



**Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber**

**Thanet & East Kent Insider**

**11<sup>th</sup> June 2011 Issue No.: 159**

### **1. Business Networking Breakfast**

Our next business networking breakfast is scheduled for Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 from 0730 to 0900 hrs at the Walpole Bay Hotel in Cliftonville. Entitled "Preparing For Profit", it will feature speakers from the public sector who are prepared to spend their budgets on Chamber members and local companies. We are delighted that the key decision-makers at some of our most notable public institutions will be telling delegates what type of suppliers they need and what they want to buy. Enlightened educational leaders realise that working closely with their local business community is essential if their curriculum is to reflect the needs of employers. Equally, it is essential for the future of our economy for the private sector to take a close interest in the operations of our schools and colleges. The Thanet & East Kent Chamber is delighted at these developments and we expect much demand for places. Booking is essential. There will be plenty of time for networking and a full English breakfast is included in the price of £12 for members and £16 for non-members. To reserve your place, email [manager@tekc.co.uk](mailto:manager@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Business Networking Breakfast 30 June 2011". Priority is given to Chamber members.

### **2. Banking News**

The Thanet & East Kent Chamber maintains good relations with all our high street banks but we are always looking to seek advantages for our members. We are delighted to report that following a meeting with three senior officials from Lloyds TSB, we are looking to establish a fast-track scheme whereby both start-ups and established companies can receive prompt advice and support from one of the UK's largest high street banks. Discussions are at an advanced stage. We expect to be announcing the results of the new scheme shortly.

### **3. Business Advice Clinics**

Around 30 organisations have attended our free Business Advice Clinics since they were first offered two months ago in the wake of the announcement of the closure of the Pfizer site and the downgrading of Business Link to a national website and helpline. We are delighted that so many companies have taken advantage of the

opportunity for a confidential discussion with our business experts. We have been able to direct many enquiries towards Chamber members who are able to offer the high standards of service that a local supplier can provide. Some common needs have emerged. *Website Development*: this is near the top of the requirements of many small and medium sized companies. A trading website should of course be your shop open 24 hours a day with a production and servicing capability to match. *Credit Control*: outstanding payments eat at your margins and can destroy the very best efforts at production. A simple three-phase credit control system can improve your cash-flow and revitalize your company. *Cash Flow*: this aspect follows on from reviewing credit control. Does your company produce a weekly or monthly cash flow forecast? As you are reading this bulletin, can you put your hand on your heart and say honestly you know how much money you have in cash and at the bank? *Export Antipathy*: reluctance to trade overseas when the Euro is so strong means that companies are missing out on potential sales to a market where foreign competitors might be 20% more expensive. *Accounts Management*: if you present your accountant with a bag full of receipts and invoices at the end of the year, you will pay through the nose for your auditing. Even some quite large companies prepare their accounts on a system that is not fully compatible with their auditors. It pays to work with your external accountant at the earliest possible stage to ensure that your accounts are maintained in a format that allows for a speedy and efficient review by your external auditors. *Happy Customers*: it is one thing to have a string of happy customers, but does that add to your bottom line? Do you have a system that permits you to publicise third-party endorsements? If you don't, you can be sure that many of your competitors probably do.

#### **4. Who Are The Chamber's Business Experts?**

It is in the nature of the conditions of confidentiality that the content and constituents of the Business Advice Clinics are strictly limited to the parties involved. Our business advisors have all agreed to maintain that privacy as an important ingredient in the frank exchanges that make for successful discussions and recommendations. All correspondence is via the Chamber and the Chamber alone. Nevertheless, as an indication of the assistance available, the board of the last Business Advice Clinic featured a world-class Chief Executive, recently featured in the honours list, who advises governments on developing new businesses, a former High Street bank manager with extensive experience of East Kent companies and their financial problems, a hugely successful local entrepreneur who bought and sold several companies before acquiring his first Rolls-Royce and the Chief Executive of the Chamber. Business Advice Clinics take place on the first Friday of the month in Broadstairs and the first Wednesday of the month in Dover. Bookings can be made by email to [manager@tekc.co.uk](mailto:manager@tekc.co.uk) or by telephone to 01843 609289.

#### **5. Airfix Airshow**

Chamber member Hornby Hobbies is the sponsor of the Airfix Airshow, billed as "Kent's Leading Air and Land Festival". Margate will again be the centre of attention on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2011 as the Red Arrows display team will join the amazing Vulcan bomber over the skies of Thanet. First flown in 1952, the Avro Vulcan saw service as a conventional bomber in the 1982 Falklands campaign. No-one who has seen this aircraft can fail to be impressed by its majestic power and show-stopping profile. Also expected is the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. From 1941 onwards, 7377 Lancasters were built. Just two remain in airworthy condition. One is in Canada and the other is joined by a Spitfire, Hurricane, Dakota and Chipmunk in the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. It will be a treat indeed to see any of these aircraft over our heads next weekend. Festivities begin at 1030 hrs on both days and finish at 2200 hrs on Saturday and 1800 hrs on Sunday. A fairground, live bands, a Scaletrix track, an Airfix Make-and-Paint area, a Hornby train layout and a parachute display will ensure that the weekend caters for a wide variety of tastes for all the family. As we say at the Chamber, it's happening now, it's happening in Thanet and East Kent.

#### **6. What's All This About Airfix?**

Airfix was founded in 1939 by a refugee from Hungary, Nicholas Cove. He wanted a name that would feature near the beginning of a business directory. As his models were inflatable, the name Airfix was a natural choice. After passing through a number of owners, Margate's own Hornby Hobbies Ltd acquired the company in 2006 to join its stable mates, Hornby, Scaletrix and Corgi. The company has enjoyed notable successes in the last

few years and continues to delight fans and investors with its innovative designs and accurate market forecasts. The company is celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking of the Bismark with a range of 1:600 and 1:1200 British and German Ships which were involved in the action. The Pearl Harbour attack also dates from 1941 and has inspired the launch of new models of the Curtiss P-40B and the Mitsubishi Zero. If anyone has never tried modelling from an Airfix kit, now is the time to give it a try. Starter sets are available from under £8.00. One experienced modeller told us of his sense of triumph at completing the top of the range De Havilland Mosquito NFII/FBVI which has 617 parts, but he admits that his favourite is the BAe Sea Harrier FRS1. As he put it reading from the notes supplied by Airfix: "The extensive use of the BAe Sea Harrier FRS1 in the Falklands War of 1982 resulted in a loss of 21 aircraft for the Argentine Airforce compared to none for the Royal Navy's Sea Harriers." He added: "How often can you read that we beat the Argentinians 21 to nil?" He does have a point. The full range of Airfix products can be seen on the company's website at <http://www.airfix.com/airfix-products>.

## **7. Croatia**

We have been approached by the government of Croatia to enquire if any of our members are interested in investigating opportunities for trade with the country. Anyone who visited Zagreb 30 years ago might recall a drab, grey city with a just one private-sector coffee shop and levels of service in the hotels and restaurants that make Faulty Towers seem like a haven of Michelin-starred excellence. That has changed and changed in a big way. Modern technology is behind the rapid growth of recent years, inspired perhaps by Tomislav Uzelac's invention of the first working MP3 engine in 1997. Companies that have recently taken advantage of the new opportunities to install themselves in or near Zagreb include Microsoft Corp, Ericsson Nikola Tesla, Siemens, T-Com and Transcom Worldwide. If you are looking to find an alternative outlet for your products, to make your mark in central Europe, to locate a safe landing for your speculative overseas investment or to write your name on the list of successful investors in the country, then you might like to note what the Croatian Ministry of Economy has told us. "Croatian innovators are accredited with inventing alternating electrical current, fingerprinting, the parachute and the mechanical pen." Fair enough. For more details, email [manager@tekc.co.uk](mailto:manager@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Croatia Delegation".

## **8. Boulogne Maritime Festival**

Although this Chamber is primarily concerned with promoting the economy of East Kent and boosting inward investment, as in the example of Croatia above we cannot expect our overseas associates to be too keen on strictly one-way traffic. It is therefore appropriate from time to time to mention some of the attractions outside the area of our main responsibilities. We make no apology for drawing the attention of our readers to the Boulogne Maritime Heritage Festival, which the local tourist officer mysteriously describes as the Boulogne Maritime Heritage Meeting, which may be one Anglicism too many in our book. The festival follows the success of the four previous events in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009. Astute readers will notice that there is a distinct probability of a repeat in 2013. From Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July to Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2011, Boulogne will be welcoming traditional sailing boats of all sizes to its delightful harbour and restaurant-encrusted port. Boulogne has persuaded some of the historic sailing vessels to offer a 3 hour excursion at some time during the four days of the festival. An emphasis on 'sea-food sampling' will undoubtedly appeal to many members, as will the promised exhibitions, fireworks and sea-shanties scheduled for the afternoons and evenings. More information is available from the website at [http://www.tourisme-boulognesurmer.com/evenements\\_detail.php?id=118](http://www.tourisme-boulognesurmer.com/evenements_detail.php?id=118).

## **9. Margate Shop Wanted**

We have received a request from an inward investor looking to open a shop in Margate 'in a good visual position'. Please send any offers to [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk) with the subject line "Margate Shop".

## **10. New Members, Ambitious Companies**

Record numbers of new members are joining the Thanet & East Kent Chamber. We share their desire to grow and flourish. Among the recruits to the Chamber are the following ambitious enterprises: *Birchington*:

Tradeshop *Broadstairs*: Complete Roofing Contractors Ltd, Kemps Accounting Solutions Ltd, Strategy Concepts LLP, Venture Telecom Ltd *Canterbury*: A Class Insurance Solutions, Endeavourcom, PD Design Ltd, Polylink Solutions Ltd, *Hersden*: Wantsum Brewery Ltd, Naturally Flawless Cleaning Services Ltd *Hythe*: Keith Cornell Waste Paper Ltd *Margate*: Connoisseur Renovations, AI Asbestos Contractors Ltd, Ramsgate: Trews Workwear & PPE, Kingsdown House, Symbolism Retail Ltd, Venado Ltd, Spiral Lift Services, Electromech, K B Occupational Health & Safety Services Ltd *Sandwich*: Transformer Equipment Ltd, Puma Conservatories *Whitstable*: R G Print Ltd.

## **11. Strategy Concepts**

A Broadstairs company with a track record of assisting local enterprises is happy to give Chamber members a free consultation. Chris Panteli of Strategy Concepts offers a system to “Boost your sales, increase your cost effectiveness and increase your profit margin”. Chris understands the pressures on owner managers these days. He assures his clients that they will be able “to reclaim your life, stop worrying about the day to day difficulties so that you can make more strategic decisions and concentrate on the bigger picture – making money.” Too good to be true? Give Chris a call and find out. Chris Panteli can be reached by telephone to 0560 296 7499 or 07815 847502 and by email to [chris@strategyconcepts.co.uk](mailto:chris@strategyconcepts.co.uk).

## **12. Meet Andy Townsend**

Andy Townsend is a gifted presenter and former international footballer who played for the Republic of Ireland, Southampton, Norwich City, Chelsea, Aston Villa, Middlesbrough and West Bromwich Albion. Football, golf and commerce mix easily in this publication and the Thanet & East Kent Insider has often commented on the fate of Doncaster Rovers. Sadly, Andy Townsend never graced the pitch as a member of this South Yorkshire team about which the words “languishing” and “barely escaped relegation” are often associated. One of TV’s most popular pundits, he may regard the lack of a Doncaster reference on his CV as a great relief. After playing 70 times for your country, it would be a shame indeed if you were denied showbusiness stardom through unfortunate associations with Donny Dog, the club mascot of Doncaster Rovers. The current fan inside the furry costume is Tracy Chandler. She follows in a noble Donny Dog tradition that readers of edition 111 of this bulletin will recall includes being refused entry to the ground and being told by the police in 2006 ‘not to reappear within 50 metres of the stadium’. Tracy has been animating the home fans as Donny Dog for the last three years. She was sacked earlier this week after the Sunday Sport featured photographs of her in her underwear. Chairman, John Ryan, later reinstated the 40 year old. Our friends at the BBC reported Mr Ryan’s unfortunate use of metaphor at the time. “As far as I’m concerned, I’m going to put this whole thing to bed and let Tracy get on.” If you want to ask what Andy Townsend thinks about this, you could visit Chamber member Stonelees Golf Centre on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2011 when the star will be available from 1100 hrs to 1600 hrs as the representative of a property developer with extensive holdings in the Caribbean. Any further questions about a stonewall defence, the foundations of good team and the need to build a side brick by brick will be meat and drink to this popular Maidstone born ITV presenter. Stoneless Golf Centre is easy to reach by car to Ebbsfleet lane, just off the main coastal road between Ramsgate and Sandwich; postcode CT12 5DJ. For more details, telephone 01843 823133.

## **13. Scientists, Engineers and Artists**

Last week’s end piece praising the contribution to society of engineers brought a prompt response from a disgruntled science graduate who maintains that he and his fellow scientists are indispensable to the future of our nation and should rank above any arts graduate, although he concedes that some other disciplines have justifiable claims. As he put it: “A science graduate knows that he will be contributing to the technologies of the future which will make our lives healthier and less burdensome. A graduate in theology can fairly say that he will awaken mankind to the spiritual aspects of life on this planet leading to deep-seated fulfillment and satisfaction. A geology graduate may claim that avoiding collapse from our diminishing energy sources will depend on his efforts to ensure that our homes and businesses receive the power they need. As for an arts graduate, he will say: ‘Do you want fries with that?’” Come on you arts graduates, we await your riposte.

## 14. Our Sponsors

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***It's happening now, it's happening in Thanet & East Kent.***

**For details of membership, email [admin@tekc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekc.co.uk)**

Thanet & East Kent Chamber Limited

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