kW to 8MW have been installed in government buildings, schools, public swimming pools, hospitals, prisons, universities, restaurants, hotels, tomato farms – and now a stately home. In addition to the UK, the systems have also been used in **France, Switzerland** and **Ireland**.

Contact: www.glosfume.com

Cambustion celebrate 25 years at the forefront of engine emissions research

Cambustion is a spinout from **Cambridge University's Department of Engineering**. In September staff were joined by their families at the Duxford Airshow to celebrate a quarter century of research and commercial success.

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Cambustion's products have been sold in 26 countries around the world. They are used for both fundamental combustion research in universities and to improve the emissions performance of engines by vehicle manufacturers.

Back in the late 1980s the drive to improve air quality placed increasing scrutiny on vehicle emissions. A tea room conversation between the Department's **Nick Collings** and **Rex Britter** lead to the timely development of an analyser capable of measuring hydrocarbon emissions from a running engine on a cycle-by-cycle basis, where previous measurements has been on a timescale of several seconds. This allowed Nick and his team; **Nigel Baker, Steve Dinsdale, Tim Hands, Steve Montgomery** and **John Willey** to investigate the emissions performance of engines in unprecedented detail.

Early collaboration and joint publications with the **Ford Motor Company** followed. Realising that the analyser had commercial prospects, the research group formed Cambustion to bring to market a fully developed system.

Contact: www.cambustion.com

Wood recycling company has earmarked £18m to expand its operations

R Plevin & Sons, based in Mossley, Tameside, is submitting an application to build a wood-fuelled biomass energy plant at its site in Elkesley, Nottinghamshire.

Electricity generated by the plant will be used to power Plevin's existing manufacturing operations there and to dry wood shavings. Any surplus energy will be supplied to the **National Grid**. The scheme will generate 16 full-time jobs.

Plevin also plans to recruit a further 20 people across five sites and has recently made a series of key appointments to strengthen its management team. The recruitment drive comes as Plevin, which employs 150 people across five UK sites, looks to increase production following major contract wins.

In 2011, Plevin won exclusive contract with **E.ON** to supply waste timber for a £120m biomass-fired renewable energy plant at Blackburn Meadows, near Sheffield.

In October 2012 the company began exporting biomass timber to a renewable energy plant in Sweden. MD **Jamie Plevin** said: "These are exciting times for Plevin, and with our new team members in place we can build further on the success we have enjoyed of late."

Contact: www.plevin.co.uk

Enval developed method for recycling laminated plastic and aluminium packaging

Currently, it is difficult to effectively recycle food packaging such as foil-laminated material. Enval, backed by **Nestlé, Kraft Foods Group** and **Mondelez International**, has installed its microwave induced pyrolysis (MIP) system for recovering materials from foil-laminated flexible packaging.

Enval originally formed as a spinout from the **Department of Chemical Engineering** at the **University of Cambridge**. This is Enval's first processing facility. The premises will be situated on the Enterprise Zone in Alconbury. Enval's business development director, **David Boorman**, said "We know of many companies within the resource recycling sector that have found the planning process difficult to navigate.

"Enval's experience, with the support and expertise offered by our local authority partners and the Enterprise Zone itself, has been an extremely positive one."

Contact: www.enval.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Sales at postal operator Secured Mail leap 41 percent to £68m

The company delivered another year of stellar revenue growth and announced plans to invest more than £1m for further expansion. Customer wins and an acquisition in the south helped Secured Mail, based in **Warrington**, increase turnover from £48m to £68m in the year to July.

The firm handled 650 million items in the period – up from 400 million in the previous 12 months – ranging from direct marketing literature and utility bills to magazines and goods ordered from **Amazon**. Secured Mail is backed by private equity outfit **Next Wave Partners**, which took a 40 percent stake in 2011.

Secured Mail manages the post for clients through the sorting and distribution network and uses **Royal Mail** for final deliveries, aims to be carrying a billion items a year by 2014. Clients include **Debenhams, Mothercare, Nectar, Domino's Pizza, American Express, Centrica and Center Parcs**.

Secured Mail employs 150 people, and it extended its facilities to handle small packets as well as letters and parcels, as online shopping surges. The firm also grew by snapping up a division of rival **DHL Global Mail** in January, which added 55 staff and a depot in Crick, Northamptonshire, to complement its operations in Warrington, Dartford in Kent and a new site in Scotland.

Chief executive **Mark Bigley**, 43, who founded Secured Mail in 2006, said he aims to establish a presence in south-west England and Ireland over the next 12 months.

Mr Bigley said the firm would continue to upgrade its automated sorting operations to achieve further growth this year, while also seeking acquisition opportunities.

Contact: www.securedmail.co.uk

Digital startup Blue Badge Style launches app after support from UCL Advances

The mobile app – jointly developed by UCL Advances and software development company Stuxbot – rates accessibility to London's coolest venues, and was launched to coincide with the 2012 Paralympics.

The app, aimed at people with mobility issues who nonetheless want to maintain a sense of style, uses geo-positioning technology to identify the user's location and rates the facilities of nearby bars, restaurants and entertainment facilities based on how accessible they are for those with mobility difficulties.

Help from UCL Advances in developing the app was initially offered at the recent UCL Mobile Academy course, based on the promise that it would improve the lives of people with disabilities.

Fiona Jarvis, founder of Blue Badge Style, said "Our app means that people with limited mobility – and equally importantly, their friends – don't have to be surprised or embarrassed by a lack of accessibility or facilities."

"With this app you can easily see the best places near you, read our review, check the Blue Badge Style rating and get directions on how to get there. We're also encouraging like-minded people to post their own reviews. We believe that decreased mobility need not stop you from enjoying a stylish life," she added.

Timothy Barnes, director of UCL Advances, added "UCL is leading the way in supporting that through initiatives like our mobile academy, establishing incubators and through the UCL DECIDE programme, digital start-ups have received the very best in support to bring their products to market."

Contact: www.stuxbot.co.uk

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Blur Group plc offers SMEs a new creative and IT 'project marketplace'

The West London business was founded in 2007 by serial entrepreneur **Philip Letts**, and it now has more than 20,000 experts, agencies and firms over 130 countries.

Very similar in concept to **Guru.com**, **Freelancer.com** and **Elance.com**, it offers another way to buy, sell, collaborate and pay for projects online – for creative, for IT, for most business requirements.

They state that 'expert crowds of pre-vetted and approved creatives, agencies, IT, legal and accounting professionals and firms from 133 countries' connect with business buyers from anywhere in the world via its cloud-based trading platform. Businesses discover new suppliers, shortening project cycles and reducing internal costs. Expert suppliers win new business without overheads.

To date, Blur states that the total value of projects submitted 'is over \$14m' – with more than 60 new projects briefed and over 500 new experts joining 'every month'.

Blur Group floated on AIM in October 2012 – valued at just over £20 million. The listing is the key to raising £4 million that will be used to develop the company's technology, as well as growing its sales team, support services and marketing.

The business was founded in 2007 by serial internet entrepreneur **Philip Letts**, the founder of **Beenz.com**. It started with 50 expert service providers. Today it has over 20,000 experts, agencies and firms over 130 countries on six crowd platforms.

"We now approve 500 new service providers a month," added Letts. **The AA**, **Coral**, **Harvey Nichols** and **The Financial Times** are among a host of well known names to use the services exchange. Blur is currently building crowds of experts for legal and accounting services, and expects to accept briefs in the second half of next year.

Letts said. "The competition in every single case is doing it the existing way offline. I think being pretty focused on quality from day one has helped us build a credible service. We created a stream of crowdsourcing, which is called expert sourcing and we really are the market leader. Expert sourcing is all about corporate-grade crowd sourcing. We have always been seen in the industry in the US and Europe as the leader of this whole approach – one that is relevant to big corporates."

Contact: www.blurgroup.com

Data management firm 1Spatial plc agrees contract with US Government bureau

Company CEO **Marcus Hanke** said the deal would enhance its presence and credentials in the US, but the length of it would also provide it the opportunity to focus on organic growth and operating cash flow generation.

Mr Hanke took over the role of CEO at 1Spatial when it was bought out by **Avisen** in October 2011. Revenues for the year ended 31 January 2012 reached £5.2m, double the pre-acquisition amount the previous year. The share price rose by as much as 60 percent from 2.5p a share to 4p. The Cambridge firm says will have 'a material impact' on this year's full year results and beyond. It wasn't joking – it led to a 'furious amount' of market trading..

Earlier, in September 2012, GIS service provider **Dotted Eyes** joined with 1Spatial to deliver a free data validation service. **Duncan Guthrie**, strategic alliance director at 1Spatial said "There's now a quick and easy way to check that your data is right, rather than waiting for a problem to tell you it's not. What's more, this service is completely free of charge."

Contact: www.1spatial.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

IT services firm adept4 moves to new HQ after doubling its staff

adept4 has made some acquisitions so far this year – most recently taking over **QmediaStream**, the digital partner for the **Glastonbury Festival**. The company also acquired software development and health and safety consultancy, **TGF Consultants**, earlier in 2011.

The acquisition is expected to help take adept4's turnover from £2.25m in 2011 to more than £4m by the end of this year. It follows a £1m contract, which was also secured this year, to provide IT support to global maritime engineering company **Viking SeaTech**.

adept4, moved to **Daresbury Business Park**, in north west England, after increasing its workforce from 19 to 43 since the start of the year. The move will see the company merge its three North West offices to one central hub.

Peter Birkett, chief executive of adept4, said: "The second deal – with Qmediastream – continues our strategy of pursuing growth through both organic means and acquisitions. It gives us access to new markets and sectors and will help us drive turnover and profit in the coming year."

London web services business Qmediastream specialises in the music media and insurance sectors. It counts the **American General Life** insurance company and the world-famous Glastonbury Festival among its clients. The business was launched in 1999 and offers services spanning domain and website management and hosting, media hosting services, high end data centre provisioning and open source content management systems.

Its founder, **John McHugh**, is helping to manage a transitional period following the acquisition and will remain with the business. adept4 turnover is set to rise from £2.25m in 2011 to more than £4m by the end of this year. The firm was founded in 2007 and is a full service IT solutions company working for clients on a global basis.

Contact: www.adept4.co.uk

Cloud-based software business KashFlow continues growth drive

KashFlow Accounting Software moved to new premises following record growth in 2012, continuing to double in size year on year. The new office in Bermondsey, east London, is twice the size of the company's previous workspace, accommodating a recent influx of new recruits and providing space for further growth in 2013 and beyond.

MD **Duane Jackson** said: "It doesn't make sense for us to be based in **Silicon Roundabout**. While there are advantages to being based there, like networking events and access to other startups, avoiding the high rents makes more business sense to us. Many are over-charging for what they feel has become a vanity postcode. More of us will start to look outside of the Old Street area as we continue to grow."

So far, the company has avoided turning to outside investment or IPOs to fund expansion. KashFlow's primary focus on the British SME community, and the team expanded the team by 16 to a total of 34.

Contact: www.kashflow.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Manchester-based Zilico secures a further £750,000 investment in November 2012

The investment – in addition to the £1m announced in June 2012 – is from the **North West Fund for BioMedical**, managed by **Spark Impact**. Zilico is developing a new system, ZedScan I, with two applications to provide ‘real time’ results for women undergoing both these types of test, removing several weeks of waiting for a diagnosis.

Chief executive of Zilico **Sameer Kothari**, said: “I welcome the ongoing support of the existing shareholders and I am also pleased to bring in new investors. This investment will significantly help with our launch plans of ZedScan in 2013.”

Zilico will use the investment to complete the manufacture of commercial devices and to establish its route to market for EU and other territories.

The North West Fund for Biomedical is a sub-fund of the £185m evergreen North West Fund that is jointly financed by the **ERDF** and the **European Investment Bank**.

Cervical cancer affects around 500,000 women worldwide each year and is responsible for 300,000 deaths. Under current screening practices in the UK, a woman will have a Pap smear or LBC test every three or five years. If the test is positive, she will be referred to a colposcopy clinic for a detailed cervical examination.

Contact: www.zilico.co.uk

Holloway Immunology hopes to bring new vaccine technology to market

Led by **Dr Joanna Cox** and **Professor Simon Cutting** from the School of Biological Sciences at **Royal Holloway, University of London**, the company will focus on developing three lead vaccines: tuberculosis, Clostridium difficile, and influenza.

Prof Cutting has performed pre-clinical evaluations of Bacillus-based vaccines for a number of diseases, including tuberculosis, influenza, and tetanus, but he also discovered that the technique could be applied to deliver a vaccine suitable for protecting against Clostridium difficile – a gastrointestinal infection responsible for approximately 50,000 infections, and 4,000 deaths per year in the UK, primarily in the elderly. Clostridium difficile currently has no vaccine, needle-based or otherwise.

Research conducted at RHUL offers the hope of achieving this, by using a bacterium to deliver a vaccine which can be administered via nasal spray, oral liquid, capsule, or small soluble film placed under the tongue, thus reducing the risk of spreading infectious diseases like HIV.

The research was conducted with the use of pro-biotic spores taken from the bacterium Bacillus subtilis, which Cutting cites as ideal vehicles for carrying antigens and promoting an immune response in the patient.

“Rather than requiring needle delivery, vaccines based on Bacillus spores can be delivered via a nasal spray, or as an oral liquid or capsule,” explained Prof Cutting. “Alternatively they can be administered via a small soluble film placed under the tongue, in a similar way to modern breath fresheners. As spores are exceptionally stable, vaccines based on Bacillus do not require cold-chain storage alleviating a further issue with current vaccine approaches.”

Contact: www.hollowayimmunology.co.uk

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

ProtAffin wins Most Innovative European Biotech SME at EuropaBio Awards

In a ceremony held at the **European Parliament** in Brussels, the award was presented by **Antonio Tajani**, EU Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship. The quality of applications led the jury to select two winners for this year's award. **ProtAffin AG** won jointly with a company from the industrial biotech area, **Global Bioenergies**.

Dr Jason Slingsby, CEO of ProtAffin, said: "This is very rewarding for the team at ProtAffin that has made great progress with moving our lead product PA401 into its first clinical trial earlier this year." Dr Slingsby has worked over the last 14 years at listed biotech companies – **Oxford BioMedica** (UK), **Sosei Co Ltd** (UK/Japan) and **Intercell** (Austria).

ProtAffin is developing more effective therapies for global diseases with major unmet needs such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD), by creating a pipeline of glycan-binding decoy proteins that cause potent down-regulation of protein function. ProtAffin's approach of developing glycan-binding biopharmaceuticals also potentially avoids many of the well known limitations of established drug modalities. ProtAffin has 25 employees located in Graz, Austria and in London.

Contact: www.protaffin.com

Nottinghamshire firm BPR Medical continues as UK's fastest-growing medical firm

Earlier, the firm won a **Queen's Award for Enterprise (Innovation)** after inventing a device which limits damage caused by medical oxygen tubes catching fire.

BPR Medical, which developed the firebreak valve at its base in Mansfield, has seen it used in the UK and Germany and is now hoping to break into the US market.

The award was in recognition of its 'Firesafe' range, which prevents the spread of oxygen-related fires. Oxygen use in clinical areas has the potential to greatly accelerate the spread of fires. Firesafe has helped saved lives around the world and is now mandatory in the **UK** and **Germany**.

Other countries could also soon follow suit. Health authorities in **Japan** are currently debating whether to make firebreaks mandatory in all medical oxygen applications. The results of these discussions will be published later on.

MD **Richard Radford** said "The award underscores our commitment to innovation, patient safety and quality. It is testament to the hard work and dedication of all those involved, both in and outside of BPR, that have supported the development of this important safety device. Out of over 7000 UK companies in the health sciences sector, only one achieved the Queen's Award for Enterprise: Innovation in 2012 – BPR Medical."

Formed in 1990, BPR is one of the world's leading specialist medical gas design engineering companies – and is now the UK's 'fastest growing independent manufacturer of medical gas products'.

Contact: www.bprmedical.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

FUNDING & INVESTMENTS

Entrepreneur Dr Mike Lynch launches a new investment firm

The former boss of **Autonomy plc**, Dr Mike Lynch, has apparently started Invoke Capital, with a view to investing in startups in European technology sectors.

The investment group's website says it will provide a new approach to unlocking the potential of fundamental European technology, though how the approach will be new or what is meant by fundamental technology is as of yet unknown.

US finance website **Global Corporate Venturing**, which broke the story, quotes Dr Lynch as saying that Invoke will use Autonomy's experience of successfully commercialising university research. Autonomy was acquired by **Hewlett Packard** for £7.1 billion, the biggest exit of any Cambridge technology firm.

It goes on: 'Dr Lynch said: "UK universities are the best in the world but the technologies on the bench rarely reach the market," says Dr Lynch in Global. "Autonomy showed a way of doing this and [with Invoke] we have access to substantial sums of money and the people who did it."

Since the HP acquisition Dr Lynch has made one public investment, an angel round in **Featurespace**, a Cambridge University spinout whose technology is closely aligned with that of Autonomy. Autonomy also spun out **Blinkx**, valued at \$225m at IPO, has a very popular augmented reality division, **Aurasma**, and handled several technology acquisitions, which were successfully integrated into Autonomy and played a key role in increasing the firm's value over time.

Contact: Featurespace – www.featurespace.co.uk

TSB to help SMEs involved in 'a broad range of manufacturing competences'

Technology Strategy Board is to invest up to £2m in feasibility studies to stimulate innovation by small and micro businesses in a broad range of manufacturing competences.

An event for successful applicants will be held shortly after project completion, in July 2013, for dissemination of results, to encourage collaboration and to help bring projects to market.

The TSB was seeking projects across the whole manufacturing lifecycle, from design and engineering through to process development, manufacture, service delivery and re-manufacture/re-use, including innovation in supply/distribution chains, risk management and business models.

It aims to encourage SMEs to innovate in a number of 'competence areas' which we believe have the potential to bring strong growth to UK manufacturing businesses.

The competition is open to small and micro companies only – no more than 50 employees), working either alone or in collaboration with one partner. Projects can last up to four months and are eligible for grants of up to £25,000. Total project costs must not exceed £33,000.

Contact: www.innovate.org.uk

Processing industry innovation to receive £7 million of TSB funding

Seventy UK companies, universities and research organisations are to share over £7 million of government funding to undertake research that could lead to the development and commercialisation of innovative approaches to sustainable manufacturing for the process industry.

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

The 17 collaborative R&D projects will be led by **C-Tech Innovation Ltd, Centre for Process Innovation Ltd, Dynamic Extractions Ltd, Environmental Pulp Products Ltd, GlaxoSmithKline, Imerys (UK) Ltd, Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd (an AkzoNobel company), Industrial Microwave Systems Ltd, Johnson Matthey Ltd, Perceptive Engineering Ltd, PhosphonicS Ltd, Plant Integrity Ltd, Procter & Gamble Technical Centres Ltd, Scionix Ltd, Syrris Ltd, Unilever and Yorkshire Process Technology Ltd.**

The Technology Strategy Board and the EPSRC will invest the funding in 17 major research and development projects that will develop innovative process technologies to improve sustainability in a wide range of sectors, including food and drink, chemicals, construction and aerospace. The total value of the R&D, including contributions from the participating companies, will be in excess of £14 million.

Contact: www.innovateuk.org – www.epsrc.ac.uk

£2.25m business support programme for start-ups and SMEs manufacturing firms

The **Institute for Manufacturing (IfM)** at University of Cambridge received funding from the **European Development Fund (ERDF)** to provide fully-funded support for 50 start-ups and 70 manufacturing SMEs throughout the East of England to help them increase their profits, reduce their costs and minimise their impact on the environment.

Dr Derek Ford, who heads the IfM ECS's team supporting SMEs and start-up companies, said: "We have worked with hundreds of small and medium-sized manufacturers over the last 10 years, developing practical ways to help them improve their businesses and develop the capabilities they need to grow and achieve their goals."

The **PrISMS** programme will also feedback into the research process by providing the **EPSRC Centre for Innovative Manufacturing in Industrial Sustainability** with case studies which will inform its work on reducing the resource and energy requirements of existing production processes and looking at options for a radical, low-carbon redesign of the industrial system.

Companies interested in taking part should contact Anna Rowntree on 01223 766141 – prisms-enquiries@eng.cam.ac.uk

£750,000 competition launched for innovative university-industry projects

The **Intellectual Property Office (IPO)** launched its annual **Fast Forward** competition to encourage universities and public sector research establishments to collaborate with businesses and local communities on innovative projects that benefit UK society and can help grow the economy.

Now in its third year, Fast Forward has so far provided £1.25 million in prizes to 23 winning projects in diverse areas, ranging from the creative industries to medical research and social enterprises.

The total prize fund available for this year's competition is £750,000, which will be awarded to around a dozen projects in individual awards of between £10,000 and £100,000.

IPO's chief executive **Sean Dennehey** said: "Fast Forward recognises and rewards projects that demonstrate innovative approaches to university-industry collaborations, providing funding that can help create new companies and services which benefit the UK economy and society." The closing date for the competition is Friday 14 December 2012.

Contact: www.ipo.gov.uk/fastforward

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

TV Apprentice finalist secures £170,000 for 'food business app'

In June 2012, after being fired by **Lord Sugar**, TV Apprentice **Nick Holzherr**, was determined to succeed on his own – despite being one of the final four.

He has now secured backing from a consortium of investors in a deal brokered by **Midven** – a venture capital company based in the West Midlands. Holzherr is now planning the launch of Whisk: a free app that reads recipes online. It analyses the ingredient information from the recipe and cross-references it to the inventory in online supermarkets.

Craig Edmunds, leader of the team who developed the transactional functionality of Lastminute.com and Expedia.com, will be joining Whisk as co-founder. The consortium of investors includes: Birmingham City Council; **Nate Macleitch**, chairman of cloud computing company **Quickblox**; Midland entrepreneur **Doug Scott**; **C7 Medical** founder **Peter Dines** and **Guy Morris**, who sold his digital marketing business **Media Ingenuity** in 2011 with a valuation of £4m.

The app, which is free to use, also calculates what ingredients will be leftover from cooking recipes by comparing pack sizes with the amount needed. It will suggest new recipes to cook with leftovers and work out "optimum" portions to cook in order to use leftovers, which fits with the current trend to reduce food waste.

Contact: www.whiskapp.com

GrowthAccelerator's group of 'growth experts' aim to work side by side with SMEs

GrowthAccelerator is a new service that will help England's brightest growing businesses achieve their ambitions with rapid, sustainable growth. Its network of business experts work side by side with leaders of high-growth potential businesses to provide them with the know-how and ability to achieve sustainable growth. The service will help discover the real issues that could be holding businesses back, define the right growth plan and open doors to world class business experts and networks.

GrowthAccelerator will drive growth for up to 26,000 ambitious small to mid-sized businesses across England, creating 55,000 high-value jobs. This will be achieved through a personal, tailored programme that will provide high growth businesses with access to an unrivalled network of experienced, highly qualified business growth experts.

To be eligible, businesses need to be registered in England with fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than £40m.

Contact: www.growthaccelerator.com – enquiries@growthaccelerator.com

GENERAL NEWS

The SME finalists for the 2012 Lord Stafford Awards are announced...

The awards were founded to recognize those companies which had carried out successful business and technology collaborations with Universities across the English Midlands.

The Innovation Award:

- **Vale Brothers Ltd** and Coventry University
- **Haemostatix Ltd** and the University of Leicester
- **DeCipher PTE Ltd** and the University of Lincoln

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

The Open Collaboration Award:

- **Bioscience Ventures Ltd** and the University of Birmingham
- **Hanson UK** and the University of Derby

The Best Knowledge Transfer Partnership Award:

- **R Holt & Co. Ltd** and Birmingham City University
- **Clive Durose Woodturners Ltd** and Staffordshire University
- **Elsoms Seeds Ltd** and the University of Warwick

The Innovation for Environmental Sustainability Award:

- Birmingham City Council and the University of Birmingham
- **McCarmley's UK Ltd** and Keele University

Contact: www.thelordstaffordawards.co.uk

Venturefest Bristol exhibited 30 companies at the Innovation Showcase.

The Innovation Showcase, sponsored by the **University of Bath**, featured 30 diverse new technology business ideas feature, including a super-lightweight aeroplane, a submersible boat and a haptic cow. Here is our selection of the best (minus the haptic cow...).

TEACO-Bat

The Electric Aeroplane Company (TEACO) are creating a record-breaking electric aircraft. The TEACO-Bat is a super-lightweight acrobatic aeroplane which will attempt to break the electric air speed record in 2013. After setting the world record, the company's long-term vision is to establish TEACO-Bat as an affordable kit aircraft. The company is looking for further investment to help it succeed in its world-record attempt.

Pixelpin

PixelPin is disruptive technology that provides a new, simple and secure way of logging into web services using pictures. People remember images better than words. Scientists call it the pictorial superiority effect (PSE). PixelPin uses PSE so you never have to remember a password again. PixelPin, which was set up in 2011, is looking for advice on future funding as well as potential customers and collaborators.

Scubacraft

Scubacraft is a marine technology company developing a high speed boat that can transform into a streamlined submersible that can dive to depths of up to 30m where the occupants wear scuba diving equipment. Formed in 2010 the company aims to launch the Scubacraft SC3 to market in 2013. Scubacraft is currently seeking investment to finalise the production developments, launch the product to market and deliver to customers.

Calvium

Calvium is a mobile development company specialising in location-based and media rich apps. Its AppFurnace tools enable the company to productise cross-platform app development to increase efficiency and reduce cost. The company has created great apps for organisations including The Guardian, The RSC and The Tower Of London. Looking for talent and investment to increase sales.

Brackenburn

Brackenburn has developed carbon neutral biomass fuels from naturally occurring and 100 percent sustainable bracken. After exhaustive R&D, Brackenburn is ready to build a manufacturing facility in Somerset producing 10,000 tonnes per annum, utilising Earth observation satellite technology to optimise harvesting. Seeking investment to supplement a grant of £426,650 from Defra.

Trevenning Water

Trevenning Water was created in 2008 to address waste-water treatment and recycling issues in countries

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

suffering from water stress. Now the company has designed a new plant, covering all the processes required to treat waste-water under a novel control system, and is seeking funds to validate the design by computer-based performance testing, and other pre-launch tasks. Looking for investment, exposure for approach and useful contacts.

Pumped

Pumped was founded in 2010 to commercialise a novel, patented actuator. It is designed to efficiently transfer rotary motion into multiple linear movements, using a stack of discs with a patented design. The first planned product is a cycle pump that can pump four times the volume of conventional systems of a similar size. Looking for investors and collaborators.

Lifecycle

Set up in 2009, AssemblyX has developed a web application that produces, manages and distributes complex manufacturing documentation. AssemblyX software significantly reduces the amount of time manufacturing organisations spend creating, managing and updating work instructions and supporting documentation and provides a platform for a paperless shop floor. Looking for customers and investors.

Contact: www.sciencecitybristol.com/pages/31-innovation-showcase

Companies celebrate at the 19th Manchester Evening News Awards

One Iota Ltd was crowned Young Business of the Year. The Rossendale firm, which has 18 staff, was founded in 2010 by **Damian Hanson** and **David Hague**. It provides mobile commerce technology to retailers and has installed SmartPods in some customers' stores. They are screens where shoppers can browse merchandise in-store and buy products that are not currently in stock.

Oliver Valves, the engineering company founded by **Michael Oliver** in 1979, won the award for firms with turnover of £50m-£100m. It is the second time in three years that Oliver Valves has won an MEN Business of the Year accolade, having been victorious in the £25m-£50m category in 2010.

Another family-owned business, Stockport-based **UK Point of Sale**, won the 'business under £10m turnover' category. UK Point of Sale, founded 20 years ago by MD **Jason Leslie** and his father Bill, makes racks and holders for leaflets, posters and other items found in shops, pubs, restaurants, estate agents and other premises. It is investing £4.5m in a new manufacturing and distribution site in Stockport.

Better Bathrooms, an independent bathrooms and tiles retailer based in Warrington, won the £25m-£50m turnover prize. The ambitious business currently has three showrooms and sells its ranges via mail order, telephone and the internet. It was established by **Colin Stevens** at the age of 21 to fund his dream of becoming a professional golfer.

Trendsetter Home Furnishings won the £10m-£25m turnover category in its centenary year. The firm, which is based at Trafford Park and has a factory in Estonia, supplies duvets, pillows and other bedding to retailers and has a string of concession outlets nationwide. Trendsetter has invested heavily in new production lines and innovation, and remains family-owned.

NES Global Talent, the Altrincham-based manpower firm with more than 30 offices worldwide and 450 staff, took the prize in the inaugural category for businesses with turnover of more than £100m.

Contact: www.itsoniota.com – www.ukpos.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Daresbury innovation campus spawns '125 new products and services during 2011'

Sci-Tech Daresbury's business development manager **John Leake** said: "Sci-Tech Daresbury's rich mix of enterprise, innovation and collaboration is a fertile breeding ground for developing new products and technologies."

Products were launched by 52 of Daresbury's 113 companies and 85 percent are already being sold. Almost half the firms based at Daresbury are collaborating with other companies on site, with the most active forging links with 12 fellow tenants.

Board member **Prof John Womersley** said: "Innovation at Sci-Tech Daresbury is thriving despite the economic climate and it is exciting to see activities on this scale coming out of the north-west."

The site saw 26 companies arrive in the first six months of this year, from sectors including advanced engineering and materials, biomedical, digital ICT, mobile and energy and environmental technology. Plans for new specialist office, laboratory and technical space at the site could create up to 10,000 skilled jobs over the next 20 years.

The complex changed its name from **Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus** to Sci-Tech Daresbury – not that anyone will bother – after becoming an 'Enterprise Zone'. Companies based there have a combined turnover of £28m.

Sci-Tech Daresbury is one of only two 'national science and innovation campuses' in the UK – it is a joint venture between Halton council, development company Langtree and the **Science and Technology Facilities Council**.

Contact: www.sci-techdaresbury.com

Money saving website reveals 'SMEs say 'NO' to graduates'

School-leavers and non-grads employees of choice for small businesses, says a study of 20,000 small business owners, according to money-saving website **DealJungle.com**.

It found that 54 percent believe school-leavers and non-graduates to be 'better value for money' than their graduate counterparts.

The survey found that 77 percent of SMEs had elected to hire non-graduates, saying that they required less on-the-job training than their more educated equivalents, and were more willing to 'get their hands dirty' on tasks that graduates can sometimes perceive as beneath them.

"Graduates are usually more expensive to employ and often feel they are above basic day-to-day tasks, making them less useful to a small business than a non-graduate with a 'can do' attitude," said DealJungle.com founder **Tom Michaels**. "Many of our members tell us they have been burned by employing graduates in the past. The picture we are getting is that graduates often turn up for work with lofty ideas about a glamorous career.

"SMEs are struggling in this current economy. They are providing jobs and in many ways they are still the engine room of the economy, but they certainly can't afford to carry expensive passengers."

Contact: www.dealjungle.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

UNIVERSITY NEWS

QUB's Centre for Plasma Physics out to defeat hospital superdrugs

The centre developed a new technique which has the potential to kill off bugs like *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *C. difficile* and MRSA. The novel method uses a cold plasma jet to rapidly penetrate dense bacterial structures known as biofilms which bind bacteria together and make them resistant to conventional chemical approaches.

The new approach developed by scientists in the **School of Mathematics and Physics** and the **School of Pharmacy** at Queen's passes electrical currents through flowing gas mixtures to create a wide variety of reactive species. These then effectively penetrate biofilms of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and MRSA and rapidly kill the bacteria within.

Currently antibiotics and disinfectants are used to target bugs in hospitals like *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *C. difficile* and MRSA. Effective in killing individual bacteria, they are often ineffective against complex organised communities of bacteria.

Professor Bill Graham, from the Centre for Plasma Physics at Queen's, said: "When bacteria congregate on surfaces they produce a kind of glue which joins them together in complex communities, known as biofilms. Instead of individual bacteria, they form a resistant film or layer and bind themselves together.

"This often makes it impossible for antibiotics to penetrate through and kill the bacteria deep within this protective layer. Bacteria growing like this, as is often seen with superbugs in hospitals, are often more than 1000 times more tolerant to antimicrobial agents like antibiotics and disinfectants compared to free-floating bacteria."

Contact: www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/CentreforPlasmaPhysics

Bristol and Lancaster Universities join Euro consortium – NEMIAC project

A consortium taking part in a project to build the world's first fully functioning nano-electro-mechanical (NEM) relay-based processor includes Universities of Bristol and Lancaster. Other participants are **IBM Zurich, STMicroelectronics, Royal Institute of Technology Sweden (KTH)**.

The processor will target an energy efficiency that 'cannot be matched by transistor implementations'. The NEMIAC project (Nano-Electro-Mechanical Integration and Computation) will investigate this new technology to build digital integrated circuits for ultra-low power computing applications.

With a €2.44m grant from the European Commission, **Dr Dinesh Pamunuwa**, from Bristol, who is in charge of the project's communication, said: "NEM relays have practically zero leakage, an abrupt turn-on transient and a high on-current, and can also be integrated with CMOS at the die or wafer level. This makes them promising candidates for digital logic implementation in ultra-low power applications.

"By building a functioning NEM relay-based processor we would go full circle by using electro-mechanical switches as the basic building block some 200 years after Babbage proposed his original fully mechanical calculator."

Contact: Dr Dinesh Pamunuwa – dinesh.pamunuwa@bristol.ac.uk

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

£92m National Automotive Innovation Campus to be built at Warwick

The so-called **NAIC** will be part-funded through the Government's UK Research Partnership Investment Fund (**UKRPIF**), administered by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (**HEFCE**), which supports university capital research projects.

The Government, **Jaguar Land Rover** (JLR) and **Tata Motors European Technical Centre** (TMETC) will invest £92m in the creation and operation of NAIC at the University of Warwick.

The group envisages 'a 10x ROI' through increased value added from exploitation of research outputs in new and improved products, processes and services. It will also address a shortage of skilled R&D staff in the automotive supply chain, creating a pipeline of people into companies nationwide, including the creation of many apprentices in specific areas of vehicle technology.

Tony Harper, head of research at JLR joined with **Nick Fell**, director of TMETC, to state: "The automotive industry in the UK is currently enjoying a period of resurgence with Jaguar Land Rover at its heart. We need, however, to take steps now to ensure that growth is enhanced and sustained in the long-term."

Contact: www.warwick.ac.uk

Strathclyde becomes exclusive European partner in Korean R&D programme

The project, funded by **Korea's** ministry of knowledge and economics, will see Strathclyde academics collaborating with technology companies to turn research projects into business opportunities.

Professor Jim McDonald, principal of the University of Strathclyde, said the partnership, which is expected to last for at least three years, will see academics at the university team up with Korean technology SMEs. The Korean government's Global Industry-Academia Co-operation Programme will provide £170,000 in funding for ten feasibility projects, in technologies such as biomedical devices, industrial materials, mobile communications and robotics.

Three of the studies are expected to go forward to full-scale research and development projects worth £1 million over three years. A further ten feasibility projects will be taken on next year.

Contact: www.strath.ac.uk

Cardiff University spinout company i2LResearch Ltd buys Baltimore firm

i2LResearch Ltd is a little-known research firm run by CEO **Dr Peter McEwen**.

The company being acquired is ICR Inc, which provides efficacy testing and regulatory consulting services to the insect control product industry.

The US company currently sells its products into more than 60 countries globally and is a world leader in the development and distribution of the botanical insecticide, Pyrethrin, as well as a wide range of synthetic chemistries.

The acquisition, whose financial details were undisclosed, has created a significant contract research organization that will enable i2L to expand its European based agrochemicals, biocide and regulatory operations into the USA. Fast-growing tech transfer firm **Fusion IP plc**, which has a commercialization contract with both Cardiff and **Sheffield** universities, owns a 31 percent equity stake in i2L Ltd.

Contact: www.i2lresearch.com – 029 2077 6220 – peter@i2lresearch.com

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

York biologists a step nearer to solving the Parkinson's conundrum

Research by a team in the University's **Department of Biology** found evidence that movement disorders, including tremor and slowness of movement (bradykinesia), associated with Parkinson's disease (PD) may be due to a defect in energy production in the nervous system. The advance may help to identify young adults who may be susceptible to the disease.

Parkinson's, the second most common form of neurodegenerative disease, principally affects people aged over 60, but some forms – known as juvenile PD – usually start in the 30-40 age group. One in 20 people diagnosed with Parkinson's are under 40 and such early onset PD is often inherited. Previous research has identified the genes which cause the disease and found them to be linked in a common pathway to failure of the mitochondria – the power source within each cell.

In the latest research, part-funded by leading research charity **Parkinson's UK** and published in *Human Molecular Genetics*, scientists at York studied the effect that parkin, one of the genes which cause juvenile PD, has on the larva of the fruit fly, *Drosophila*.

They discovered that parkin faithfully models the locomotory defects of PD with a marked reduction in speed, and slower muscle contractions, reminiscent of bradykinesia.

Dr Chris Elliott, who led the study, said: "Our experimental evidence confirmed that this was due to a defect in the nervous system. This was important because previous work had suggested a big impact on the muscles, but PD is associated with neuronal failure."

Contact: www.york.ac.uk/biology

OxeHealth is the latest venture by Prof Tarassenko in his IT-cum-bio data quest

New Oxford University spinout OxeHealth, from Oxford's **Institute of Biomedical Engineering**, will allow patients' health to be monitored using a webcam.

The software will detect a patient's heart rate, respiratory rate and oxygen saturation even in artificial light without the need for any physical contact or additional hardware. **Isis Innovation** announced that the new company will receive up to £500,000 in funding from **IP Group**, subject to certain milestones being met.

Oxehealth will refine its technology for remote monitoring of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder and other chronic disease patients in their homes. Oxehealth's software will be available for license to technology, medtech and pharma companies and for organisations conducting clinical trials.

Professor Tarassenko, director of the Institute of Biomedical Engineering, said: "Our research has transformed the ubiquitous webcam into a non-contact sensor for monitoring the most important vital signs. Our close collaboration with biomedical scientists in the University and clinicians in the NHS Trust has enabled rapid translation from the lab to the ward. We believe that our webcam software offers a step change in the way that the health of individuals can be assessed in the home or the hospital."

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust chief executive, **Sir Jonathan Michael** said: "Oxehealth is the first spinout directly linked with the Trust. The study in our Kidney Unit was essential to demonstrate that the technology works in a clinical environment, for the benefit of patients."

Contact: www.isis-innovation.com/spinout/OxEHealth

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Loughborough spinout claims ability to ‘find small amounts of explosive particles’

Professor John Tyrer from Loughborough University’s School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering developed the pioneering technology, alongside colleagues from the **Department of Chemistry**.

Tyrer’s spinout company – **Laser Optical Engineering** – has developed several working prototypes of the device that is undergoing field trials at a number of undisclosed locations across the country.

It is developing an anti-terrorist device which can scan remotely in crowded areas, such as airports and stations. The ‘Explorer’ system is claimed to be non-invasive, causing no delays to passengers and is fully automated, ruling out human error. It automatically signals an alarm if traces of explosives are detected.

At the national **Counter Terrorism & Specialist Security Awards 2012**, the Explorer beat tough industry competition to win the category of ‘Electro Optic, Thermal Imaging and Night Vision’.

The system is non-invasive, works in real time, causes no delays to passengers and is fully automated, ruling out human error – and the images produced are no more controversial than those generated by CCTV.

Contact: www.laseroptical.co.uk

LATE DATES FOR NOVEMBER 2012

20 November 2012 – ‘Shore Start’ Networking Breakfast

Cafe Shore, 10-14 Banks Road, Sandbanks, Poole BH13 7QB. 8am.

The networking breakfasts, sponsored by Cravenplan, are held bi-monthly by the Dorset Chamber of Commerce at the fantastic Café Shore Restaurant in Sandbanks. Enjoy Breakfast with a view, followed by facilitated table networking and a ‘can anyone help’ session at the end, where members help members with issues, contacts, advice etc.

Members £18 (inc VAT), non members £30 (inc VAT)

Contact: www.dcci.co.uk/eventss

20-21 November 2012 – Penrose Festival

Ravensbourne College, 6 Penrose Way, Greenwich Peninsula London SE10 0EW.

The Penrose Festival, at Ravensbourne College, sited near the O2 centre, is where 400 design, production and technology students have set up in business and will be showcasing and selling their work at this Celebration of Creative Businesses in Design, Production and Technology. At the launch you can meet the student entrepreneurs and discover new talent and innovation in the sectors at the ‘forefront of the growing creative and digital industries’.

Contact: www.rave.ac.uk/penrose/getting-here

21 November 2012 – STFC and UKTI Mechanical and Civil Engineering Meet the Buyer Event

Hilton Hotel, London Heathrow – 10am-5:30pm.

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

STFC and UKTI are hosting the Mechanical and Civil Engineering Meet the Buyer event. This event is aimed at providing UK industry in Mechanical and Civil engineering with information and contacts to help them supply to large facilities. The following facilities and organisations attending – CERN, ESRF, ILL, ISIS, Diamond Light Source, European Southern Observatory, UK Trade and Investment, and British Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Contact: www.stfc.ac.uk/Business%20and%20Innovation/39783.aspx

22 November 2012 – 7th Construction Computing Awards

Hotel Russell, 1-8 Russell Square, Bloomsbury, London WC1B 5BE.

Affectionately known as 'The Hammers' and now in their 7th year, the Construction Computing Awards reward the technology, tools and solutions for the effective design, construction, maintenance and modification of commercial buildings, residential and social housing and civil engineering projects of all sizes. They have also becoming the event where the industry gets together to network, exchange thoughts and ideas, and dare we say it, have a little bit of fun as well. Companies compete in 20 categories.

Contact: Josh Boulton, Event Director: josh.boulton@btc.co.uk – 01689 616 000. – www.constructioncomputingawards.co.uk

26 November 2012 – New Entrepreneurs Foundation event

The Cormack Room, University Centre, Granta Place, Mill Lane, Cambridge CB2 1RU. 6pm.

The New Entrepreneurs Foundation (NEF) wants to develop a new generation of outstanding entrepreneurs by equipping them with the hands on skills to build scalable businesses. Results have been poor so far, but each year, NEF selects up to 30 of the UK's brightest, most entrepreneurially minded people to join their unique year-long paid programme. The programme gives the chosen few the time to work in one of the UK's most entrepreneurial businesses for a year.

Speakers at the event include Cambridge alumnus Tom Mercer, the founder of Moma, a food company aimed at the breakfast market which is stocked in FMCG giants such as Waitrose and Ocado, as well as Virgin Atlantic and British Airways.

Contact: sara@brightnetwork.co.uk

29 November 2012 – Friends of Imperial College Lecture Series

Sir Alexander Fleming Building, London. 7.00pm.

Electronic tsunami: changing human behaviour' with Professor Nelson Phillips, Chair in Strategy and Organisational Behaviour.

Electronic communications and digital devices have caused the death of distance and place but how is this affecting the way we behave and where is it leading.

Professor Phillips has a strong interest in technology strategy and innovation, where he has been working for several years on various aspects of the social dynamics of technology adoption and the ramifications of these dynamics for technology strategy and innovation. He is particularly interested in the dynamics of the adoption of digital consumer devices and these dynamics on firms and industries.

Contact: www.friendsofimperial.org.uk/FOIC-Index.php?pg=FullEvent&from=Our-Events&ev=100

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

AND FINALLY...

>> **Canongate Books**, the Edinburgh-based publisher, has blamed Wikileaks writer and asylum-seeker **Julian Assange's** "failure to deliver" the book he was contracted to produce for plunging into operating loss. They were unable to obtain repayment from him of Canongate's substantial advance, which had to be written off." This advance is rumoured to have been about £500,000.

Contact: www.canongate.tv

>> Early Xmas presents? Little Wigwam is a family-owned business based in Surrey that aims to provide quality educational products for children, designed by teachers and reviewed by kids.

Founded in 2010 **Mark Slade**, MD of **Little Wigwam**, said: "We've spent over a year developing and testing the game to turn the rough and tumble fun of playground favourite British Bulldog into a board game that captures kids' imaginations and helps them develop key skills at the same time. And most importantly, our young testers love the thrill of the chase when they play it."

Their placemats are made in the UK and comply fully with British safety legislation including toy safety regulation EN71, which means the inks and lacquers on the mat are safe for use by children – there are no toxins, no thalides, no heavy metals and no PVC. The mats are finished with a smooth edge and rounded corners for added safety.

Contact: www.littlewigwam.com

>> Brighton-based **Hirsch Guitar** is designed and developed by **Jonathan Hirsch** – is now bringing to market the Hirsch SB-1 Radius 'smallbody' electric guitar. They offer guitarists a no-compromise travel option: a top-spec, high quality travel guitar.

Contact: www.hirsch-guitar.com

>> Manholes or drain covers – you'll miss them when they're gone... Many of **America's** 20 million manholes are in need of 'immediate rehabilitation or replacement', says a consultancy report. Manholes are everywhere yet they often go unnoticed, but when a manhole fails, overflowing sewer systems quickly make these seemingly innocent infrastructure markers all too conspicuous. In the US manholes exist about every 400 feet of pavement.

Meanwhile, criminal gangs could be responsible for stealing more than 1,000 iron drain covers in the Manchester suburb of Bolton. The problem has become so serious **Bolton Council** is now embarking on a major programme to replace traditional cast iron grids with new steel-hinged models to deter thieves. But a report to the council warned it could take 100 years to replace them all.

The council has received 1,365 reports of missing covers in the four years since 2008. Worse still, the council has been hit by 19 compensation claims related to uncovered drains in the last two years, which could cost the taxpayer more than £200,000.

>> And now for an MP who really knows how to enjoy herself? **Margaret Moran**, 57, the former Labour MP, is currently accused of making a series of bogus expense claims including using an elderly couple's address on a fake invoice.

The false claims for £60,000 in parliamentary expenses took place between 2004 and 2008. **Southwark Crown Court** heard that on one bill for more than £4,000, address details given for a building firm were those of an elderly couple.

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...

Prosecutor **Peter Wright QC** said: “They relate to the home of an elderly couple with no connection whatsoever to Elite builders. The invoice was a complete forgery. It was simply a means of pocketing £4,756.40 in public money.”

She also claimed more than £2,000 for a landline at her flat when there was no phone line fitted, the jury heard, and for carpet for three bedrooms for her one-bedroom Westminster flat. Mr Wright said: “It was rather a lot of carpet for a one-bedroom flat in London.”

Moran is accused of 15 charges of false accounting and six of using a false instrument over the claims for parliamentary expenses. Wonderfully, the former politician was found ‘unfit to stand trial’ due to mental health issues, so proceedings are taking place in her absence.

>> Being ‘unable to face trial’ is fast becoming the ‘get-out’ claim of choice for a growing number of middle-class professionals when faced with charges of misconduct. **Dr Sabah Al-Zayyat**, the consultant paediatrician who failed to spot that the abused toddler **Baby P** – Peter Connelly – had serious injuries including a broken back in 2007, when she examined him two days before his death – claimed she ‘was suicidal’- and then fled the UK.

In June 2011 **Great Ormond Street Hospital** apologised to a senior doctor which it suspended after she blew the whistle on failings at the clinic where Peter was treated just days before his death. Consultant paediatrician **Kim Holt** and three colleagues wrote to managers in 2006, warning that understaffing and poor record keeping posed a serious risk to patients’ safety at **St Anne’s clinic** in Haringey, north London.

Holt, who was on paid leave for much of the past three years, said managers ignored her warnings and removed her from the clinic. She now works at the **Whittington Hospital** in north London.

Section Links

Company of the Month // SME News – Engineering, Electronics, Telecoms // SME News – Chemicals, Materials & Environment // SME News – IT, Software, Services & Internet // SME News – Biotech, Pharma & Medical Sciences // Funding & Investments // General News // University News // Late Dates // And Finally...