



Your Business Advantage Bulletin

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LOCAL NEWS

A TASTE OF THE HEBRIDES

Gourmet Cookery Demo & 3 Course Lunch

Where: Park Guest House, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis
When: Wednesday 30th January 2008, 11.30am – 2.30pm

Roddy Afrin, an experienced and creative chef and also the proprietor of the Park Guest House will prepare three courses of Hebridean favorites from starter to dessert, demonstrating his culinary skills and passion for food.

The event introduces the innovative use of Hebridean produce whilst providing insider tips on how to make food look as good as it tastes. At the end of the demonstration all attendees will enjoy a fabulous three course lunch served in the cosy restaurant and enjoy what they have just watched Roddy skillfully prepare. Who Cares Wins and The Park Guest House have worked in partnership to organise this event to promote and develop the Outer Hebrides' reputation as a source of excellent food, and the cookery demonstration which is open to the all business owners will reflect the abundance of good food and drink produced on the islands.

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. The event is **£20.00 per person and includes a three course meal and a glass of wine.** *These types of events are normally charged at £45.00 per person, so take advantage of this exclusive opportunity.*

Contact the Who Cares Wins Team to book a place.
Tel: 01851 703703 or email: info@whocareswins.org.uk

If you live in an area outwith Lewis and feel something like this would be good for businesses in your area, please get in touch and we can try to arrange something!

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT www.whocareswins.org.uk



ROCK N RETRO AT THE CLOTHES SHOW LIVE

Recently PSYBT client Sarah Morrison, of 'Rock N Retro', successfully exhibited at the Clothes Show Live in the NEC Birmingham. 'Rock n Retro' make costume jewellery and accessories using a range of new, reclaimed and vintage charms, pendants, beads and materials. Sarah has been running her business from home since February 2006 and selling to customers via Ebay, on her own website, www.rock-n-retro.co.uk, and local and mainland craft fairs. When the opportunity arose to display her products at The Clothes Show Live 2007 she decided to apply for funding to assist her in paying for the exhibition stand and to purchase new equipment and materials to enable her to build up her stock.

Sarah approached PSYBT for advice, assistance and help to develop a Business Plan. When ready, she applied to PSYBT and presented her Business Plan and ideas to a Panel of volunteers from the local business community. They considered Sarah's application and decided to award her an expansion loan of £4000. The PSYBT Panel were very impressed with Sarah's business knowledge, her network of contacts and her enthusiasm for her products and were delighted to be able to help her take her products to the Clothes Show Live exhibition.

PSYBT in the Western Isles offers advice and funding to young people aged between 18 and 30, with a business idea. PSYBT can help by providing:-

- Advice and information
- Help to writing a Business Plan
- Help to source funding
- Start Up Grants of up to £1000
- Start Up and/or Expansion Loans of up to £5000
- A free book-keeping system and book-keeping training
- Access to business skills training courses and workshops
- Ongoing support from a Volunteer Business Adviser once you've started
- Membership to the PSYBT Business Networking Club

For further information contact: Jane Campbell, PSYBT Regional Manager, Business Advantage, Town Hall, Stornoway, on 01851 707475 or visit www.psybt.org.uk.

BUSINESS TIP

NETWORKING TIPS

In recent years Business networking has shot up in popularity, both on and offline, making it a great tool to spread the word on your business. Networking is not just about selling your goods and services but about building and nurturing business relationships and new contacts with a view of gaining new business in the future. This can be through the people you meet or by word of mouth from these new contacts.

Before attending a networking event, especially if you are not a confident speaker, it is worthwhile thinking of questions to ask fellow networkers for example:

- ❖ How did you travel here?
- ❖ How did you start in business?

- ❖ What do you enjoy most about your profession?
- ❖ What changes have occurred in your sector since you started?
- ❖ What is the strangest or funniest incident that you have experienced?

An important point to remember is to get the most from a networking opportunity and to not sit on the sidelines waiting for people to come to you. For more information and tips on networking and organizing an networking event please visit www.kintish.co.uk.

TOURISM FOR TRAINING

Tourism for Training is a new online learning site for training industry individuals working in the hospitality and tourism industries. Developed by the Robert Gordon University and part-financed by the European Social Fund the site is seen as a lifelong tool to assist you and your business with keeping up-to-date with your market.

Modules have been developed by established industry professionals specifically for small businesses and self-employed individuals whether you are a travel agent or a taxi driver. Its main aim is to develop skills and knowledge at your own pace with case studies providing real working examples of the modules syllabus. For more information and to register for free please visit www.tourismfortraining.com.

BUSINESS NEWS

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE INTERACTIVE

Members of Investors in People can now make use of a new online tool to allow you and your business to achieve your goals by assisting you through the development process. The IIP Interactive business improvement tool is directly linked to achieve and stay within the IIP standard by following the 5 key management practices of Strategic Planning, Effective Management, Developing People, Culture and Communication and Managing Performance. Please click on this link to access the [Investors in People Interactive](#) and take a preview tour of the tool.

NEW FOOD GUIDELINES PUBLISHED

A guide for food preparation businesses has been developed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) recommending that cafes and others enterprises that provide non pre-packed food should advise their customers what, if any, allergies may be triggered by the products ingredients. For instance this includes informing the public if a sandwich contains milk, egg, nuts, mustard or soya etc. For more information please visit the [Food Standards Agency](#) website.

Furthermore the Scottish Government is developing a national food policy and published a discussion document entitled '[Choosing the Right Ingredients: The Future for Food in Scotland](#)' (click to access the paper). This paper aims to "*make the nation healthier, wealthier and smarter*" in terms of their attitudes towards food and where it comes from. The policy is intended to be a joint vision, from consumer and producer through to local and national government, to forge links through the whole supply chain thus promoting healthy locally produced food and reducing the impacts food production and transportation have on the environment – "*from egg to plate*".

OTHER NEWS

CHAMPIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AWARDS 2008

The Champions for Sustainable Communities Awards aim to recognise those highly motivated individuals that drive positive changes in local communities and who are largely not publicly recognized for their motivation and drive.

There are four possible categories for entries:

- ❖ Community groups
- ❖ Public and third sector
- ❖ Business
- ❖ International

The winner will receive assistance to help forward and progress their work with sustainable communities. The deadline for nominations is Friday 8th February 2008 with the awards ceremony taking place in March 2008.

For further information on the awards, including opportunities to exhibit at or to sponsor the event please visit the [Forward Scotland](#) website.

USEFUL LINKS

The following are useful links that may also assist you succeed and grow in your sector by networking with other groups and gaining more tips and information:

- Please visit the Business Advantage website for loan and business advice and information www.cne-siar.gov.uk/eds/business/index.htm.
- The Princes Scottish Youth Business Trust offers start-up funding and advice to young people aged between 18 and 30, with a business idea. They also offer expansion funding and more information is available at <http://www.psybt.org.uk/Regions/WesternIsles.aspx>.
- www.hiebusiness.co.uk - very useful for staff and clients and very user friendly support so well worth visiting. The site will be regularly updated so any changes in legislation etc will be incorporated promptly.
- The Business IT Guide is operated by e-skills UK and assisted by The Highlands & Islands Enterprise offering useful hints and tips on IT solutions for small businesses as they have found that small businesses in the UK are losing millions of pounds from lost revenue due to not being adequately IT literate. Please visit them at www.scotland.businessitguide.com
- A regular 'Socio Economic Update' is published containing useful information on the local economy at: <http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/factfile/index.htm>
- 'Aim-Hi' (www.aim-hi.org) is an online forum for the Creative Industries sector - please feel free to register your interest and visit the site at <http://s4.invisionfree.com/aimhi/>.
- The Creative Industries section of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar also publishes a periodic newsletter on the website at <http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/eds/creativeindustries/index.htm>. Creative Industries focus on the arts, crafts film, and television, publishing, and new media sectors and therefore this is worth a read if you specialise in this sector to help you keep ahead of your competitors.

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Good luck

The Business Advantage Team

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