

business

In association with



HOVIP

Heads of the Valleys Innovation Programme

 INNOVATION drives success
 A unique opportunity to
 become more profitable


Winners of the 2009
 Heads of the Valleys
 Innovation Awards

The spirit of innovation - driving success

Doing things differently to get better, quicker or more cost-effective results is what innovation is all about. The Heads of the Valleys Innovation Awards and Marketplace celebrate and reward the most innovative businesses in the region.

ONCE again, the search is on for the most innovative businesses and social enterprises in the Heads of the Valleys area. The 2010 Heads of the Valleys Innovation Awards are open. Any business or social enterprise in one of the five Heads of the Valleys county boroughs is invited to enter the 2010 Awards.

But what does innovation in business really mean and what sort of results can we expect from being innovative?

To answer that question, let's look at the four winners of the 2009 Awards. Not only are they excellent examples of innovation in action, but they also demonstrate how innovation can be effective in any area of the business. Merthyr Tydfil-based New Pathways, a social enterprise providing support services to victims of domestic and sexual abuse, won the Award for the Most Innovative Social Enterprise. The only organisation in Wales to provide such a range of services, they have also developed an innovative volunteer training scheme and are running a unique project for prison inmates. Winner of the Award for the Most Innovative Sole Trader, Shabby Chic Antiques took an innovative idea and created a sustainable business. Antique furniture is recycled with a French shabby chic look and sold in the UK as well as exported to the US, China and Japan. The business has also featured in Vogue and ITV's '60 Minute Makeover' programme.

Abertillery-based SteriTouch Ltd won the Award for the Most Innovative Business with less than 20 employees. SteriTouch is the only company in Wales enabling any product to be made antimicrobial. Their trademark is imaginatively used as a co-brand by over thirty companies including the world's largest remote control manufacturer. The Awards judges said, "When

a great technology, a strong brand, a clever business model and sheer hard work are all combined, outstanding innovation is the result."

The fourth example is DecTek Ltd, winner of the Award for the Most Innovative Business with more than 20 employees. DecTek has developed a unique global asset tracking solution for use in tracking anything from luggage to livestock. Commended by the judges as "an excellent example of open innovation", the company has used collaborations and partnerships to speed up the process of developing new products and is having a global impact.

"Entering the 2010 Awards is a great way to recognise your employees and raise the profile of your business. All entrants will automatically become members of the Turning Heads Club (HOVIP's regional business club) and the winners will be entered for the Wales Innovation Award and South Wales Chamber Business Awards," says Phil Burkhard, HOVIP Manager.

"The 2010 Awards have once more attracted prestigious and high profile sponsors. The University of Wales Global Academy Innovation Initiative is the main sponsor of the Innovation Awards, as well as overall sponsor of the Marketplace event. Equinox PR have joined us as our Media Partner. And we again have support from HSBC, BT, the South Wales Chamber of Commerce and Cardiff-based Capital Law, each of whom has contributed an exciting package of prizes for the winning companies."

"I would urge businesses across the Heads of the Valleys region to find out more about the Awards and the Marketplace event – just visit www.hovip.org.uk after 17th March for all the details. Entries for the 2010 Awards are open until 14 May 2010 – so don't delay!"



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If you would like to find out how you can benefit from HOVIP, contact Phil Burkhard on 01685 725469 or Email phil.burkhard@merthyr.gov.uk or visit www.hovip.org.uk