

‘GIBSON INDEX NEWSLETTER’

– Issue No.42, February 2008 –

**A Comprehensive Monthly e-Newsletter on British Enterprise and Innovation
– by Marcus Gibson**

Welcome to the February 2008 Edition of the ‘Gibson Index Newsletter’, a unique monthly report on emerging British companies, finance, initiatives and commercial research that our researchers have pinpointed from around the UK. The newsletter is based reports about the 25,000+ companies across 45 technology sectors in the Gibson Index SME database.

>> The e-Newsletter is distributed mid-month, with the Events Diary distributed on the 20th of each month. The e-Newsletter involves 12 issues per annum, and is available at £325 + VAT to subscribers.

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>> *All contributions are welcome – info@gibson-index.com. Do please let us know if about successes, developments or new connections made as a result of reading the Newsletter*

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HEADLINE NEWS

Finalists For The UK Technology Innovation & Growth Awards Announced

The awards, now in their ninth year, recognise those individuals and organisations that drive the success of the UK's 'fastest growing technology companies'. The winners will be announced at the Innovation and Growth Awards gala dinner on March 18th. As in previous years the finalists are mostly large-sized companies that are already well known to the VC and investment community rather than truly new technology companies.

The finalists include:

Solarcentury, The Cloud, Ubiquisys, Viagogo, Volantis Systems, Enfis, Filtronic, Imagination Technologies, StepStone ASA, Telecity Group, Cambridge Semiconductor, Omnifone, PicoChip Designs Ltd, Plastic Logic, Skinkers, Adaptive Mobile, Blyk, Exanet, Joost, Rhythm NewMedia, VirtualLogix Inc, ip.access, iQur Ltd, Microtest Matrices Ltd, Oxford Immunotec Ltd, Silistix, Bac2 Ltd, CMR Fuel Cells plc, Insensys, Moixa Energy USBCELL, Solarcentury, Celltick Technologies, LOVEFiLM, Openads, Pictel Technologies Ltd, VideoJug Corp Ltd, Xtract Corporation Ltd, Atomico Investments Holdings, Eden Ventures, JAFCO Ventures, DFJ Esprit, Scottish Equity Partners, blinkx, Enfis, Expansys, i-design, Neuropharm Group plc, TelecityGroup, Amadeus Capital, DFJ Esprit, Index Ventures, Scottish Equity Partners, Spark Ventures, Brown & Rudnick, Field Fisher Waterhouse LLP, Heller Ehrman (Europe) LLP, Osborne Clarke, Taylor Wessing LLP, AxiCom, Brands2Life, Firefly Communications, Mantra PR, Porter Novelli.

www.innovationandgrowthforum.com

First True 'Clean Coal', Commercial-scale Plant To Be Built In The UK

The promise of turning coal into clean fuel has led to 11 companies in the UK forming an industrial organisation called the Carbon Capture & Storage Association or CCSA.

The founders include the BP, ConocoPhillips and Shell oil companies, Alstom Power and Scottish and Southern Energy, and they have come together to encourage the development of CCS.

Its spokesman said: "The founding members of the CCSA strongly believe that CCS technology can deliver major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from fossil-fuel-based power generation. In doing so, CCS can play a significant role in enabling the UK to meet its Kyoto protocol obligations and may also extend the life of North Sea oil production by facilitating enhanced oil recovery using the captured carbon dioxide.

"Additionally, CCS technology may provide access to hydrogen from fossil fuels with no or low CO2 emissions, helping to fuel a hydrogen economy for power and transportation."

The London-based CCSA said the North Sea has 'huge storage potential' for CO2 in oil fields, gas fields and in saline aquifers. The capacity in just the UK sector of the North Sea has been estimated at more than 15,000 million tonnes – enough to accommodate and store CO2 from fossil-fuel generating plants and other industrial sites for several centuries.

Since 1996, more than seven million tonnes of CO2 have been stored successfully underground in the Utsira formation in the central North Sea. The effectiveness of this project has been monitored by an international consortium of geological experts.

Since the early 1970s, CO2 has been injected into oil fields, mainly in the US, to enhance oil recovery. Its behaviour is well understood and predictable with more than 25 million tonnes injected annually.

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“The capture technology can also be retrofitted to existing coal-fired plants. This will be vital to tackling climate change on a global scale – China, alone, built an average of one new coal-fired power station every four days in 2006.”

A number of countries, including Norway and the United States, are working to perfect CCS for power generation but the UK believes it can take a lead in building a commercial-scale coal-fired CCS plant.

The World Coal Institute said that CCS presents one of the most promising options for large-scale reductions in CO2 emissions from energy use.

Contact: World Coal Institute: www.worldcoal.org – Carbon Capture & Storage Association – www.ccsaassociation.org.uk

South West Ventures Fund (SWVF) SWVF Invested £4m In 14 Companies Last Year

Overall in 2007, Since launch the Fund has invested more than £8m in 25 companies. The South West Ventures Fund is managed by YFM Venture Finance Limited, part of the YFM Group.

Most recently, TBiConnect secured £330,000 venture capital funding to support the market development of its business-to-business eCommerce service. The company is to be chaired by David Rogers, a former chief executive of Amstrad Plc and Lucent EMEA.

Secondly, BeCheeky.com, an online retailer specialising in high-quality lingerie, secured £200,000 in venture capital funding from the South West Ventures Fund. Supplemented by angel investors, the sum is part of a financing round totalling more than £600,000. BeCheeky.com was founded in 2005 by James and Sarah Akin-Smith, and is chaired by Quentin Griffiths, co-founder of online fashion retailer, ASOS plc. The company's website attracts 130,000 individual visitors per month, viewing more than 1,200 individual lines from brands such as Bracli, Lola Luna, Morgan, Princess Tam Tam and Sensuelle.

Thirdly, the South West Ventures Fund has invested a further £410,000 in Mirifice Ltd, a Digital TV and broadcast software and consulting company. Mirifice has raised the additional funds to support further development of MirimonT, its unique monitoring solution for Digital TV networks, as it looks to expand into Europe and the United States. The current customer base includes leading digital TV broadcasters Virgin Media and Sky TV.

Other companies of interest include Atlas Genetics – point-of-care DNA diagnostic instrumentation; Action Sports – indoor sport and leisure facilities, and CMS Global Technologies – mobile workforce tracking and management software.

Contact: YFM Group team Peter Davies, Julian Dennard, Nick Simmonds, or Alison Briggs.
www.yfmgroup.co.uk

Catapult Venture Managers Enjoys Record Year In 2007 – And Seeks Yet More

CVM specialises in providing equity capital for businesses requiring between £200k and £2m, is enjoying its best year ever and on target to complete around 20 transactions across its three funds before the end of 2007.

Since 2003, it has invested in over 52 companies, providing initial and further follow on funding. MD Rob Carroll said “We now have funds totalling £80m under our management, and transactions in the last quarter are proving particularly buoyant.

“Our £30m East Midlands Regional Venture Capital Fund (EMRCVF) has already completed seven new deals this year. The latest is in Nottingham-based drug development company Zysis Ltd, which is currently

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working on two exciting drug reformulation products. Other new deals include Blackstar Amplification, Sigmala and FDTEK.

“We’ve also completed further investments into: Monica Healthcare, Brake Testing International, Haemostatix, Digeprint and Safetoeat.”

Another notable success story can be found at Northamptonshire-based security software and hardware company Transvisual Media Limited (TVM), which has been acquired by Soncell Ltd, a manufacturing subsidiary of Bowmer and Kirkland.

Catapult’s Birmingham office, which runs the £20m Advantage Enterprise and Innovation Fund (AEIF) – funded by Advantage West Midlands and the European Regional Development Fund – has enjoyed a run of completions since September. This includes leading a £1.2m investment into Synchro Limited, designers and developers of a unique software package for the construction industry.

Catapult was a key investor in a £1.6m funding round into Anaxsys Technology Limited, developers of a revolutionary portfolio of products including an asthma monitoring device.

Anaxsys secured the funding from a syndicate of institutional and private investors, in order to complete commercialization of its lead Asthma Diagnostic and Disease Management Tool, and for the setting-up a new Head office at Keele Science Park.

At the start of the year Catapult Venture Managers launched its new £30 million Catapult Growth Fund with a geographical focus primarily on the Midlands, but with a remit to also invest nationally. The Fund’s first investment was for £1.2m into Oxford Genome Sciences – OgeS (UK) Ltd of Abingdon, alongside £400k each from the South East Growth Fund (SEGF) and Oxford Capital Partners (OCP).

The work that OGeS undertakes could change the face of medicine forever. Its unique technology holds one of the world’s largest proprietary collections of genomic, proteomic and clinical information, which is then used to aid the development of personalized medicines – tailoring drug treatments to an individual biological profile – for cancer and Alzheimer’s disease.

The Catapult Growth Fund’s second investment was a £500k injection into Chesterfield-based Kyoob Space, a rapidly growing and profitable operator in the premium end of the portable and modular buildings market. The Fund is due to complete a further transaction over the coming weeks.

Contact: 0870 116 3000 (Birmingham), 0870 116 1600 (Leicester) or aeif@catapult-vm.co.uk

Work To Begin On New £15.4m Glasgow City Science Innovation Centre

Ambitious plans for a new science and technology district in the centre of Glasgow have taken a big step forward with the sale of part of the Glasgow City Science site by Scottish Enterprise Glasgow to developers Start Anywhere Group (START).

Covering just over 2 hectares, the City Science development is located on a site bounded by Albion Street, George Street, the High Street and Ingram Street and is expected to attract a total of £60 million worth of private sector investment and create more than 1,600 new jobs.

This phase of construction, a five-storey innovation centre, will provide more than 5,000 sq m (55,000 sq ft) of space, providing a dedicated business centre, associated retail facilities and larger units for a whole range of companies that want to benefit from the location and the connections START has with its other UK centres as well as locally.

START Anywhere Group designs, develops and operates business and innovation centres and science parks, and it also provides both social and business encouragement and opportunities to new and high

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growth organisations.

Through a relationship with St John's Innovation Centre in Cambridge START has expertise in both the encouragement of technology transfer between academic institutions and business and also in the creation and growth of a range of start ups.

START has built up a national network of centres in Bristol, Dartford, Edinburgh, Fareham, Oxford, Reading and Woolwich and is involved in the development of the London Science Park, part of 'The Bridge' at Dartford, a mixed use regeneration project integrating commercial occupiers and residents to create a vibrant new community.

Start Anywhere Group: Maggie Wright – Tel: 0131 226 3622 – maggie@mwa-scotland.com

TR Control Solutions In Last Three To Win Microsoft's Ingenuity Point's Contest

Independent software vendors (ISVs) from around the world have been taking part in the competition, which focuses on recognizing software solutions that are making a meaningful difference in the areas of education, healthcare and environmental sustainability.

The winning ISVs are TR Control Solutions Ltd. of Surrey, UK, Tobii Technology AB of Stockholm, Sweden, and OSIsoft Inc of San Leandro, Calif. TR Control Solutions, Tobii Technology and OSIsoft will be joined by a second round of three grand prize winners that will be announced after the second contest period ends on February 28, 2008.

Microsoft will provide each of these companies with a variety of marketing tools and resources to help them increase the awareness of their respective solutions and the work they are doing in their particular areas of expertise.

In education, TR Control Solutions applied its skills in process control technology to develop ecoDriver Schools, a solution that helps students, teachers and school administrators monitor their consumption of power, water, paper and other resources, and to work together to minimize the environmental impact of their respective schools. In addition, schools that use ecoDriver can collaborate, compete and share best practices using a Microsoft Office SharePoint Server-based collaboration tool.

To develop this solution, TR Control also uses the features and capabilities in the Microsoft .NET Framework, Visual Basic .NET, Microsoft ASP .NET, Visual Studio .NET, Microsoft Office Visio, Microsoft SQL Server, ActiveX, Microsoft Office Project, and the core applications in the Microsoft Office system.

The six vertical winners selected in both award rounds are eligible to be chosen as the Platinum Ingenuity Point Award winner, to be announced in spring 2008. In addition to receiving additional marketing support, the Platinum Award recipient will receive a coveted guest judge position at the Microsoft Imagine Cup 2008 competition to be held in Paris.

www.microsoft.com/isv – www.trcontrolsolutions.co.uk

First Ever Alternative Fuel-powered Commercial Aircraft Flight Flow By A380

The flight on February 1st was between Filton in the UK and Toulouse, France. The flight, involving an Airbus A380, powered by Rolls-Royce Trent 900 engines and fuelled with Shell GTL (Gas To Liquids) jet fuel, is the first in a series of tests to examine alternative fuels for civil aviation purposes.

GTL is a synthetic biofuel processed from gas. GTL Fuel for transport, in particular, is a clear, clean fuel, virtually free of sulphur and aromatics and has a very high cetane number. Cetane number is a measure of fuel combustion quality – the higher the cetane number, the more complete the combustion. GTL Fuel

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has a cetane number of 75-80, much higher than the typical refinery diesel range of 45-50.

Because the new fuel, produced mainly at a Shell refinery in Malaysia, produces 75% less particulate emissions than current EU vehicle diesel engines, it is likely that GTL fuels may have a bigger long term impact on the automotive sector rather than aerospace.

www.shell.com/gtl

Bradford University Launches New Nanotechnology And Nanoparticle Expertise

Lena Nanoceutics develop improved formulation processes for prescription drugs, over the counter medicines and healthcare products, says its founder Dr Riddhi Shukla.

Its vision is to become an internationally recognised provider of formulation solutions for the pharmaceutical and healthcare markets.

Based at the Institute of Pharmaceutical Innovation at Bradford University, he says this will be achieved through the application and ongoing development of its technologies for particle size reduction, mixing, homogenisation and particle coating. They manufacture nanoparticulate formulations for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries.

Lena Nanoceutics Ltd use novel reactor technology to develop and manufacture nanoparticulate formulations for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries. The nano-particle forming process employed does not rely solely on extensive and repeated mechanical shearing of pharmaceutical ingredients and can rapidly generate nano-particles.

Unlike other available technologies, Lena's processes include in-line de-agglomeration, dispersion and homogenisation of the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs). This provides greater control over particle size and size distribution with potential benefits in enhancing and controlling drug bioavailability, efficacy and toxicity.

Lena Nanoceutics' competitive advantages are: reduced production time and costs through rapid nano-particle generation and additional in-line processing; improved process environment control – single-step continuous process; improved control of particle size and distribution; fewer surface defects/amorphous i.e. cleaner, more crystalline surface; significantly expand the range of drugs that can be subjected to nano-processing. Lena Nanoceutics strategy focuses on collaborative interactions with pharmaceutical and healthcare companies to develop formulation solutions that are readily scalable to production levels.

* At the Tokyo Nano Tech 2008 exhibition in mid-February, UK companies in the UK's pavilion included Intrinsic – the former QinetiQ Nanomaterials Ltd. Back in 2007 the firm announced they had completed trials on a nanotechnology compound that could kill MRSA, H5N1 and e-Coli when put on surfaces.

www.lenanano.com – r.y.shukla@bradford.ac.uk – www.ics-inc.co.jp/nanotech/en

General News In Brief:

- The British government, including the Ministry of Defense (MoD), will be able to share or trade some of the most valuable radio spectrum in the country under new guidelines being drawn up by the communications regulator.

Watchdog Ofcom said in February that it expected the new rules to free up some prime spectrum held by the public sector, which has been estimated to be worth between '£3-20bn (\$6 billion-\$40 billion)' for new mobile services.

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“Public bodies and the MoD in particular hold some of the most valuable and sought-after radio spectrum,” said Ofcom Chief Executive Ed Richards, who aims to consult the industry about its plans to enable public spectrum trading in the summer.

“By working with these organizations we are enabling them to trade and release this spectrum, which will create new opportunities for the development of wireless services for the whole country.”

The MoD, which holds around a third of the most sought-after public-sector spectrum, has said it is committed to sharing and releasing “a significant proportion” of its spectrum and plans to consult on proposals in May 2007.

Public bodies such as the MoD use around half of the radio spectrum below 15 Gigahertz – the most sought after and congested frequencies.

www.ofcom.org.uk

- The Government is investing almost £400m to transform Birmingham New Street Station and make journeys easier for millions of passengers.

The station redevelopment focuses on relieving the congested conditions, making it easier for the 17m passengers who use the station each year to reach platform level. This investment will also help accommodate the increase in passenger levels, forecast to increase by around 30% in the next 10 years.

The project will double the size of the station concourse; widen Platforms 8 and 9, the busiest on the station; increase the number of escalators to platforms from five to 31, and the number of lifts from five to nine; increase the number of pedestrian entrances to the station from two to five, opening up new routes to the city centre; enhance CCTV, car parking and lighting facilities; and improve the appearance of the station.

From December 2008, the new West Coast Main Line timetable will provide three trains every hour between Birmingham, Coventry and London, 50% more services than today. The new timetable will also reduce journey times between Birmingham and Scotland, improve services between Birmingham and Milton Keynes, and deliver improved weekend services.

Train passengers in the West Midlands will benefit from more carriages serving Birmingham in the peak commuting hours each day. The Government’s Rolling Stock Plan will mean around 92 extra vehicles for London Midland and around 106 carriages used to lengthen Pendolinos which will operate between Birmingham and London and other cities on the West Coast Main Line.

www.networkrail.co.uk

Oxford Airport Starts Work On A New Business Aviation ‘To Triple Existing Capacity’

Slated for a June 2008 completion, building the terminal is part of Oxford’s wish to cater for fully-fledged executive handling in anticipation of which, the airport is recruiting for a raft of senior management.

“We have a lower cost base compared with the London airports, which cater for business aviation and we have slot availability to offer an alternative,” said managing director, Steve Jones.

“With our new wider and stronger runway completed last summer, Oxford Airport is able to accommodate heavier business jets such as the Global Express and Gulfstream V [550], together with regional aircraft such as the BAe146 and Bombardier Q400.”

The work is the concrete manifestation of investment from new owners the Reuben brothers, who purchased the site from BBA Aviation last year.

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Potential for the airport was demonstrated towards the end of 2007 when a Flybe Q400 landed at Oxford to trial the new runway, while the high-bearing strength apron can now take aircraft of more than 77t. Acquisition of a third fire tender will also allow the airport to raise its fire and rescue cover to Category 6, allowing larger aircraft to use Oxford.

And the site will shortly increase its licensed hours from 06:30h to 22:30h, while weekend access has been upped with a further two hours per day. During the next two years, available times will progressively increase from 06:00h to 24:00h.

Oxford had 50,000 movements last year – 36% in its capacity as Oxford Air Training – and has the potential to accept 160,000.

www.oxfordairport.co.uk

World's Fastest Diesel Ferry Takes To The Water

Austal's 65 metre Auto Express catamaran ferry 'Shinas', built for the Sultanate of Oman, has achieved a record service speed of 52 knots during sea trials, making it the fastest diesel-powered vehicle-passenger ferry currently in commercial service. The vessel's confirmed service speed of 52 knots exceeds contract requirements by one knot, with the vessel also reaching a peak speed of 55.9 knots (103.5 km/h). 'Shinas' is the first of two identical vessels being built for the Sultanate of Oman at Austal's facilities in Henderson, Western Australia.

Each vessel will carry 208 passengers and 56 cars along a 180-nautical mile route between Shinas and Oman's rugged Musandam Peninsular. The vessel has the capability to assist in search and rescue operations due to its helicopter landing facility, which is suitable for a medium class helicopter. Both vessels are powered by four MTU 20 cylinder 1163 series diesel engines each producing 6,500 kW and driving Rolls-Royce / Kamewa waterjets. The vessels meet Det Norske Veritas survey requirements and conform to the HSC code.

The vessel's high operating speed is made possible by four MTU 20 cylinder 1163 series diesel engines, each producing 6,500 kW and driving Rolls-Royce / Kamewa waterjets.

www.austal.com

Rolls-Royce Joint Engine For F-35 Again 'Under Threat' In US

President Bush called on Congress for the third straight year to cancel a multibillion-dollar project to develop a second engine for Lockheed Martin Corp's F-35 fighter jet.

The alternate, interchangeable engine, being developed by General Electric Co in partnership with Rolls-Royce Group, would vie for orders against one built by Pratt & Whitney, a unit of United Technologies Corp, in a projected \$100 billion market over coming decades.

The F-35 is a family of warplanes for the US Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy, as well as for export, projected to be the costliest military acquisition in history. Current Pentagon plans call for production of 2,458 aircraft in three versions over a 28-year delivery period.

An additional 738 aircraft are expected to be ordered by eight co-development partners: Britain, Australia, Italy, Canada, Denmark, Turkey, the Netherlands and Norway.

Projected orders from Singapore, Israel and other countries could push the ultimate production beyond 3,200 aircraft. The F-35 is also known as the Joint Strike Fighter.

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“The (Defense) Department made a decision they’re willing to accept the risk” of going with just one engine, given budget pressures and a perceived lack of significant benefits from continued competition, Air Force Maj. Gen. Charles Davis, head of the Pentagon’s F-35 program office, has told Reuters.

For the past two years, the US Congress has rejected Pentagon efforts to kill the second engine on the ground that competition would more than offset development costs.

A new battle is likely over the issue in coming months, spurred partly by British support for Rolls-Royce and the jobs it would create in Britain.

http://www.geae.com/aboutgeae/presscenter/military/military_20080213.html

COMPANY OF THE MONTH

‘Quiet Firm’ Meridian Captures Strong World Market In Digital Sound Equipment

Meridian Audio in Huntingdon is a company that has quietly been churning out ‘world-firsts’ for over three decades. Meridian Audio designs and manufactures some of the finest high-fidelity audio-visual electronics components available in the world today.

To own a Meridian hi-fi system, DVD Player, complete home cinema system or any of the company’s outstanding loudspeaker systems is an aspiration akin to one of desiring an Aston Martin Vantage. It’s beautifully crafted, solidly built, British high performance personified.

Better known for its top-end loudspeakers and home stereo equipment, Meridian’s audio compression technology has been specified as the de facto standard for the soon-to-be-launched next-generation DVD format, high-definition DVD (HD-DVD).

Its ‘firsts’ in the audio market include the world’s first high-performance (audiophile) CD player, the world’s first consumer digital surround controller and being the first company in the UK to manufacture a CD player of any description.

With the exception of its remote control handset, all Meridian’s manufacturing is carried out in Huntingdon. The firm has now positioned itself to take advantage of massive market opportunities in cinema and home entertainment.

The company is also in ongoing talks with Hollywood film studios such as Warner Bros, Disney, Fox and Universal about having the technology standardised within the digital cinema industry. The developments have the potential to deliver multi-million pound licensing revenues for Meridian.

The company, founded in 1977 by visionary audio engineer Bob Stuart and award-winning industrial designer Allen Boothroyd as Boothroyd/Stuart-Meridian, has grown from a cosy Cambridgeshire workshop to a world-renowned force in the advancement of music and home cinema audio and video.

In fact, Meridian’s record of achievement is unsurpassed, even if measured only by ‘official’ industry acknowledgements. The company can count more than 100 awards. These include no fewer than three Design Council Awards administered by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, three citations from the Academy for the Advancement of High End Audio, and dozens of ‘Best-Buy’, ‘Editor’s Choice’, or ‘Product-of-the-Year’ awards from virtually every major audio and video magazine in Europe, the USA, Canada, and Asia.

In 1999 Meridian Lossless Packing technology (MLP) was selected by the world’s leading experts as the software standard for DVD-Audio. DVD-Audio, or DVD-A, as it has become known, is the new standard for playback of quality sound recordings.

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Many of the world's richest people buy their hi-fi and cinema systems from Huntingdon – because they are among the best in the world. They may be seriously expensive, but they still represent good value for money, if you can afford it, and the equipment lasts long after some of the peripheral technology does.

Meridian's quality control is legendary: every component is tested. Every installation is tested. Most of them many times. Employees pride themselves that every piece of equipment works out of the box and for decades afterwards. People who rave about Bose should listen to the F80, they insist. "We have been a pretty well kept secret," manager Bob Stuart concedes. "It's now a question of becoming better known and of persuading people to aspire to own our equipment. The F80 is an ambassador for the brand. We are determined to be the best in class for performance, value for money and durability. In 25 years' time it will still be working. It takes time to build that sort of reputation. People go to huge lengths and expense to record superb quality sound. Most people have no idea how good it is until they hear it on our equipment. We can make recorded music so close to live quality that it's scary."

www.meridian-audio.com

SMALL COMPANY NEWS

In January 2008 This Nuclear Software Technology Firm Won A £350,000 NWDA Grant

StructureVision Ltd was awarded a £350,000 Grant for Research and Development to help develop a tool to the deployment of a world class nuclear clean up programme.

The company, which received early stage funding from IP Group plc and White Rose Technology Seedcorn Fund, provides innovative software solutions to enhance safety and provide major efficiency benefits to the nuclear waste management sector. The development of this new digital modelling tool will mark a major technological breakthrough in the nuclear industry.

The working principle of the technology lies in its ability to analyse and consequently model object interaction enabling the packing of objects into confined spaces such as containers. It will be launched as the world's first wholly digitally based industrial packing analysis tool. It will also be able to analyse and predict the most appropriate cutting lines for the cutting up and disposal of Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) during a decommissioning process.

The total market that StructureVision seeks to take advantage of is worth around £2.5bn in waste products each year; of which £1.8bn are projects that could use this technology, according to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

The company's target market for the new product over the course of the next 10 years is around £100m. The project has received strong support from the two technical advisors, the National Computing Centre and the National Physical Laboratory, who have confirmed the highly innovative nature of the project and the excellent market prospects. Bob Ward, CEO of StructureVision, said: "This extra funding is crucial to our NuPlant project development plan and allows us to deliver a best in class product for the nuclear industry within the next two years."

The NWDA grant follows news that StructureVision signed a key partnership agreement with British Nuclear Group Project Services as well as appointed Neville Chamberlain CBE, the former Chief Executive of British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) and former Chairman of Urenco, as its Chairman.

In November 2006, StructureVision secured the investment of £300,000 equity financing from both IP Group plc, the intellectual property commercialisation company, and the White Rose Technology Seedcorn Fund, which provides funding for spin-out companies from the universities of Leeds, York and Sheffield.

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StructureVision was founded in 2003 by Dr Xiaodong Jia and Professor Richard Williams of the institute of particle science and engineering at Leeds University. It is jointly owned by Leeds University, Techtran Group (owned by IP Group plc) and the White Rose consortium.

Contact: StructureVision – 0870 126 3200 – www.structurevision.com

OrthoMimetics Awarded £750,000 Grant To Develop Second Product

A consortium led by OrthoMimetics (OM) has been awarded £747k (\$1.5m) from the UK Technology Strategy Board (TSB) for the commercial development of LigaMimetic, the second product based on OM's technology platform.

LigaMimetic is a porous, resorbable tissue-regeneration scaffold that uniquely mimics the composition and structure of ligaments and their bony insertions. It will be used initially to enhance existing surgical techniques for anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) reconstruction, a procedure performed worldwide an estimated 500,000 times each year.

For patients, this could mean a reduced risk of reinjury, a better chance of pain-free healing, and a greater likelihood of avoiding total joint replacement surgery later in life. This award forms part of the TSB's remit to attract and develop technology-intensive companies, and follows the 2007 launch of a project, backed by an £817,000 UK-government grant, to develop ChondroMimetic, OM's flagship product for articular-cartilage repair. ChondroMimetic and LigaMimetic address a combined global market in excess of \$1bn.

Joining OrthoMimetics in the consortium for the development of LigaMimetic are two organizations, the processing technologies company Devro plc (www.devro.plc.uk), and the Cambridge Centre for Medical Materials.

A FTSE-listed world-leader in processing technologies for collagen-based materials, Devro plc is a leading provider of medical-grade collagen. Cambridge Centre for Medical Materials ("CCMM"), part of the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgy, University of Cambridge; www.msm.cam.ac.uk/ccmm. CCMM is a research institution recognised as a leading centre for the development and characterisation of medical materials.

OrthoMimetics specialises in the design, development, and manufacture of products for the treatment of sports injuries, trauma other conditions that affect knees, ankles and other articular joints. Formed in 2005 as the first spinout venture from the Cambridge-MIT Institute, the company is bringing to market a line of medical device products designed to improve the treatment outcome of first-line surgical procedures for the regenerative repair of articular cartilage, ligament and tendon injuries.

www.orthomimetics.com

Warwick Spinout AdvanceSis Receives Multimillion Dollar Follow-on Investment

Using new developments pioneered by the company – combined with advanced semiconductors, power electronics and optical systems – AdvanceSis believes it can bring the cost of solar energy down to compete with fossil fuels.

The investment – from Seven Spires Investments – will fund a three-year business plan for expansion of its technology and business development in the UK and mainland Europe. By reducing the cost of PV, which the company believes is the major obstacle to the technology, the company hope to make a significant impact on the PV sector which is estimated to be worth \$15bn.

AdvanceSis CEO Dr Robin Godfrey said "We will use the new funding to accelerate our multidisciplinary and systems approach to PV development." Regarded as one of the possible long term solutions to the

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world's energy demands, PV as a sector grew 40 per cent in 2007, but high costs have restricted take up of the technology.

Dr Robin Godfrey said the Warwick University spinout is aiming to build more efficient and powerful silicon chips. The substrate engineering firm also appointed Dr Keith Bowen as its first non-exec director. He was a director at Bede plc, a leader in x-ray metrology tools to the semiconductor industry.

Keith has also held professorships at MIT and the Universities of Paris and Denver. He is an acknowledged expert on x-ray characterisation techniques. AdvanceSis is a leader in silicon substrate engineering, developing Virtual Substrates for applications in microelectronics and optoelectronics, with an emphasis on the development of manufacturable processes for high germanium content, low defect silicon germanium substrates.

The company has technology and facilities agreements with its partner, the University of Warwick, and received an initial, substantial investment from Angel investment company Seven Spires Investments last year.

Contact: Dr Robert Godfrey – robin_godfrey@lineone.net

CamrivoX Raises £1.2 Million To Perfect Its Computer Software For SMEs

The investment marks the first deal under the Co-Investment Programme between Bank of Scotland Growth Equity and Oxford Investment Opportunity Network (OION) launched in January 2008.

Under the Programme the Bank has set aside £2 million to invest during 2008 alongside investor members of the OION Network. The Bank is acting as a 'super angel' and invests on the same terms as the angel investors. The over-subscribed funding round was led by NESTA and other investors include Create Partners.

CamrivoX will use the funding to develop its main product, 'Flexor', which provides Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) software for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) applications in a way that is affordable and easy to implement for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Flexor allows the PC and telephone to work in unison so that applications are integrated with phone calls, thus providing a raft of productivity enhancing features to sales staff who gain automatic access to records whilst speaking to customers, can track customer enquiries and generate call reports. To date, the majority of CTI deployments with CRM have been to large businesses and have required significant investment in infrastructure, hardware and software.

CamrivoX has made CTI software easy to use and cost-effective by creating a package that can be downloaded directly from the web to the PC for the first time, enabling SMEs to benefit from the latest telephony CRM integration systems without the need for significant additional investment or training.

CamrivoX is now preparing for the official launch of its software offering with SNOM, at CeBIT – the ICT exhibition held in early March in Hanover, Germany. This launch will give SNOM's new and existing users the opportunity to upgrade to the Flexor CTI software on their phones.

The CamrivoX management team is led by CEO, Malcolm Wood, who has over 20 years experience in the electronics and Telecommunications industry in Europe and the USA. This includes senior management positions at Marconi and Airtech where, as Managing Director and part of an executive team, he took the company to an AIM listing and spearheaded its international development in the US, China, Korea, and Malaysia.

www.camrivoX.com – www.createpartners.com

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TSB Picks Up Where The DTI Technology Programme Left Off

In one of its first grants to SMEs, the Technology Strategy Board, based in Swindon, Wiltshire, two small companies – GlycoForm Ltd and PolyTherics Ltd – and Aston University have been awarded £685,000.

The consortium is to use this additional funding over the next two years to accelerate the development of a treatment for anaemia initiated by GlycoForm. Through combining the sugar synthesis and conjugation technology of GlycoForm, the unique PEGylation expertise of PolyTherics and Aston University's yeast expression capability, the consortium will explore the development of next generation products for the treatment of anaemia. A product with an improved safety profile and an extended half-life is in increasing demand in this £5 billion market.

Michael Short, GlycoForm's CEO, said "We are delighted that this peer reviewed funding will enable us to further accelerate our lead therapeutic product programme for the treatment of anaemia with such an outstanding consortium. This fits well with our existing collaborative programmes of drug modification with sugars to improve treatments for patients".

GlycoForm has a world leading capability in the synthesis of complex branched human oligosaccharides, GlycoChem, and has developed a range of approaches to conjugate sugars and proteins, including GlycoSeS. These conjugated oligosaccharides can be enzymatically extended to improve pharmacokinetic properties, GlycoExtend.

GlycoForm is a privately held company based in Milton Park, Oxford, UK and was established as a spinout of Oxford University in 2002.

Founded in 2002, PolyTherics is a spinout company from Imperial College London and the London School of Pharmacy that is dedicated to using biomedical polymers to optimise pharmaceuticals for the treatment and cure of the world's most important diseases.

www.glycoform.co.uk – www.polytherics.co.uk – www.innovateuk.org

AIM-listed ArgentVive Plc Acquires IT Systems Developer Solcara

The Capital Fund has achieved its fifth exit from an investee company following the £4.5m acquisition of Solcara Ltd by ArgentVive plc.

Since its foundation in 2001, Solcara has developed information management software that now delivers efficiency and productivity savings for over 130 blue chip clients in the UK and Europe. Companies as diverse as AstraZeneca, De Beers, VISA and Thomas Cook all benefit from Solcara's systems that can facilitate knowledge exchange, information publishing and crisis management. The UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Edinburgh City Council, the Metropolitan Police Service and 26 other police forces are among the public sector bodies on Solcara's client roster.

Established in 2002, The Capital Fund is a £50m venture capital fund that backs fast-growing small and medium-sized companies in the Greater London area, and is the largest of the nine UK regional venture capital funds. Solcara's merger into ArgentVive has resulted in a highly profitable return on The Capital Fund's original investment of £250,000 in July 2003.

Solcara markets four leading software products – Crisis Control Centre, Communications Centre, SolSearch and Know How. Following the acquisition deal, Mr Jackson was appointed MD of the ArgentVive Group and Chairman of Solcara. Rob Martin, previously head of Solcara's information management division, is the new Solcara Managing Director.

Solcara is the fifth portfolio company from which The Capital Fund has successfully exited. Avanti

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Screenmedia Group, a provider of satellite communications and consultancy services to UK businesses, floated on AIM in 2004. UK Explorer, a wired and wireless internet access solutions company, was acquired by Spectrum Interactive in 2005. Ekay plc, a full service advertising agency providing media planning buying design and production to clients across media types, floated on AIM in 2006. Most recently, Touch Clarity, a provider of intelligent online targeting software that predicts user requirements and optimises content for each visitor, was purchased by Omniture Inc in February 2007.

www.yfmgroup.co.uk – www.solcara.com

Cambridge Temperature Concepts Secures £375,000 In Private Investments

Founded in 2005 by four post-graduate students at Cambridge University, CTC is now based in new premises at the Cambridge Science Park and plans to complete its development programme over the next four months, with trials beginning in the second quarter of 2008. The first product release of its novel ovulation detector, DuoFertility, scheduled for the third quarter of 2008.

One-in-seven British couples now face problems conceiving, so maximising the chances of natural conception by identifying precisely when ovulation occurs is critical. Ovulation detectors currently available on the market require women to either take a daily urine sample to identify hormonal changes or wake up very early every morning and manually measure and record their body temperature to identify the half-degree change associated with ovulation.

CTC's patent-pending DuoFertility technology continuously measures the most accurate domestic indicator of ovulation – the half-degree change in a woman's body temperature – to digitally pinpoint this optimum time for conception and thereby assist couples to achieve pregnancy.

Dr Oriane Chausiaux, chief scientific officer for CTC said "DuoFertility is an extremely precise medical thermometer, embedded in a small stick-on patch that can be worn discreetly under the arm. Unlike currently available ovulation detectors that require daily manual readings at set times, DuoFertility automatically collects temperature data every few seconds and a compact digital hand-held reader shows the results whenever desired. We believe DuoFertility will make a dramatic improvement to many couples' quality of life, increasing their chances of conception by providing a more convenient, accurate and reliable way to identify when ovulation occurs."

The £375,000 in funding will be used to finalise the product development programme and address the growing market in ovulation detection.

The investment has been syndicated between the Cambridge Angels, Cambridge Capital Group, and members of the Downing Enterprise board.

www.temperatureconcepts.com

Yorkshire's Solvent Design Company Ramps Up Production Line Output

Bioniqs Ltd was established in 2004 by the Centre for Novel Agricultural Products (CNAP) at the University of York. Its product range, known as ionic liquids, offer environmental and performance benefits over many widely used solvents as they can be both biodegradable and recyclable. Due to the development of new manufacturing processes they are now available from as little as £49/kg.

The company was formed to exploit the potential of a novel class of patented ammonium based ionic liquids. They achieve this by undertaking solvent recommendation and design studies which screen the marketplace of green solvents (including ionic liquids) to identify the most suitable product for an application.

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Bioniqs manufacture up to a 10kg scale in-house and licence preferred partners to produce bulk-scale quantities. It is anticipated that when supplied at scale even lower prices will be realised. The company's product catalogue acts as a supplement to their core service of recommending and designing application specific green solvents from a proprietary database of over 12 million candidate solvents.

These studies are made possible by an extensive and proprietary computer database which is used to screen, evaluate and design solvents which are both specific to the customer's requirements and optimized for their particular application.

Ionic liquids are a sustainable new technology with the potential to replace conventional solvents in a wide range of applications. They are composed of pure salts that are liquid below 100°C. Their low lattice energy affords a structure with considerable intermolecular space which contributes to the dissolution of otherwise intractable molecules.

Contact Robert Newton, Marketing Manager at Bioniqs – 01904 561 538 or robert.newton@bioniqs.com

Shares In Mobile Phone Technology Firm 2ergo Group Rise On News Of O2 Deal

AIM-listed 2ergo will provide its 'MultiSend' interactive technology under a five-year contract to enable O2 to communicate with its 17.8m customers via text messages and emails.

News of the contract lifted 2ergo's shares by 8p, or 4.4 per cent, to 189.5p, giving it a market value of nearly £58m. The Rawtenstall-based 2ergo already has a similar deal in place with US telecoms giant AT&T. Under its terms, 2ergo will be paid management fees plus a percentage of transactions generated by the service. Analyst Michael Armitage, of broker Charles Stanley, is forecasting group sales of £37.3m for the 12 months to August and pre-tax profits of £4.3m, up from £33.3m and £2.6m respectively for last year. He now expects sales to top £40m in 2009, and profits to come in at £5.6m.

In a stock market statement, O2 said the technology would revolutionise the way it engages with its customers. Over time it will enable O2 to gain a greater insight into customer demands. This will free time for its marketing staff to devise future campaigns and build on customer relationships.

Neale Graham, chief executive of 2ergo jointly with Barry Sharples, said: "MultiSend enables companies to quickly and simply target their customers, capture instant responses and achieve the best possible return on their marketing investments.

"The service and hosting fees secured by 2ergo under this agreement further underpin the board's expectations for the year. The board anticipates that the agreement will also generate additional transaction-based fees, the timing and scale of which will become clear as the relationship with O2 develops over time."

Formerly known as Lammtara, the 2ergo Group also provides technology for text and voice message competitions, sports news alerts, casino games and other services.

www.2ergo.com

Slingsby Advanced Composites To Open New Facility In Prestwick, Scotland

It has announced plans to expand its design, manufacturing and marketing operations for structural composite and metal structures for the defence, aerospace, marine and rail industries in a new facility in Prestwick, south of Glasgow.

Advanced composite materials such as carbon and glass fibre enable air frames to be lighter, stronger, more cost effective and kinder to the environment than equivalent metal airframes. Demand for composite

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fuselage airliners, such as the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, has increased by 15% in the last year.

MD Steven Boyd, a former apprentice of British Aerospace, Prestwick said, "It's an exciting time for Slingsby as we embark on a venture that will not only compliment, but enhance technology in the local community. Having spent over ten years working for BAe, it is testimony to the skill set, reputation for innovation and capabilities of the people in the area that we as a company chose Ayrshire.

Stuart Brown, Finance Director, added "We are growing as a business and strengthening our market position. Many new projects are in discussion with current customers and we anticipate them coming to fruition in the not too distant future, hence it will necessitate the need for skilled people across many disciplines. The expansion will create 28 new jobs at the company's Prestwick base and the new investment is being supported by a Regional Selective Assistance grant of £250k."

Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire is also supporting the company's plans with a £350k Training Plus grant. The training programme, which will last until 2010, is to develop the composite manufacturing skills of the new employees the company will recruit.

Slingsby Advanced Composites, founded in 1939 employs 120 people at its Kirkbymoorside, North Yorkshire facility.

www.slingsby.com

TMD Technologies Has Completed Its Transmitter For NATS Installation In Fife

This additional primary radar for Glasgow International airport is being built to avoid interference to air traffic control from the 140 turbines planned for ScottishPower's new wind farm at Whitelee.

As well as helping the wind farm to gain approval to be built, the radar system has another green benefit: TMD's transmitter uses 30 per cent less energy than other designs.

"By making use of our advanced travelling wave tubes, we are able to reduce power consumption considerably compared with solid state devices of a similar type," said TMD sales director Graham H Brown.

Another advantage of the 40 kV PTX7602 is that it uses silicon based encapsulation for insulation rather than oil in its high voltage sections. This provides increased safety and convenience for the operator as well as being environmentally friendly.

TMD's extensive experience in the development and manufacture of high performance transmitters for aerospace applications, where space is at a premium, has resulted in an extremely compact and modular design.

Unlike previous TWT (travelling wave tube) based systems, the power supply for the new PTX7602 is built up of a series of separate in-service line replacement units (LRUs) combined within a standard 19 inch rack.

TMD Technologies is one of the world's leading designers and manufacturers of specialised transmitters for radar and electronic warfare applications, high voltage power supplies and microwave tubes. The multiple Queen's Award winning company also produces a range of advanced commercial microwave amplifiers for EMC testing and scientific applications.

Contact: www.tmd.co.uk – Heather Skinner – heather.skinner@tmd.co.uk

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Whitfield Solar Ltd Announces New CEO As Further Funding Round Is Sealed

Whitfield Solar, the developer of low cost solar concentrator technology, says Stephen Bates will join as CEO, to help drive forward the company's strategy for growth and development.

Mr Bates joins from commercialization firm Angle plc, where he was UK CEO. He has an MBA from Cranfield and has also held senior positions with Sagentia, Arthur D. Little, and Marks & Spencer.

Whitfield closed an interim funding round of approximately \$2m to enable it to complete its product development, take its solar concentrator through accreditation testing and install a grid-connected demonstration site in Spain. The equity investment came from existing shareholders Carbon Trust Investments (CTIL) who partnered with new shareholder Kilsby Ltd.

In parallel with product development work planned for 2008, Whitfield will complete its long-term growth plans and return to the investment community in the second half of the year to fund its expansion and diversification.

The company has also made a number of new hires to reinforce its board of directors, project management and engineering resources. Ian Collins joins as Project Director from McLaren Automotive, Chris Lee joins the board as a non-exec director from his role as CEO of MicroGen, the CHP (Combined Heat and Power) spinout from British Gas, and Sylvain Chonavel joins Whitfield to head-up the mechanical engineering function from ArvinMeritor

Jonathan Bryers, Investment Partner at Carbon Trust Investments, said, "We are delighted at the calibre of the commercial and product development team that is now in place at Whitfield to take their low cost solar concentrator product to market. We believe the market will increasingly focus on cost and simplicity within the solar sector and Whitfield is well placed to exploit this opportunity.

Whitfield was set up in 2004 as a vehicle to commercialise the research work of Dr George Whitfield from the University of Reading into low-cost solar concentrators. He was joined by fellow founders Dr Roger Bentley and Dr Clive Weatherby.

Whitfield Solar's launch product is initially aimed at the high-growth market for land-based solar farms. It competes with flat-plate photovoltaic (PV) offerings on four levels. It is lower cost; lower weight; has lower embodied energy; and requires lower-tech manufacturing processes.

www.whitfieldsolar.com

Theme Park Software Firm Vision XS Wins A Further £200,000 In Angel Funding

The company was set up eight years ago by CEO Tony Sefton who had started his career designing rides for theme parks. He decided to develop experience modelling software to allow leisure venues to understand what sort of experience visitors gain at their attractions and which shows how this experience can be improved, leading to greater returns and increased word of mouth recommendations.

"We can also benchmark attractions within a worldwide database and across more than twenty countries," says Mike Harrison, Chairman of Vision XS.

The Abingdon based business worked with Thames Valley accountants and business advisers, James Cowper to secure the funding which will assist Vision XS to maximise its current growth opportunities.

The company already provides software to many of the UK's leading visitor attractions, including the Natural History Museum, Bristol Zoo, Imperial War Museum as well as international venues such as The Two Oceans Aquarium and Gold Reef City in South Africa.

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It has recently been appointed to advise Dubai Holdings on its multi-billion dollar investment, the Dubailand theme park, which is set to become the world's biggest and most ambitious tourist destination.

Vision XS has made the management of leisure destinations such as theme parks, museums and zoos a more precise science. Vision XS is now taking this a stage further and has started to advise regional tourism groups in the UK and overseas, and look at facilities across a whole region to determine how the visitor experience can be improved.

Vision XS is currently completing one such project for South West Tourism, looking specifically at Cornwall, where visitor numbers have declined by 15 per cent over the last ten years.

For the Dubai project, they have already produced analysis for the anchor theme park tenant in Dubailand, Universal Studios, and will continue to plan the surrounding parks and attractions to ensure a balanced and enjoyable experience for the visitors, linking Dubailand with a 10km strip of themed hotels, much bigger than Las Vegas.

www.visionxs.co.uk

Senexis Secures £2.9 Million In New Funding From The Wellcome Trust

The new funds will be used to further optimise Senexis' small molecule compounds as a potential disease-modifying treatment for Alzheimer's disease and to progress their preclinical development. These compounds were licensed from BTG in 2006.

Senexis is a private drug development company in which BTG plc (LSE: BGC) is a shareholder. The Wellcome Trust award of £2.9 million is being made available from its Seeding Drug Discovery initiative. This new funding augments an investment of £0.8 million from BTG in 2007 and is in addition to the £2.4 million that BTG and the Wellcome Trust had already invested in Senexis since November 2002.

Mark Treherne, Senexis' Chief Executive, said "We now look forward to being able to accelerate the development of our small molecule compounds towards the clinic."

Ted Bianco, Director of Technology Transfer at the Wellcome Trust. "Senexis are exploring an important avenue that we hope may lead to a disease-modifying therapy. It is precisely this sort of pioneering R&D that the Seeding Drug Discovery initiative was set up to facilitate. In spite of the attention Alzheimer's disease receives, we know rather little about how to detect or treat the condition."

Louise Makin, BTG's CEO said "We believe Senexis' platform and expertise in protecting cells and tissues from amyloid-induced toxicity gives them a real competitive advantage in taking these innovative compounds forwards."

The number of people with Alzheimer's disease is expected to double over the next two decades. Currently, five million people in the US alone are affected by the disease.

www.senexis.com

Remploy Wins £6.6 Million Order For 44,000 Chemical War Suits

The Remploy-made suits guard against nuclear, biological or chemical attacks and are designed to seal around the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) service respirator and fit over combat clothing to give extra protection to troops.

Remploy was formed more than 60 years ago and provides work for people injured at home and abroad during the Second World War and employs a total of 6,500 across the UK. The company has supplied

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specialist protection suits for several years from its workshops around Scotland and the UK.

Minister for Defence Equipment and Support, Baroness Taylor said: "Individual protection is of the highest priority and these suits will allow our troops to maintain the tempo of operations should there be a chemical, nuclear or biological incident. This order with Remploy will build on improvements we have already made to the protection of our forces against nuclear, biological and chemical threats."

The suits will be made in factories in Dundee (15,050 suits), Cowdenbeath (20,050 suits), Stirling (2,750 suits), Clydebank (4,530 suits) and Cleator Moor (1,620 suits).

The order builds on other recent developments made by the MoD in the nuclear, biological and chemical arena, including the Integrated Biological Detection System (IBDS), a truck mounted 'high technology' suite of detector and identification equipment; a Lightweight and Man-portable Chemical Agent Detectors (LCAD and MCAD) provide an alarm of attack by Chemical Warfare agents, and Tactical Radiation Monitoring Equipment (TRaME) a comprehensive suite of detectors and monitors for use on the battlefield in order to protect UK forces from suffering the effects of radiation.

These are all now in-service.

Contact: Remploy: Terry Farugia – 0845 241 2990 – www.remploy.co.uk

Quantitech Wins New Orders For Its Specialist Hydrogen Monitors

In January 2008, Bangor University in Wales approached Quantitech Ltd, a specialist instrumentation company based in Milton Keynes, when it needed the latest hydrogen monitoring technology for an in-depth research and development project in advanced photovoltaics using metal organic chemical vapour deposition (MOCVD).

This project, in collaboration with the nationwide Supergen initiative 'Photovoltaic for the 21st Century' (PV21), will enable research and development of the next generation of low-cost thin film photovoltaic modules for renewable energy.

Quantitech had recently been appointed to distribute a range of hydrogen monitors in the UK and Ireland by H2scan Corporation (California) and was contacted by the University searching for an in-situ hydrogen detector to ensure the safe use of hydrogen gas in its MOCVD chamber.

The H2scan HY OPTIMA 700 analyser will principally be used before and after deposition for safety reasons and to determine whether the chamber can be safely opened by the operator. This process should only take place with a low percentage of residual hydrogen, once the chamber has been flushed with nitrogen. H2scan has developed a range of advanced portable and fixed monitors for the specific measurement of hydrogen in mixtures, without interference from other gases.

Dr Vincent Barrioz from the University's School of Chemistry said "We are using the H2scan technology primarily for safety monitoring of hydrogen levels in the deposition chamber and on the product testing side we will see if it can be used during the deposition process.

"It is all part of a larger research and development project looking at the deposition chamber and the process of photovoltaic production. We are confident that the HY OPTIMA 700 will provide us with the accurate readings we require. We chose the H2scan instrument for reasons of cost and instrument sensitivity."

H2scan's hydrogen specific solid-state sensing technology is able to detect hydrogen from 15 ppm to 100% over a wide range of temperatures against virtually any background gases without false readings or expensive support equipment.

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Accurate hydrogen measurements are critical for a large number of organisations. Applications include both health and safety, and process control within a wide variety of industries including petrochemical refineries, hydrogen production, chlorine manufacture, nuclear power/waste, fossil fuel power, chrome plating, lead acid battery monitoring, research, semiconductor and electronics manufacture, abatement exhausts, transformer oil, and automotive (fuel cell technologies).

Contact: www.quantitech.co.uk – 01908 227 722.

Scottish Firm Develops Innovative Device To Detect Breast Abnormalities

PWB Health Ltd, based in the former Polaroid factory at Vale of Leven industrial estate, near Alexandria, is nominated in the Most Promising New Life Science Company in Scotland category of the awards, which will be presented at the Scottish Enterprise Life Sciences Annual Dinner 2008 at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre on 7 February.

The Scottish Enterprise Life Sciences awards aim to recognise the groundbreaking work carried out in Scotland during 2007 and the valuable contribution that life sciences companies and individuals have made to the growth of the sector in recent years.

Established in January 2007, PWB Health has developed the 'BreastLight', a handheld home use device to assist women with breast awareness. It uses an array of high-powered red LEDs to safely shine light through the breast allowing woman to see some of their internal breast structure. The device will provide reassurance to the majority of women carrying out breast self examinations between their scheduled mammograms.

If a woman does notice any changes in her breasts she will be able to report them to her GP. The concept behind the device was first explored in the 1980s but, at the time, the technology was not advanced enough for the equipment to be used as a home device.

Trials have proved successful and with many pharmaceutical retailers expressing interest. Breastlights are set to go on sale by summer this year – taking the product from start-up to volume sales in just 18 months.

Russell Overend, director of PWB Health, said: "We have worked very hard to develop this product and we are confident about the potential the Breastlight has to help woman monitor the health of their breasts."

The company was one of three nominees for the Scottish Enterprise 'Most Promising New Life Science Company in Scotland' award – these are Highland Biosciences Ltd and Wireless bioDevices Ltd.

www.pwbhealth.com

Philips Spinout Polymer Vision To Launch 5" Display 'In Mid-2008'

Polymer Vision, a fast-moving spinout company from Dutch electronics giant Philips, headquartered in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, whetted the appetite of gadget fans more than two years ago when it showed off a prototype.

Now it claims that the gadget is in production and will go head-to-head with Apple's iPhone and Amazon's new ebook reader Kindle, when it hits stores mid-2008.

The engineers have squeezed a display the size of two business cards into a gadget no bigger than other mobile phones – by making a screen that folds up when not in use.

The 5-inch (13-cm) display of Polymer Vision's 'Readius' is the world's first that folds out when the user wants to read news, blogs or email and folds back together so that the device can fit into a pocket.

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Karl McGoldrick, chief executive of the venture capital-funded firm, in which Philips still has a 25 percent stake, said "We are taking e-reading and bringing it to the mobile phone. You will get the large display of e-reading, the super battery life of e-reading, and the high-end connectivity... and the form factor and weight of a mobile phone."

Mr McGoldrick would not say how much the RADIUS would cost, but said it would be comparable to a high-end mobile phone. He added that his 'dream device', which the company planned to build within 5 years, was a mobile phone with an 8-inch colour display that could show video.

Like Amazon's Kindle, the RADIUS will have a so-called electronic paper screen, which displays black-and-white text and images that look almost like they have been printed on paper.

www.polymervision.com

Northern Ireland Patients To Benefit From New Locally Developed Monitoring System

In February 2008 Sensor Technologies and Devices (ST+D) has invested over £400,000 in developing an innovative wireless health monitoring system that will help to improve patient care during hospital stays.

Supported by Invest Northern Ireland – with EU support under the NI Competitiveness Programme 2007-2013 – the R&D project is a collaborative venture with US-based CIMIT, the Center for Integration of Medicine and Innovative Technology, located in Boston.

Michael Caulfield, CEO of ST+D said: "It is a great opportunity to work with such influential and thought-leading medical organisations as Partners HealthCare and CIMIT. They have already greatly informed the specification for this connected health solution and will provide both clinical trials and integration into the hospital IT networks." The project will mean ST+D taking on another three staff and the first devices are expected to be market ready by July 2009. ST+D has recently attracted almost £1 million of venture capital funding for its ongoing activities from a range of investors led by Belfast-based Clarendon Fund Managers, and including Enterprise Equity and UUTech.

The collaboration aims to develop a miniaturised patient-worn monitor that will provide information on a patient's heart, respiration, temperature and movement. The devices will use the existing hospital wireless networks to give an immediate indication of change directly to the clinical teams even as patients move around the hospital. This contrasts with traditional monitoring, which is based around hospital beds.

Partners HealthCare, a member of CIMIT and a leading US healthcare system based in Boston, has signed a memorandum of understanding encouraging the project.

www.std-ltd.com

Novacta Biosystems Gain £3.5 Million 'Strategic Translation Award' From Wellcome

Novacta Biosystems, an anti-infective therapeutics company, has said that the Wellcome Trust, the UK's largest medical research charity, has awarded it £3.5 million as part of the Trust's Strategic Translational Award programme.

The company will use the award to progress development of a drug which, it is hoped, will help combat hospital-based *Clostridium difficile* (*C.difficile*) infections.

C. difficile infections (CDIs) are a growing and serious problem and have, for example, been associated with twice as many deaths in UK hospitals last year as MRSA. Cases of *C.difficile* infections, which occur in the lower digestive tract, rose by 22 per cent in the past year and affected more than 15,500 people over 65 in the first quarter of 2007. New anti-infective drugs are needed to target *C.difficile* without

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depleting other beneficial bacteria in the gut.

Novacta is developing novel, naturally-derived products known as 'lantibiotics' as potential drugs for treating hospital acquired infections caused by C.difficile. Early preclinical data show promise for an effective treatment for CDI, acting selectively to kill C.difficile with less disturbance of normal gut bacteria than seen with existing drugs. Novacta will use the Wellcome Trust Strategic Translational award to progress its preclinical drug candidates into human clinical studies.

Novacta: 01707 356 130 – Dr Mike Dawson, CSO – www.novactabio.com

In January 2008 Circassia Raised £11m In Oversubscribed Second Funding Round

Circassia is initially focusing its expertise on curing allergies, utilising its proprietary T-cell epitope desensitization technology, which was originally developed at Imperial College London.

The company has a number of ongoing development programmes, with the most advanced against cat dander allergy having successfully completed a phase II clinical trial. Circassia is developing proprietary T-cell epitope technology which offers the opportunity to produce a range of safe and effective allergy treatments in a substantial but poorly served market.

Its technology is based on research which was originally conducted by Professor Barry Kay and Professor Mark Larche of the Faculty of Medicine at Imperial College London.

In early 2007 Imperial Innovations invested £2 million in Circassia as part of a £6 million funding round to develop its allergy products. This most recent round includes new investors, Goldman Sachs and Invesco Perpetual, and existing investors, including Lansdowne Partners and Imperial Innovations. Following the investment, Imperial Innovations will now hold only 13% of the company.

The company has a strong management board in place. Sir Richard Sykes, Rector at Imperial College and formerly Chairman of GlaxoSmithKline is chairman. Charles Swingland (Deputy Chairman) and Steve Harris (CEO) were instrumental in the IPO of PowderJect and its subsequent £540 million sale to Chiron.

More recently they were part of the team who sold Zeneus Pharma for US\$360 million to Cephalon, Inc. Russ Cummings, Chief Investment Officer at Imperial Innovations is also a director of Circassia.

www.circassia.co.uk

Low Power Radio Solutions Is 'Key' To New Intelligent Energy Management System

An energy management system used by Envision Energy is deploying an off the shelf wireless communications solution from LPRS, says its MD Barry Gillibrand.

Marketed as Intelligent Energy Controls the system provides a reliable way to save on energy costs by ensuring nonessential equipment is turned off when it is not needed. Most commercial premises contain electrical equipment that only needs to be switched on for a portion of each day, usually when staff are on site. Easy Radio modules have been designed into a handheld device for marking competitors in sports such as swimming

Barry Gillibrand said "This a great example of an application requiring an off the shelf wireless communications solution requiring minimal RF or programming knowledge. Our Easy Radio modules provide an out-of-the-box solution ideal for projects such as Envsion's Intelligent Energy Controls."

Traditionally, this has been achieved either by giving the specific responsibility to members of staff or by automating the process using time switches or other control systems.

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The main benefits of the Intelligent Control System include: control of essential and nonessential services centrally; centralised switching control systems; up to 255 individual zones and limitless equipment applications; remote on/off switching facility; wireless control system; and minimising of equipment run-times to essential periods only

www.lprs.co.uk

NERC Spinout Microbial Solutions Wins £1.2m In Development Funding

A newly formed spinout company from the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, a research centre owned by the Natural Environment Research Council, has succeeded in raising £1.2 million to commercialise its innovative wastewater treatment technology.

The investment round was led by Oxford Capital Partners investing alongside H2O Venture Partners, who also provided management input to develop the company.

Microbial Solutions has also announced a partnership with Houghton Europe, the leading provider of industrial fluids, which will see the two firms provide a complete supply and treatment process to major manufacturing companies using industrial fluids.

Current disposal processes for metal working fluids, the oily lubricants used to ensure clean cutting processes during drilling and manufacturing, require the used fluids to be transported offsite by tanker to specialist treatment facilities. These treatment processes are themselves energy intensive, are expensive, cannot remove all the toxic components – and still leave a residual oily waste that then has to be transported to landfill for disposal, where their anaerobic degradation produces the high impact climate change gas, methane. With such disposal options reducing and costs rising, manufacturers' costs are also rising unpredictably.

By contrast, Microbial Solutions' innovative on-site bacterial process can treat metal working fluids within seven to ten days in a much more environmentally friendly manner, producing grey water that is safe to dispose of in the sewerage system, and with no methane production in the process – so lower greenhouse gas impact. Water re-use is also possible, and the company can offer treatment price certainty and stability to manufacturers, on a non-capital investment 'pay-as-you-treat' per litre basis.

The technology has been successfully trialed with a leading car manufacturer. Microbial Solutions has now moved to new office and laboratory facilities in Oxfordshire, and following an introduction by Houghton Europe, is also now set to conduct a commercial pilot of its patent protected bacterial treatment, known as 'Microcycle™ Technology' at the site of a major aerospace manufacturer.

Microbial Solutions uses a simple bioreactor (a large cylinder) containing a meshed plastic grid on which a variety of non-pathogenic bacteria are cultivated – each bacterial species feeds off different components of the metal working fluids, together 'eating' the polluting and toxic elements. The resulting grey water is disposed of to sewer, removing the need to transport to landfill, and the next batch of metal working fluid is added to repeat the process.

Prof William Pope, its CEO, said: "Our Microcycle Technology can revolutionize the treatment and disposal of metal working fluids. It can generate significant cost savings as future disposal costs rise – the costs of waste disposal in Europe alone are already estimated at around 1 billion Euros per annum – and, unlike existing facilities, our bioreactors are straightforward to scale up."

www.microbialsolutions.co.uk

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Bristol-based Online Video Technology Provider Coull Secures New VC Funding

The firm closed on a series B financing from Finance South West Growth Fund, which is managed by YFM Group, Creative Ventures Group, and private investors.

With this investment, Coull has launched two products available to brands and content owners to create and manage interactive online video.

At the same time, the company launched 'Coull Engage', an online video advertising format, enabling unprecedented levels of interactivity and consumer engagement. Brand marketers and digital marketing agencies can easily create interactive video adverts, with Coull's robust reporting tools allowing real-time campaign tracking, measurement and monitoring. Meanwhile, Coull Activate is a web application that allows content owners to make any video content interactive – activating objects to link to other sites or additional product information.

Content owners can use Coull Activate to monetise product placement; increase consumer dwell time; and control and monitor distribution across the web. "Coull's technology allows any video to be made interactive – activating objects to link to another site, product or service," says Irfon Watkins, Coull CEO. "This offers brands and content owners increased creative scope to incorporate advertising into online video content, in a way that directly engages consumer audiences. Maximising the opportunity presented by the continued surge in consumer use of online video."

"The financial investment will be used to accelerate further development of these products and to augment Coull's sales and marketing programme"

Gillian Kent, former MSN UK managing director and CEO of Propertyfinder.com, has been appointed to the Board of Directors at Coull. Gillian will aid establishing Coull as a premium online video advertising format within the digital marketing and publishing sectors.

Creative Ventures Group founder Spyro Korsanos also joins the board at Coull.

"These new appointments bring extensive experience to the board as we embark upon rapid expansion," said Bernard Holcroft, Coull chairman and director of Rupert Hambro & Partners Ltd, Coull's major shareholder.

www.coull.biz

London Evening Standard And Comtech Ltd Unite To Market New Digital Signage

The wireless digital signage delivers headlines and creates new advertising revenue opportunities for newspaper publishing groups has been developed by Comtech, the Bolton-based machine-to-machine (M2M) technology company.

The 'Extra...' digital signage system from Comtech is the latest product to be developed as a result of the firm's intensive, £5 million, five year, R&D programme.

The company has already sold the system to major organisations including Camelot/National Lottery, BT Redcare, Nintendo, Kraft and Bombardier Transportation.

The electronic bulletin board, named 'Extra', is the only digital signage system to combine LED and LCD displays with wireless mobile technology, meaning both dynamic advertising and 'ticker' headlines can be sent instantly to one or many units located in any number of indoor or outdoor locations nationwide.

Two major UK newspaper publishers, The London Evening Standard and leading regional newspaper group Newsquest have already begun to introduce the units across newspaper sales outlets.

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The London Evening Standard has taken delivery of 30 outdoor 'Extra!' units in the first stage of a roll out across the capital. The wireless, battery operated systems featuring 32" screens have been installed in Evening Standard sales booths at major footfall sites including Euston Station, Fenchurch Street, Farringdon and Waterloo as part of a major programme of improvements to its street presence.

Comtech M2M, headquartered in Bolton, Lancashire, has also signed a contract for an indoor version of the 'Extra!' system with Newsquest, the major regional newspaper publisher to maximise on queue dwell times at newsagents, helping titles within the group to reach new captive audiences. The screen media market has experienced huge growth over recent years, with advertising income generated in the UK set to reach £170m by 2010 and £860m across Europe.

Sean Keenan, MD of Comtech M2M, said "The 'Extra' system was designed specifically to take the advantages of wireless digital signage to the newspaper and magazine publishing industry and open up important new revenue streams in an industry facing ever changing commercial challenges."

Contact: Steve Whitehead, marketing director, Comtech M2M Ltd – www.comtechm2m.com

B3 Cable Solutions Eyes New Corporate Purchase In Expansion Drive

The company has entered into exclusive negotiations with Nexans to purchase its telecommunications and railway signalling cable business in Santander, Spain.

The new acquisition, if successful, will make B3 the third largest manufacturer of metallic telecommunication cable in the world and the largest outside the US market.

The deal is expected to be completed at the end of Q1 2008, subject to due diligence and finalisation of the necessary agreements and approvals. This deal would represent the fourth acquisition by the group since the beginning of 2006 and makes B3 the fastest growing cable manufacturer in the world.

In November 2007 it had agreed to purchase UM Cables, one of India's leading manufacturers of optical fibre and copper telecomms cables employing 140 people and with a turnover of \$60m. The Manchester and Ireland acquisitions carried out in 2006 were the first milestones in B3's strategy of building a successful company through a combination of organic growth and acquisition.

The modern and well equipped operation in Santander serves high profile telecoms companies across mainland Europe. It employs approximately 340 people for Euro 75m in turnover.

Significantly for B3, the business also has an impressive rail company client list and the acquisition of the business will enable B3 to further grow its market share in the rail cabling sector. Steve Ellis, Managing Director at B3 said "The acquisition of the Santander business is a significant development for the Group and further demonstrates our commitment to growth through selective acquisition."

www.b3cables.co.uk

AWS Ocean Energy Secures New Investment From Shell Technology Ventures Fund

This new investment, coupled with the Scottish Government £2 million grant made to AWS Ocean Energy last year, will facilitate the commercial development and deployment of the company's Archimedes Wave Swing, the world's first sub-merged wave energy system.

STV Fund, which is managed by Kenda Capital B.V., selectively focuses on renewable energy technologies that show 'significant promise' of delivering cost-competitive energy and chose to invest in AWS Ocean Energy after a detailed evaluation of the international marine energy market.

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Simon Grey, Chief Executive of AWS Ocean Energy said: "Having their backing, alongside the Scottish Government, is an endorsement of what we have achieved so far and important for our future plans. This new investment will allow us to continue building our technical team where we have some really exciting opportunities opening up."

The AWS team will deploy a demonstration 250KW pre-commercial prototype at Orkney's European Marine Energy Centre in 2009 and they expect this to lead on to the first phase of a commercial demonstration farm in 2011 which may expand to 100 AWS units within three years.

AWS Ocean Energy was established in 2004 and is based in Alness, near Inverness (Scotland). Its industrial partners include Global Maritime, Poseidon and Bosch Rexroth. In February 2007, the company was awarded grant funding from the Scottish Government to support its commercial development and, in September 2007, was a beneficiary of the Carbon Trust's Marine Accelerator Programme.

The AWS wave energy converter is a high power generator intended for bulk power production to a utility grid. As a wave crest approaches, the water pressure on the top of the cylinder increases and the upper part or 'floater' compresses the gas within the cylinder to balance the pressures. The reverse happens as the wave trough passes and the cylinder expands. The relative movement between the floater and the lower part is converted to electricity by means of a hydraulic system and motor-generator set.

The AWS system is scalable and it can be adapted to respond to a wide variety of ocean wave climates. Unlike other wave technologies, the AWS is submerged at up to depths of 50 metres below the surface of the sea which, as well as removing any visual impact and hazards of shipping, avoids high storm impacts. With low environmental impact and high power density, the AWS can survive the most violent storms and downtime is minimised through maintenance at sea.

www.awsoccean.com

Battery Technology Pioneer Atraverda Brings In Industry Veteran To Secure Future

Atraverda, which is based in South Wales, has developed an advanced proprietary material called Ebonex, a titanium sub-oxide material with a range of commercial applications. These include an eco-friendly bi-polar battery which can be used in diverse sectors including hybrid electric vehicles, personal mobility, stand-by power, defence and telecoms.

The company has recruited Mike Greenlee as its new chief executive 'to lead the next phase of the company's development'. Greenlee, who takes over from Andrew Dixey, has more than 30 years experience in the battery industry and brings valuable contacts and operational experience to the company.

Dixey is handing over the reins after presiding over the company's successful \$21.4 million Series B funding round in 2007 as well as an increase in its global customer base.

www.atraverda.com

Atmos Technologies' Unique Radiation Detectors Mark Turnaround In Fortune

After a rough patch in which the company nearly ran out of cash, the Daresbury-based Atmos Technologies has managed to develop a series of radioactive detectors that could help the security forces and nuclear powerplant crews in uncovering sources of radiation.

Jeff Boardman, a scientist-inventor and MD, said "Our detectors can be produced in sizes large enough to be fixed to the outsides of decommissioned nuclear reactors, giving warning of leakage. Similarly they can be used to monitor radioactive waste in storage or the spread of contamination in the water table.

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“The current method of sampling water requires periodic examination of samples extracted from bore holes. Atmos detectors are so robust they can simply be dropped into such holes, connected remotely to a radio link and left to give automatic warning at the first signs of contamination.”

Atmos detectors can be applied to medical and food irradiation as well as the polymerisation of rubbers and plastics. The firm is now seeking partners to license the technology to manufacture the radiation detectors. Jeff Boardman said, “We set out to develop a cheap, robust and easy to use product that was more efficient, yet flexible enough to be practical for use in a wide variety of applications.”

His backers and supporters have included the Daresbury Laboratory, the North West Development Agency, NESTA, the Merseyside Special Investment Fund and Liverpool Ventures.

Trials carried out by the University of Louvaine-la-Neuve in Belgium and the Medical Physics Department of University College, London, showed that Atmos radiation detectors are ‘more robust, simpler to operate and more cost effective to manufacture than any existing devices currently in use and will react to the full spectrum of ionising and electro magnetic radiation’.

Additionally, no detectors have failed or deteriorated under extreme testing and there is no maximum radiation energy or flux density limit to their operational capability. Furthermore, the detectors can currently be produced in any size from 25mm² to 500mm² and will shortly be available in sizes up to 1200 mm².

www.atmos.uk.com

‘Beast Of The Bollards’ Strikes Gold In International Markets

The maker of heavyweight road bollards, the scourge of car park users worldwide, is ATG Access, which designs and manufactures security bollards.

But car park owners can’t get enough of them – the firm has seen its international business increase ‘more than 10-fold in recent years’.

ATG Access manufacture everything from residential bollards to protect homes to the high-tech, anti-terrorist bollards that safeguard the Houses of Parliament, Embassies and Consulates, football stadiums, stations and airports including Heathrow, Ebbsfleet Eurostar stations and the newly refurbished St Pancras.

Recently they secured a six figure contract to design and install 36 high security automatic bollards to protect the Malaysian Prime Minister’s Office, and in the last two years have massively increased their export turnover from £50,000 three years ago, with contracts in 15 countries including Australia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, India, Singapore, Hong Kong, USA, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The company were set up in 1989 but until recently did very little exporting. The original owner of the company came up with the idea to manufacture basic, manual bollards after his neighbour’s car was stolen from the drive, but they soon expanded the range and became the UK market leader in their field, supplying automated traffic management bollards for all major UK cities and security bollards to everyone from BNFL to English Heritage.

Having dominated the UK market ATG Access decided to look seriously at exports, and Business Development Manager Gavin Hepburn signed up for Passport to Export, UKTI’s flagship scheme for new and inexperienced exporters.

After completing Passport, Gavin commissioned OMIS reports on South Africa and Sweden. OMIS gives accurate and up to date information on trading opportunities, and an honest assessment of a company’s potential in a chosen country, then helps with market entry strategies as well as identifying business

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partners and distributors and arranging introductions and briefings.

www.atgaccess.com

Campbell Scientific Snaps Up Weather Systems Company To Aid Further Growth

Campbell Scientific Ltd, a scientific instrument manufacturer based in Shepshed, recently finalised a deal for the acquisition of Muir Matheson, a leading marine and airport weather systems provider.

Muir Matheson specialises in the provision of oceanographic and meteorological systems for offshore oil rigs and airports and has been a customer of Campbell Scientific for several years, integrating Campbell data loggers and peripherals into its bespoke systems.

Currently operating in related but non-competing markets, it is expected that the two companies will continue to trade independently but will seek to develop areas of synergy to mutually enhance their product ranges and competitiveness. Dick Saffell, Campbell Scientific's Managing Director said: "The merger provides a real opportunity for both businesses to draw upon the skills of the other, cross-fertilise our respective markets and exploit new opportunities together."

www.campbellsci.eu – www.muir-matheson.com

Novel Test Chamber Set To Eliminate Need For Liquid Nitrogen For Manufacturer

Contract manufacturer Axis Electronics has commissioned the design and installation of a unique environmental test chamber that can cope with extreme temperatures without the need for liquid nitrogen.

This means maximum flexibility at minimum cost for its customers. The new high-performance chamber is mechanically cooled and has a linear ramp rate of 15°C/min over a temperature range of -55°C to +125°C and a full temperature range of -70°C to +160°C. The chamber is able to achieve a temperature gradient of +/-1°C, using a powerful horizontal airflow instead of the liquid nitrogen normally used to meet ramp rates in excess of 10°C.

Future proofing has been achieved by adding an liquid nitrogen boost option which allows the cooling ramp to be enhanced with relatively small amounts of liquid nitrogen, giving ramp rates (heating & cooling) up to 30°C/min.

Axis Managing Director Phil Inness said: "We were concerned about the cost and also the inconvenience of having to manage liquid nitrogen storage with a variable test demand. However this new chamber has given us faster response times, greater technical expertise and reduced costs. As environmental stress screening runs almost daily we are now able to respond instantly to customer demands."

www.axis-electronics.com

Cambridge Enterprise Seed Funds Sells Genapta Ltd To American Firm

In the seven years since foundation Genapta has built a technology portfolio specialising in high performance optical platforms for biochemical screening such as DNA sequencing and genomic testing.

Genapta was founded in 2001 by Dr Julian White and Professor David Richards. Since inception the company has grown organically and now develops complete instrument solutions for the life science market.

The Genapta systems are capable of screening chemical compounds down to the few molecule regime

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which takes the optical platform design forward to the next level of performance and cost. This capability is highly sought after by the pharmaceutical industry where accuracy is required sometimes in very challenging circumstances within drug discovery.

Co-founder Dr Julian White said: "In recent years we have worked with customers and partners to commercialise our patented technology, but on the whole it is a challenging task for a small enterprise to protect, develop, manufacture and support a new application and market."

Cambridge Enterprise Seed Funds is part of Cambridge Enterprise Limited which is the commercialisation office of the University of Cambridge. Bill Matthews, formerly Head of the Seed Funds said: "Genapta is a good example of a start-up that got the essentials right. They combined a high level of relevant technical expertise with skilful husbanding of financial and human resources. They avoided the trap of diluting their holdings through raising too much equity capital but instead were frugal personally and developed the product through collaboration with potential customers."

www.genapta.co.uk

SME Sub-contractors Announced For New Surveillance And Range Finder

The British Army's new £30m Surveillance System and Range Finder (SSARF) allows a soldier to quickly establish the exact location and distance of enemy forces up to three miles away, and determine the most appropriate and accurate mortar or artillery firepower to use.

The new all-weather, day and night system is hand-held, lightweight, with built-in GPS, thermal imaging, and laser range finder. The new system will be speedier, lighter to carry, more accurate and less conspicuous than the current system which has no thermal imaging, GPS and is tripod mounted. Walker Precision Engineering, based in Glasgow, have been subcontracted by Thales UK to manufacture the lightweight Kevlar casing for the binoculars. Secondly, ACW Technology Ltd will make the PCBs for Thales UK at the ACW Technology factory, in Tonypany, South Wales, and lastly, Instro Precision Ltd will supply the tripod/pan and tilt head. These will be manufactured by Instro in Broadstairs, Kent.

www.walkerprecision.com – www.acw.co.uk – www.instro.co.uk

Welding Firm Witnesses Excellent Growth As It Defies Manufacturing Gloom

Arc Energy Resources Ltd is a specialist welding engineering company that serves the oil and gas, petrochemical, water and waste treatment and defence industries.

With turnover growing by more than 70 per cent from £2.2m in 2005 to £3.8m in 2007, Arc Energy set a new target of reaching £5.5m by the end of 2008.

The Gloucestershire-based company has looked at lean improvement methods to enable the relocation of the fabrication department. Empowering the senior management teams, ensuring they were prepared for the pressures of meeting such a turnover target, was also key.

The Manufacturing Advisory Service visited, and recommended a two-prong approach to the challenges the business faced – a series of lean improvement workshops and the Strategic Management Programme (SMP). Sharing lean techniques involved using a 5S factory simulation, so team members were able to see the link between a tidy, well-organised factory and the importance of reducing time to search for tools, materials and information. The second phase of activity addressed top-end management strategies via the SMP.

Through working with the senior management team via a combination of meetings and workshops, Arc Energy worked on the development of the management team and building a solid organisational structure

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that would help the business achieve their goals. The programme proved invaluable in helping Arc Energy to translate, and implement plans for growth. Both SMP and the lean techniques implemented had an immediate impact on the business.

Alan Robinson, managing director of Arc Energy, said “Our experience of working with MAS has been invigorating and we now have a clear purpose and sense of achievement. It is an exciting time for us, and working with the MAS specialists has certainly helped put our business on the road to achieving its objectives.”

www.arcenergy.co.uk

CIO Connect Network Snapped By The Board From The National Computing Centre

On February 20th, the management team, led by chief executive Nick Kirkland, and supported by investment from Shackleton Ventures, acquired the business from the NCC. CIO Connect currently offers tailored networking services and facilitates experience sharing between members, as well as leadership development training, for top CIOs in major organisations based in the UK.

The new owners promised further investment as part of the plans to enhance the membership organisation dedicated to CIOs and their teams.

“Independence allows us to completely dedicate our organisation to the CIO and their agenda,” said Nick Kirkland. “We are now free to make additional investment in the network to further improve on the experience members receive, including investment in member relationship and services.”

Michael Gough, NCC’s Chief Executive said “This additional investment in CIO Connect will enable it to grow to the next level and allows NCC to focus on its mission of championing the effective deployment and professional management of IT within the UK.”

The acquisition was supported by investment from Shackleton, who specialise in direct secondary venture capital investments. Hugh Stewart, Managing Partner said “I am delighted to be backing Nick and his team to acquire CIO Connect. They have excellent ideas for extending CIO Connect’s range of services and we look forward to working with them to develop the business both in the UK and internationally”. Hugh Stewart will join the new Board.

CIO Connect is an independent networking forum for top CIOs and their direct reports. CIO Connect helps CIOs and their teams to make a greater contribution to their business through the exchange of experiences with their peers in a trusted environment. With more than 250 members, including most of the FTSE 250 companies and high-profile public-sector organisations, CIO Connect runs a comprehensive programme of events including conferences, roundtables and special interest groups.

www.cio-connect.com – www.shackletonventures.com – www.ncc.co.uk

SME News In Brief:

- A student from Manchester University emptied his bank account and jumped on a flight to China – and is now running a successful business importing miniature helicopters.

Last summer Vernon Kerswell took a crash course in Chinese at The University’s Confucius Institute before using his £1,500 overdraft to travel to some of the most remote areas of industrial China in search of great gadgets.

Starting out from the capital Beijing, the ambitious 19-year-old came across a company that makes lightweight rechargeable remote controlled miniature helicopters and UFOs.

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After specifying a few design tweaks to the flying machines – which are made from a highly durable foam body, tough enough to survive multiple crash landings – he took the plunge and placed an order for 2,000.

The shipment arrived in the country just three weeks before Christmas and the business Extreme Fliers was ready for take off.

Vernon stashed hundreds of the boys' toys in his student bedroom in Hulme Hall in Victoria Park, Manchester, to deal with the high volume of orders. In just one month Vernon – who studies Information Systems Engineering at Manchester Business School – sold most of the 2,000 helicopters over the Internet and through five shops.

Vernon won the £1,000 first prize in recent The Venture Out competition, run by The University's Manchester Science and Enterprise Centre (MSEC).

Videos of the helicopters can be seen at: www.extremefliers.co.uk/Competition – www.manchester.ac.uk/venturecompetition

- Cambridge super-search technology firm True Knowledge has raised a further £570,000 from Octopus Ventures for further product development. The company is developing search technology that allows general knowledge to be understood and processed by computers, allowing questions posed in natural language to be answered intelligently. Although this is a much smaller deal than the other ones highlighted in this article, the company is interesting as search sites capture the majority of online advertising revenues. The company's service is complementary to current search engines, making True Knowledge a prime acquisition target if its technology is proven. With applications for beta testers numbering in the tens of thousands, considerable press coverage and the company looking to close a substantial venture capital round before Q2 of next year, 2008 is lining up to be an exciting year for True Knowledge.

www.trueknowledge.com

- CMC Markets, the fast-growing online share-trading platform for retail investors that will open an Edinburgh office, and it has plans to take educational seminars "on the road" outside Scotland's main financial centres of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Founder and chief executive Peter Cruddas has already pioneered the seminars at CMC's London HQ. CMC, which made a £50 million profit on £115m turnover in the year to March 2007, specialises in spread betting and "contracts for difference". The latter is a contract that mirrors the performance of an underlying security, with the profit determined by the difference between the price you buy at and the price you sell at.

There is no stamp duty payable on contracts for difference and no stamp duty or capital gains tax on spread betting. Four-fifths of CMC's business is already outside the UK. Goldman Sachs bought 10 per cent of the company for a rumoured £140m late last year. "Bringing in Goldman could be described as an in-between move (between flotation and private status)," Cruddas said.

www.cmcmarkets.co.uk

- Nokia Siemens Networks (NSN) has agreed to buy Britain's Apertio Ltd for about \$205m, and expects to close the deal in the first quarter of 2008. Apertio, a provider of real-time subscriber data applications for telecom operators, employs 237 staff and had 2007 sales of around 28 million euros, NSN said in a statement. It was started by Bristol-based, US-born entrepreneur Paul Magelli, its chief executive. Apertio will form a new business line within Nokia Siemens' Converged Core business unit, headed by Mr Magelli, NSN said.

www.apertio.com

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- In among all of the noise and bustle of Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, British audio research partnership Airsound LLP introduced its revolutionary 'airSOUND' single-point-stereo speaker system, with a range of personal and home entertainment products featuring the technology.

airSOUND single-point-stereo technology returns to the origins of stereo sound and the idea of encoding main and spatial signals, instead of separate left and right channel audio. Successfully engineering this principle, airSOUND overcomes the inherent deficiencies of conventional two-channel stereo, and the problem of the limited area within which an accurate stereo signal can actually be heard – instead, providing an identical high quality, stereo soundfield anywhere in a room.

www.airsound.net – 07977 410 444 – Alan Johnson.

- Medical devices firm Aircraft Medical is gearing up to fight a £37 million court action over its main product. The Edinburgh-based firm is set to defend itself in the Court of Session in Edinburgh over allegations by US rival Verathon that it has breached a patent on its video laryngoscope. Aircraft, set up by Matt McGrath in 2001, will defend itself against claims that its McGrath Series 5 product infringes Verathon's patent on its Glidescope design. The Aircraft product is a hand-held video laryngoscope, which makes it easier for doctors to take control of a patient's breathing while they are under anaesthetic. It allows medical staff to "intubate" patients – allowing them to breath mechanically – without damaging teeth, tissue or vocal chords.

Aircraft Medical has won a number of significant contracts over the past 18 months, when it has expanded its market share in the UK, US and Europe.

www.aircraftmedical.com

- In December 2007 Exeter University signed an agreement with London-based firm Exomedica Ltd for a 10-year strategic partnership for the evaluation and support of life sciences intellectual property coming out of the University. This novel deal, which is worth an initial £3m, will provide early market evaluation and venture capital for commercially attractive ideas. The structure of particular funding deals will be agreed on a case-by-case basis allowing for complete flexibility. This is the first such deal that the company has struck with a major UK University. Andrew Newell, Managing Director of Exomedica said: "We are particularly pleased to have struck this agreement with such a respected university. Exeter University has an excellent and growing reputation in many areas of life sciences and has ambitions that match Exomedica's to be leaders in medical innovation. We look forward to a fruitful collaboration that will bring new clinical solutions to market in a way that rewards respectively the academics, the University and our own shareholders."

www.exomedica.com

EUROPEAN NEWS

Ruud Lubbers Gives Starting Signal For Cleanest Ship

The low emissions, fuel efficient and environmentally friendly oil lube barge 'Victoria' will moor in the Port of Brussels for a special one-day event showing how clean shipping technology may just revolutionise the way goods are transported across Europe. The Cleanest Ship is the result of cooperation between the pan-European research project CREATING and the energy company BP, which is providing one of its lube oil barges, the "Victoria", as the demonstration vessel.

The Cleanest Ship is using existing technologies to realise optimal transport performance and reduce emissions. Application of sulphur-free fuel, a speed control system, a selective catalytic reduction and a particulate matter filter will realise a reduction in fuel consumption by up to 10 per cent and a significant

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decrease of nitrogen oxide (NO_x) by 90%, particulate matter (PM) by 98%, sulphur oxide (SO_x) by 99% and carbon dioxide (CO₂) by up to 10%.

Ruud Lubbers: "As son of a lady, born on a Rhine barge, it is a special pleasure to witness the launch of this project. This project shows how inland navigation can play its part and contribute to a cleaner and better living environment.

CREATING is a research project within the 6th Framework Programme of the European Commission, comprising 23 partners from 9 European countries. Its objective is to stimulate inland waterborne transport in an economical way and improve its competitive position versus road transport. An important part of maritime cargo is transported to the hinterland via inland waterways. Continental cargo, however, is still mainly transported by trucks. The ever increasing transport flows, road congestion and air pollution require the exploration of other transport solutions.

Inland navigation is safe and environmentally friendly, though the emissions limits are not as strict as those for road transport. Consequently, its superiority in environmental performance has become smaller compared to road transport. The Cleanest Ship project demonstrates how inland navigation can improve its environmental performance and thereby its competitive position.

The progress of this initiative – which will run for a year – will be posted on a website www.cleanestship.eu. The "Victoria" – owned by BP and managed by Verenigde Tankrederij (VT) – is operating in the Port of Rotterdam and Antwerp areas. BP also funded the hardware and installation costs whilst providing the technical assurance around the project.

www.cleanestship.eu

Glasgow University Wins £750,000 Funding From European Sources

The European Commission provided the funding for three projects which could 'revolutionise the electronics industry'.

The funding for the projects, DUALLOGIC, NANOSIL and REALITY, will support research aimed at creating a new generation of faster and bigger electronic chips that power all consumer electronics products.

Lead investigator of the Glasgow side of the projects, Professor Asen Asenov, said: "This funding is really important for the UK electronics industry which suffers from relatively low level of investment in semiconductor device and technology research. The European Commission recognises that University of Glasgow researchers are world-leaders in the area of chip development known as nano CMOS device modelling and novel device technology and design.

"The results of the projects will be particularly important for the vibrant and innovative UK design industry, which increasingly needs wider access to this kind of technology and device knowledge in order to remain competitive in an international market.

"10 years ago mobile phones were designed to make phone calls, now they are used for taking photos, listening to music and accessing the internet. Who knows what this research will bring us in the next 10 years?"

DUALLOGIC, which was launched at the end of January 2008, will investigate the possibilities of incorporating new channel materials into the production of chips that will make them faster and more powerful.

Previously researchers have used separately germanium and compound semiconductors in order to increase the performance of individual transistors, however, this project will, for the first time, investigate

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the possibilities of combining these two different channel materials in a single chip made on silicon substrate. NANOSIL and REALITY will be launched later this year.

Contact: Prof Asen Asenov on 0141 330 3683 – a.asenov@elec.gla.ac.uk. The DUALLOGIC website: www.ims.demokritos.gr/duallogic

UNIVERSITY NEWS AND RESEARCH

Busy Year For Edinburgh University As It Forms 16 New Firms In 2006-7

In 2006-2007, the University of Edinburgh supported the formation of 16 new companies and ventures – the largest number of business startups by any UK University – to the best of our knowledge.

The 'sweet' 16 are as follows: Anarkik 3D Ltd, Anti Bullying Network Ltd, Brave New Enterprises Ltd, Deranged Events Ltd, Dot Red Games Ltd, Explova Ltd, EZEP Ltd, Finnwell Pharma Ltd, Groopit Ltd, Miramodus Ltd, Quarters Ltd, Research is Cool Ltd, Shapespace Ltd, Textensor Ltd, Unisil Ltd, and YourGroup Ltd.

www.edinburghconsultants.org.uk

Three Students Claim Lancaster University's 'Green Ideas' Contest

Lancaster's Environment Centre has started a competition to reward 'creative, realistic, environmentally-focused business ideas with the potential to improve the planet'.

Three winners won 12 months' free incubation support and accommodation in The Gordon Manley Building, a new business extension to the LEC, which is now one of the largest environmental research centres in Europe.

The winners are: Kenneth Cheung, 22, from Liverpool, who will produce liquid organic fertilizers by recycling food wastes. He will also develop a biological method of eliminating odour problems from domestic refuse bins. Kenneth is a biochemistry graduate from York University. Secondly, Eddie Sammon, 19, and Andrew Glover, 21, Lancaster, who established Ethical Fuels Ltd, a bio-fuel feedstock manufacturing and trading business, which aims to produce the oils required for bio-fuel production 'sustainably from algae'. "Algae can produce significantly more oil per hectare than traditional fuel crops," said Mr Sammon. Lastly, Becky Toal, 34, from Chorley in Lancashire, who launched Crowberry Consulting Ltd, an environment, ethics and corporate social responsibility management consultancy.

www.lec.lancs.ac.uk/ebp

Centre For Zoonosis Research Opens At Liverpool University

Zoonosis research is the study of diseases that originate in animals but can jump species and infect humans. The new centre – which will be opened by Lord David Owen, the University's Chancellor, and Lord Lawson Soulsby, former President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

Professor Malcolm Bennett, Veterinary Pathologist and Co-Director of the centre, said: "Diseases such as SARS and avian flu are examples of new and emerging zoonotic diseases that hit the headlines, but around two thirds of all human infections are transmitted from animals, and some of these can be very serious. Rabies, for example, still kills more than 50,000 people every year, mainly in developing countries, while closer to home, most cases of food poisoning are also caused by zoonoses."

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While many people associate zoonoses with wild or farm animals, pets can also be sources of important human infections, sometimes even with fatal consequences. Equally, however, human beings can sometimes be the source of animal infections.

Dr Chris Parry, Medical Microbiologist and Co-Director of the centre said: "Antibiotic resistance is a problem in many zoonotic bacteria, and this complicates the treatment of patients."

Current projects at the Centre include studies of food-borne zoonoses ('food poisoning'): researchers at the centre are studying how zoonotic bacteria survive in the abattoir and food chain to land on people's plates; the role of behaviour in the transmission of food poisoning bacteria between farm animals, and between wildlife and farm animals, and the ecology of zoonotic bacteria in the environment.

Wildlife zoonoses: for example how bacteria and viruses circulate in wild animal populations; the factors that lead to them spilling over into people, and methods for the control of such transmission that don't simply rely on culling the host.

Emerging infections: most new and emerging infectious diseases in people come from animals, and the centre is interested in the factors that make some infections more likely to jump species and infect people.

Antibiotic resistance: antibiotic resistance is a growing problem in both human and veterinary medicine, but little is known about how and why resistance emerges. The Centre has several projects investigating the epidemiology of resistance in farm animals, wildlife, pets and people, and the treatment of patients infected with these multi-resistant bacteria.

www.liv.ac.uk

Supercomputing Grids Of UK And US Simulate HIV Drug Efficacy

The combined power of the UK and US 'national grids' has enabled UCL University College London scientists to simulate the efficacy of an HIV drug in blocking a key protein used by the lethal virus.

The method – an early example of the Virtual Physiological Human in action – could one day be used to tailor personal drug treatments, for example for HIV patients developing resistance to their drugs.

The study ran a large number of simulations to predict how strongly the drug saquinavir would bind to three resistant mutants of HIV-1 protease, a protein produced by the virus to propagate itself. These protease mutations are associated with the disease's resistance to saquinavir, an HIV-inhibitor drug.

The study, by Professor Peter Coveney and colleagues at the UCL Department of Chemistry, involved a sequence of simulation steps, performed across several supercomputers on the UK's National Grid Service and the US TeraGrid, which took two weeks and used computational power roughly equivalent to that needed to perform a long-range weather forecast.

The idea behind the Virtual Physiological Human (VPH) is to link networks of computers across the world to simulate the internal workings of the human body. The VPH – mainly a research initiative at present – allows scientists to simulate the effects of a drug and see what is happening at the organ, tissue, cell and molecular level.

Contact Prof Peter Coveney: 020 7679 4560, p.v.coveney@ucl.ac.uk – the UK National Grid Service – www.ngs.ac.uk

Centre For Indian Business Launched In Cambridge

The centre will support the work of the newly established Jawaharlal Nehru professorship of Indian

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business and enterprise, created through a £3.2m endowment from the Indian government.

The Indian business centre will be hosted by the Judge Business School. It has been created thanks to £550,000 funding from BP, the energy company. Arnould De Meyer, director of the Judge School, says the new chair marks increasing global interest in the new business models being generated in India, as well as strengthening the university's links with the country.

www.jbs.cam.ac.uk

OrbisIP Signs First UK University – Royal Holloway – To Promote Its Technology

A new IP promotion firm has signed a deal with RHUL to help it license its intellectual property – especially any with IT and Homeland Security applications.

OrbisIP is also in discussions with a number of security companies, IT companies and large prime contractors which are interested in acquiring such IP through OrbisIP.

Under the agreement with RHUL, OrbisIP will work closely with the Information Security Group to explore areas of technology development that have commercial application and also will advise them on the technical requirements of OrbisIP customers. The Information Security Group, helped by Tony Greenwood, RHUL's director of enterprise, is already working with OrbisIP supporting the evaluation of new Security Technology for inclusion within the OrbisIP Patent and Product Pool.

Peter Jaco is co-founder of the encryption software company BeCrypt Ltd. Mr Jaco expanded BeCrypt internationally and built the business into a multi-million Pound revenue company. OrbisIP has been co-founded and launched with the support of strategic investment partners Imprimatur Capital.

www.imprimaturcapital.com

Cardiff Leads Four University Team Behind New Operational Research Initiative

A £12m project will combine the resources of Cardiff University together with the Universities of Lancaster, Nottingham and Southampton to develop world-leading work in the field of Operational Research.

Operational Research uses advanced analytical methods, including mathematical and computer modelling, to arrive at the best solutions to complex problems. It is widely used in healthcare, industry, finance and defence. Operational Research techniques are used, for example, in airport scheduling, road traffic management, freight logistics and numerous other areas of modern life.

The initiative by the four Universities – together known as 'LANCS' – is supported with a Science and Innovation Award from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).

This is the third such award won by Cardiff. LANCS will bring about a significant expansion of the national research base in Operational Research to build new research capacity and help UK industry to compete in the global market.

Professor Russell Davies, Head of the Cardiff School of Mathematics said: "This far-sighted initiative aims to establish theoretical advances in the field relevant to real applications. In the LANCS initiative, four universities including Cardiff at the forefront of UK research in Operational Research have committed to a major expansion of research capacity in its theoretical foundations, supported by the additional resources available as a result of this current Science and Innovation award."

Science and Innovation Awards were introduced by Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council in 2005 to support strategically important areas of research. This award is the third to Cardiff University

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of the four Science and Innovation Awards to date. The School of Engineering received £3.8 million to create a Centre for Integrated Renewable Energy Generation and Supply (CIREGS) and the School of Chemistry won a grant of £4.2 million for the Cardiff Centre for Physical Organic Chemistry.

www.lums.lancs.ac.uk/mansci/profiles/kevin-glazebrook

New Cash To Charge Energy Research At UCL And London Centre For Nanotech

Professors Neal Skipper and Franco Cacialli, of the London Centre for Nanotechnology (LCN) and the Department of Physics & Astronomy, University College London (UCL), have been awarded a £200,000 laboratory refurbishment grant to help them develop alternative fuel supplies for transport and electricity generation.

The Royal Society awarded the grant, with funding from the Wolfson Foundation under a scheme aiming to improve the UK's research infrastructure. The refurbishment programme will create a new facility to enable the team to address two important issues in carbon emission reduction: the creation of cheap, efficient storage for hydrogen, and the development of large-surface organic solar cells.

Professor Richard Catlow, Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physical Sciences at UCL said "This grant will greatly contribute to the search for alternative fuels and efficient renewable energy supplies, therefore building on UCL's strong programme of energy research. I am delighted to hear that the Royal Society and Wolfson Foundation are generously funding the laboratory refurbishment that will make this work possible."

One of the more challenging problems in energy research is to find a compact, safe and lightweight alternative to petroleum that has similar energy densities. There are a large number of different potential solutions to this problem, but the use of hydrogen has interesting possibilities in that it promises a clean, efficient form of energy storage.

www.london-nano.com

New £8m Donation From Foundation Will 'Promote Cambridge Entrepreneurship'

The Hauser-Raspe Foundation, on behalf of Hermann Hauser and his wife Pamela Raspe, has made this substantial benefaction to enable a major new focal point for the promotion of entrepreneurship to be created.

Dr Hermann Hauser is a graduate of the University, having taken his PhD at the Cavendish Laboratory, and is an Honorary Fellow of King's College. He founded Acorn Computers 30 years ago, has been behind many other highly successful business ventures since and is widely regarded as one of the founding fathers of Silicon Fen and the Cambridge Phenomenon. Dr Raspe is also a graduate and a former lecturer at the University.

The Hauser Forum at West Cambridge, the University's growing science and technology campus, will comprise two landmark buildings sited by JJ Thomson Avenue, opposite the world-famous Cavendish Laboratory.

The Centre for Entrepreneurship will be home to Cambridge Enterprise, the University's science and technology commercialisation office, with offices, incubation spaces and a seminar centre.

www.enterprise.cam.ac.uk

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Imperial Innovations Handed Contract By The National Physical Laboratory

Imperial is to offer commercialisation services to the NPL based on the extensive research activities undertaken at the Teddington-based research centre. NPL is the UK's National Measurement Institute and a world-leading centre for the development and application of the most accurate measurement standards in science and technology.

The signing of the contract follows a successful three-month trial during which Imperial Innovations reviewed a large number of NPL's projects. As part of the agreement, Imperial Innovations has appointed Dr Andrew Barber, Deputy Head of the Engineering and Technology Team at Imperial Innovations as the commercialisation services manager, and he will work alongside Dr Sally Wilson, NPL's Commercial Director. Examples of technologies which have already been reviewed include:

- Technology to scan surface hardness;
- Ultrasound methods to detect pump cavitation;
- Procedure for determining 3-dimensional shapes to high accuracy;
- Remote pollution sensing equipment and environmental services.

Contact: NPL – www.npl.co.uk – 020 8943 6880 – www.imperialinnovations.co.uk

Sheffield's Engineering Department Receives Another Major Boost

The Institute for Microstructural and Mechanical Process Engineering at Sheffield (IMMPETUS) has received the five-year funding package from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).

The funding means that IMMPETUS will now have continuous multi-million pound funding for a total of 15 years, which is almost unheard of in the UK academic community.

The extra funding will also mean that the Institute can provide underpinning research and technology transfer to a wide range of companies that operate in different market sectors (from plant builders to metals manufacturing to metals joining). It will also allow IMMPETUS to react quickly to understand and develop new disruptive technologies to the point of commercial reality.

Professor Mark Rainforth, Director of IMMPETUS at the University of Sheffield, said: "Modern metals processing is highly competitive on the international stage. The traditional approach to manufacturing has been development through a 'black art' process that tested hunches by trial and error, but this is now badly outdated. Instead, manufacture is about prediction and control, to promote 'right first time' production. This allows companies to develop new improved products more rapidly than their competitors."

www.shef.ac.uk

Glamorgan University Joins Council To Develop Hydrogen Research Centre

The Renewable Hydrogen Research and Demonstration Centre, based at Baglan Energy Park, will explore the potential use of hydrogen as one of the key fuels of the future.

It aims to bring together academic and industrial expertise and research, providing a hub for hydrogen business development throughout Wales. It forms part of a suite of projects supported by the Welsh Energy Research Centre through grant aid from the Welsh European Funding Office.

Located next to the Solar Centre and close to the Technium Sustainable Technologies centre, the building will provide facilities for hydrogen production, conferencing, research, demonstrations and education and will run itself from renewable energy sources.

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Prof Dennis Hawkes from Glamorgan University said, 'Rather than an isolated one-off demonstration, this project is to provide the basis for a range of hydrogen energy and transport activities. Its intention is to put Wales at the forefront of European efforts to develop hydrogen communities.

<http://serc.research.glam.ac.uk/dlhawkes/>

Exeter Builds On Success Of Its University Innovation Centre

Following an 18-month build programme, the £10m phase 2 extension to the University's Innovation Centre was completed in December 2007.

The centre, including phase 1, will be operated by Peninsula Innovations Ltd on behalf of the University and will provide a total of 35,000 sq ft (3,250 sq m) office space for high-growth innovative businesses on campus.

The centre has a 'TermoDeck' flooring system that provides heating, cooling and ventilation control through the use of the thermal mass within the building and also the application of grey water systems for domestic uses. Since opening its doors for business in early January the demand for space has been high, with two major conferences being held in the purpose-built conference centre and the first six businesses moving in. The centre will be operated by a dedicated business support and facilities management team, which will complement the range of support and research access at the University and will provide café and conference support for businesses. In addition, two new networks and events have been established. Networks include the Devon International Trade Forum (DITF), the Peninsula Legal Network (PLN) and the Innovation Forum (IF).

www.spaceforsuccess.co.uk – www.exeter.ac.uk/business or phone 01392 263 456.

New Technology To Help Curb Blindness Caused By Diabetes Aiming For Marketplace

NHS Grampian and The University of Aberdeen's Ophthalmic Imaging Group and image analysis experts Medalytix have joined forces with Scottish Health Innovations Ltd to accelerate the development of a revolutionary software programme that could help reduce the risk of blindness caused by diabetes.

The programme works by rapidly scanning digital photos taken of the eyes of people with diabetes. It hunts for tiny blood spots – microaneurysms – which are the earliest signs of diabetic retinopathy, a leading cause of blindness.

This partnership is timely given that diabetic eye disease remains the leading cause of blindness in the UK working age population. The Scottish Government's Health Department has also instructed NHS Health Boards to implement systematic annual retinopathy screening using digital photography.

Since 1990, the University of Aberdeen and NHS Grampian's Ophthalmic Imaging Group – a multidisciplinary team led by Dr John Olson and Professor Peter Sharp – have worked on a project to automate the analysis of images of the eye's retina for the presence of diabetic eye disease.

Professor Peter Sharp, Chair of Medical Physics at the University of Aberdeen, said: This is yet another example of collaborative work between the University of Aberdeen and NHS and, thanks to our collaboration with Medalytix and SHIL, the product of our research now has the chance of benefiting health services throughout the world.

Contact: Prof Peter Sharp: 01224 273174 – Dr Joanne Phoenix, Business Development Director, Medalytix, 01925 607067, joanne.phoenix@medalytix.com; Dr. Nigel McLean, Business Development Manager, SHIL, 01224 559452. Nigel.mclean@shil.co.uk

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Wolverhampton To Lead £5 Million Scheme To Help Students Become Entrepreneurs

The University will lead the national Student Placements for Entrepreneurs in Education (SPEED) project, to help students create their own businesses whilst they are studying.

More than 70 students from the 13 universities involved in the project attended the West Midlands Festival of Innovation late last year at the Birmingham NEC.

One significant student startup was Natural Therapeutic Touch, from the University of Wolverhampton, involving complementary therapies business, and Mun Lai Photography from Thames Valley University.

National SPEED Programme Manager Steve Moore, based at the Institute for Innovation and Enterprise at the University of Wolverhampton, said the SPEED programme was introduced in 2006 to allow university students throughout the country to gain knowledge and experience of the corporate world in a unique way. The success of the business set up by a student is not the key factor, but rather the business acumen and professionalism they gain through experience.

Universities involved in SPEED include the University of Wolverhampton, Staffordshire University, Derby University, Coventry University, Nottingham Trent University, University of Worcester, Birmingham City University, University of Ulster, University of Birmingham, Southampton Solent University, Thames Valley University, Keele University and University of Lincoln.

In a second development, a new device to prevent motorists putting the wrong kind of fuel in their cars has been developed at Wolverhampton University.

The inventor, Martin White a retired Royal Navy Commander, partnered with the Caparo Innovation Centre at Wolverhampton University to develop and license the patent rights for the new device.

The misfuelling problem mainly arises for drivers of diesel cars who accidentally fill up with petrol. The nozzle from a diesel fuel pump is bigger than that from a petrol fuel pump, which prevents drivers accidentally fuelling a petrol car with diesel.

But the other way around, it is a serious and growing problem.

The diesel misfuelling prevention device is a retrofit product, which is installed as a direct replacement for the vehicle's existing fuel filler cap. In its normal state, the mechanical device forms a physical barrier across the fuel intake aperture preventing access to the fuel tank.

The device is configured so that when a diesel fuel filler nozzle is inserted the physical barrier swings out of the way allowing fuel to be added to the vehicle. The device can distinguish between petrol and diesel fuelling nozzles and will not open when it is attempted to insert the smaller diameter petrol nozzle, therefore preventing the wrong fuel being added to the vehicle.

The product is being taken to market by Caparo Vehicle Products, who have improved the design to make it suitable for volume production and are currently producing and testing advanced prototypes.

Initial research conducted by the group identifies that misfuelling occurs most often when the driver is unfamiliar with the vehicle they are driving. In accordance with this research, the product will initially be offered to fleet vehicle operators and hire car companies.

The arrangements for manufacturing the product are now set, although it will be a few months yet before it becomes available in the shops.

The Caparo Innovation Centre is a joint venture by Wolverhampton University and the steel multinational Caparo, which helps inventors to negotiate the early stages of the new product development process.

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Contact: Wolverhampton University – 01902 322 736.

Cardiff's School Of Chemistry Awarded A Major Research Grant

In February 2008 Cardiff was selected for funding as part of the Dow Methane Challenge, initiated by the Dow Chemical Company to identify collaborators and approaches in the area of methane conversion to chemicals. Dow's awards to the multi-institutional, multi-disciplinary teams led by Cardiff University and Northwestern University together total over £3.2m.

There are large reserves of natural methane in many parts of the world, but practical technology to convert these reserves to chemicals and liquid fuels has proved difficult to develop.

Prof Graham Hutchings, leader of the Cardiff team, said: "Success in this project has the potential to change the way we manufacture chemical intermediates in a revolutionary way. The direct oxidation of methane to methanol and other useful products represents the most important remaining grand challenge in catalysis."

Charles Kresge, Dow Research & Development vice president said: "Methane conversion is one of the most challenging areas in catalysis and we hoped the Methane Challenge would attract the highest calibre of research. Clearly it did, and we are excited by the chance to collaborate with truly world-leading teams."

www.cardiff.ac.uk

Researchers At Bath University Speed Up Production Of Hollow-core Optical Fibres

According to the university, initial tests also show that the new procedure creates a fibre superior in virtually every respect to previous versions of the technology – and the procedure has been cut from around a week 'to a single day'.

By narrowing the wall of glass around the large central hole by 100nm, the range of wavelengths that could be transmitted is broadened. This was done by omitting some of the most difficult steps in the production procedure, reducing the time taken and therefore ultimately the cost.

"This is a major improvement in the development of hollow-core fibre technology," said Professor Jonathon Knight, of the centre for photonics and photonic materials at Bath University. "The fact that light has to travel through glass limits optical fibres in many ways. For example, the glass can be damaged if there is too much light. Also, the glass causes short pulses of light to spread out in a blurring effect that makes them less well defined. Hence, fibres in which light travels in air down a hollow core hold great promise for a next generation of optical fibres with performance enhanced in many ways."

www.bath.ac.uk/physics/groups/cppm/JonathanK.php

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LATE EVENTS FOR JANUARY 2008

20 February 2008 – SAMPE UK & Ireland Annual 1 Day Conference on High Performance Composites Manufacturing

Mitchell Hall, Cranfield University

The high performance composites industry has taken up many innovative materials and process technologies over the past few years. Whilst these have delivered successful products, it has become increasingly clear that improved efficiency through automation is essential for series production. SAMPE UK & Ireland Chapter has organised a one-day seminar to disseminate and discuss the progress in this field. It is supported by Cranfield University, Nottingham University, the National Composites Network and St Gobain Performance Plastics. The programme comprises three sessions with invited speakers; all experts in their fields; from companies and organisations making major contributions to the technical progression and commercial exploitation of composites. A visit to the Cranfield Composites Centre will conclude the day.

SAMPE Enquiries: David Carlton – 01455 552 077 – sndcarlton@sedace.co.uk

21 February 2008 – ‘One Day Seminar-, Innovation in Metal Finishing and Printed Circuit Manufacturing

Birmingham Medical Institute

Hosted by the Birmingham Medical Institute, and supported by the Resource Efficiency KTN this free seminar will present results from two current EU-funded projects. IONMET is exploring the use of ionic liquids and deep eutectic solvents as electrolytes in a wide range of metal finishing processes of great importance to the surface finishing and printed circuit manufacturing sectors. PROSURF provides a range of free support services: a roadmap defining future research strategies, a best practice methodology to get SMEs involved in research and innovation, a partnering platform and more.

www.ionmet.org

21 February 2008 – New Perspectives on Chinese Innovation

London

China has big plans to boost its capacity for homegrown innovation. It is rising fast up the global league tables for investment, publications and patents, and a recent review by the OECD concludes that China ‘is now a major R&D player’. But further progress will depend on the playing out of a complicated set of tensions: between the planned economy and the market; between national priorities and global networks; between the hardware of research infrastructure and the software of culture, skills and creativity.

Can China’s growing capabilities in science and technology-based innovation be combined with the social, environmental and policy innovations that will be crucial to meeting the challenges of the next decade? This half-day workshop aims to provide a series of fresh perspectives on Chinese innovation. The workshop takes place from 09:00 to 13:00 on 21 February, followed by lunch.

atlasofideas@demos.co.uk

21 February 2008 – US Secret Service (FBC Technology Event)

The Wood Conference Center, Washington DC.

www.fbcinc.com/directions.aspx?eventid=Q6UJ9A00EDIM

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25-29 February 2008 – Apprenticeship Week

UK-wide

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is organising Apprenticeship Week, a special week designed to encourage more employers across the country to run Apprenticeships. The LSC will aim to highlight the business benefits of Apprenticeships and their place in building careers for young people and skill levels in the economy. This year alone, approximately 100,000 apprentices in England will complete an Apprenticeship, compared to 40,000 in 2001/02. In the South West, many manufacturers including Airbus, Pendennis Shipyard, Broxton Industries, Bott and Mulberry are already leading the way with successful schemes.

During Apprenticeship Week, the LSC and the entire further education network will be joining forces to organise a series of events aimed at highlighting how Apprenticeships can help people develop skills and expertise in what is becoming and increasingly fast-moving economy.

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

25-26 February 2008 – EASY Investment Forum

Milan, Italy

Meta Group, AIFI (Italian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association) and IBAN (Italian Business Angels Network Association) will organise the first easy Investment Forum of 2008. Business angels, seed funds and early-stage VC funds from across Europe will get the chance to identify investment opportunities in 22 selected European companies, representing the following four sectors: Med-tech and Healthcare (technologies and service applications for health and medicine); Design (products across all sectors that focus on design); Transportation and logistics (technologies and service applications); Clean-tech (environment and energy technologies). Travel and accommodation expenses of selected participants will be covered.

Download the programme at http://www.nesta.org.uk/assets/pdf/easy_investment_forum_programme_NESTA.pdf, or contact Yannis.pierrakis@nesta.org.uk

25-26 February 2008 – International Wireless Communications

Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas.

www.iwceexpo.com

26 February 2008 – 'Improve Performance' event

Bower Hotel, Oldham, Lancashire. OL9 8DE

The Manufacturing Productivity Programme is a major business support programme specifically designed to add value to SME-sized manufacturing and engineering businesses in Greater Manchester. They are holding a free workshop giving you the opportunity to find out how we can help your company to reduce costs, reduce waste, improve productivity and improve utilisation of resources. 7.30am – midday.

Contact: busadvice@business-support-solutions.co.uk – 0845 608 3388.

26 February 2008 – 3rd Annual Stem Cell Summit

Hilton New York, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, USA

Meet more than 50 of the world's leaders in this rapidly evolving industry, participate in 3 research panel review and debate sessions, and then end the day with a reception and networking.

www.stemcellsummit.com

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27 February 2008 – ‘Winning Business in Russia’ seminar

Hilton Hotel, Cobham, Surrey

9.30 am-2.30 pm. Russia is a large and growing market, and businesses in and around the South East can find out more about the opportunities for exporting there at a seminar organised by UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) South East. The event will include presentations on trading opportunities, business culture and attitudes, from experts including Chris Bowers, Director of UKTI in Russia, based at the embassy in Moscow; and David Cant of Albion Overseas UK Ltd, a trading company and consultancy that specialises in doing business with Russia. Over the past few years, trade between Russia and the UK has increased significantly, with UK exports (goods & services) worth nearly £3 billion in 2005. The potential for substantial long-term expansion in the Russian economy is a positive sign for continuing growth in this trade. There are opportunities in numerous industry sectors, with the current top UK exports to Russia including transport, construction, financial services, oil and gas, engineering, ICT, power, creative industries and automotive.

Contact: www.uktisoutheast.com/winningbusiness – 08454 58 64 00.

27 February 2008 – DIUS Reception on Research Councils results and outputs from research, ‘Excellence with Impact’

The Whitehall Suite, One Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HD

5.30pm speeches, Reception at 7pm. The reception will mark the completion of a major exercise to demonstrate and enhance the impact of RC research on Britain. The Research Councils’ annual investment of around £3bn of Government funding in world-class research results in profitable breakthroughs, improved health and public policy. A study by PA Consulting examined 18 areas where Research Council work has made a real-life difference. The studies covered for example the Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion, the Lasers for Science Facility, the Applied Genomics LINK programme and Engineering Doctorates.

Contact: rcuk@vistaevents.co.uk – 020 8542 7622.

28 February 2008 – International Business Day

UK-wide

Business experts from around the UK will be on hand to share their knowledge with companies hoping to achieve their international potential in 2008 at UK Trade & Investment’s International Business Day. Now an established occasion in many regions’ business calendar, one main event this year is being held on Thursday 28th February at Old Trafford Football Ground. Speakers will include Clive Drinkwater, International Trade Director for UKTI North West, and Mark Berrisford-Smith, a Senior Economist with HSBC, and Master of Ceremonies will be Granada Television presenter Lucy Meacock. There will also be two specialist workshops, chaired by industry experts and focusing on issues that UKTI’s clients have identified as key to trading overseas successfully. The workshops will be led by Tony Fish from Tony Fish Associates, Matthew Hill of Hill Networks Limited, Tony Brown, UKTI Adviser for Commercial and Legal Services, and David Booth, UKTI Adviser in Innovation, High Tech and Research.

Contact: Alexandra Crook in the North West International Trade Team on 0845 603 7053 or email info@uktinorthwest.co.uk

28 February 2008 – Cambridge Enterprise & Technology Club event – ‘Smart Textiles for Smart People’

St John’s Innovation Centre, Cambridge

This is the 4th CETC event of 2007/8 calendar, and it looks at how developments in electronics, materials and intelligence are driving a revolution in the textile industry. 6pm. Speakers: John Fyson is a Principal Research Scientist at Kodak European Research in Cambridge, and is one of Kodak’s most prolific inventors with more than 60 granted patents to his name. He has a background in physical chemistry, but

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has worked extensively in the area of "plastic electronics", and is very interested in the application of this technology to make Smart Textiles. John is also a contributor to the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council's (EPSRC) Smart Textile network. He will present an overview of some of the critical technologies that will enable the development and application of Smart Textiles.

Secondly, Prof Sandy Black is a Reader in Fashion Design and Technology at the London School of Fashion. Thirdly, Francesca Rosella and Ryan Genz founded London-based Cute Circuit in 2004, an interaction design and wearable technology company. Cute Circuit have developed the Hug Shirt which is a wearable Bluetooth accessory for your mobile phone which allows you to exchange the physical sensation of being hugged over distance via a wireless network; it was featured in 'Time Magazine's Best Inventions of 2006'.

www.cetc.info

28 February-1 March 2008 – US Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) Annual Meeting

San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina, California

More than 2,000 technology transfer officers will attend. The theme of the 2008 AUTM Annual Meeting is 'Changing Horizons', reflecting the nature of tech transfer in Universities, how this has changed in the last three decades. The discussions will reflect different approaches to technology transfer. These changes, by necessity, will define the outcomes, measurable as well as intangible, resulting from various technology transfer-related functions. Program speakers: Ira Flatow, National Public Radio Science Correspondent; Joseph Siino, Senior Vice President, Global Intellectual Property and Business Strategy, Yahoo! Inc; and The Honorable James Greenwood, CEO, Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO).

www.autm.net

28 February-1 March 2008 – The Education Show 2008

NEC Birmingham

Over 16,000 educationalists attended The Education Show in 2007. They compared, touched and sampled literally thousands of educational resources. Many of them also attended one of over 40 CPD seminars and workshops that took place around the Show. The Show floor has 600 exhibitors situated within the seven feature zones and general resources area. The Art & Design Zone becomes The Arts Zone, bringing art and design suppliers as well as many new exhibitors focusing on the expressive arts of drama and music. Making its debut at the 2007 Show will be the exciting new Healthy Schools Zone, Sponsored by the National Healthy Schools Programme.

www.education-show.com

28 February 2008 – British Wind Energy Association's BWEA Marine 08 conference

Edinburgh International Conference Centre, Edinburgh, Scotland

Over 300 delegates will attend BWEA Marine 08, sponsored by SeaRoc UK. The event is the world's largest dedicated wave and tidal stream energy conference. A networking reception, sponsored by E.ON, will be held the evening before the conference, at Our Dynamic Earth, a visitor attraction located in the heart of Edinburgh.

www.bwea.com/marine/conference2008

28 February-1 March 2008 – 6th 2008 Enterprising Women of the Year Awards

Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa in Lake Buena Vista, Fl.

Monica Smiley, publisher and CEO of Enterprising Women magazine, has announced the winners and finalists for the 2008 Enterprising Women of the Year Awards, an annual tribute to North America's top

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women entrepreneurs. The award winners and finalists will be recognized during a three-day tribute. Award recipients must demonstrate that they have fast-growth businesses, mentor or actively support other women and girls involved in entrepreneurship, and stand out as leaders in their communities. Many of these women are also leaders in key organizations that support the growth of women's entrepreneurship. Award winners were recognized in five categories: annual sales revenues of more than \$25 million; more than \$10 million and up to \$25 million in annual revenues; more than \$5 million and up to \$10 million in annual revenues; more than \$1 million and up to \$5 million in annual revenues; and up to \$1 million in annual revenues.

www.enterprisingwomen.com

29 February 2008 – Closing Date for the MX Manufacturing Excellence Awards 2008

Organized by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers'

MX is free for any firm to enter and is the only best practice benchmarking scheme of its kind to offer an elite panel of industry experts giving up to £20,000 worth of free, impartial advice. Organisations such as the MAS and Barclays Bank will provide representatives to the judging panel which will tour the country, working with entrants to compile a Self Assessment Audit (SAA). In turn, firms receive a free Benchmark Report, worth up to £20,000, which will provide them with invaluable advice on how to improve performance.

There are 13 'Oscars' up for grabs including Sustainable Manufacturing, Product Innovation, Process Innovation, Diversity, Best Finance Management, Best SME and Best Business Education Partnership. Past winners have included Rolls-Royce, Ford, Land Rover and BAE Systems.

Finalists will be invited to an awards ceremony on 26 June 2008 at The Dorchester in London where the winners will be unveiled.

Contact: www.mxawards.org or email h_morgan@imeche.org

AND FINALLY...

The Dumbest-Ever TV Quiz Answers??

Question: What was Gandhi's first name?
Contestant's answer: "Goosey Goosey."

Presenter: What happened in Dallas on November 22, 1963?
Contestant: I don't know, I wasn't watching it then

Presenter: Which American actor is married to Nicole Kidman?
Contestant: Forrest Gump

Presenter: In which country is Mount Everest?
Contestant: Er, it's not in Scotland is it?

Presenter: Name a film starring Bob Hoskins that is also the name of a famous painting by Leonardo da Vinci?
Contestant: Who Framed Roger Rabbit?

Presenter: In which European city was the first opera house opened in 1637?
Contestant: Sydney

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Presenter: How long did the Six-Day War between Egypt and Israel last?

Contestant: (after long pause) Fourteen days

Presenter: Where did the D-Day landings take place?

Contestant: (after pause) Pearl Harbour?

Presenter: What is the currency in India

Contestant: Ramadan

Presenter: Johnny Weissmuller died on this day. Which jungle-swinging character clad only in a loin cloth did he play?

Contestant: Jesus.

Seaweed Makes Smarties Blue Again

An innovative new natural colouring agent has allowed Nestle to bring back its missing blue Smartie.

The popular children's sweet has been missing its blue variant since 2006 over fears about artificial colourings in foods.

Launched in 1989, the sweet is to make a comeback on to the confectionary scene as the firm has devised a way to create the brilliant blue colour using seaweed.

Spirulina spinach means the blue option will now join the seven other colours on store shelves.

"We are now delighted to have found a solution that allows us to bring back blue Smarties with no artificial colours and flavours, just like the rest of the Smarties range," says brand manager Michelle Robe. Smarties were first introduced in 1937 by Rowntree Macintosh. Most recently, Prof Wenyuan Shi from the University of California, Los Angeles School of Dentistry, announced that he had created a new liquorice flavoured lollipop that fights tooth decay.

www.smarties.co.uk

A self-employed mother from South Shields, South Tyneside, has started to make money from YouTube after her series of videos, showing girls how to put on make-up, had been viewed a total of 2.1m times. Her videos now total 102, each about 10 minutes long. She has 345,000 regulars on her channel. Her most popular video explains how viewers can copy the look modelled by singer Leona Lewis.

<http://uk.youtube.com>

Rob Consoli, a lecturer from the University of Hull, is using the YouTube site to deliver tutorials on Autodesk's software package Maya 8.5, 'having realised that his students preferred to learn design software packages outside the classroom'.

www.hull.ac.uk/news/jan08/youtube

The Flat Cap Award Goes To..

At the Lancashire Dealmaker of the Year's annual black tie awards dinner in Blackburn, one lady won the Lancashire Dealmakers' Personality of the Year.

This seeks to reward an individual's values, attributes and their approach to doing deals that mirrors 'All That Is Unique' about Lancashire. This year's winner is a Lancashire lass from Rawtensall, a 'real

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character' with a no-nonsense approach to dealmaking, which makes her a firm favourite with businesses and professionals countywide.

And the winner is – Debbie King of Farleys.

<http://farleys.com>

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