

**\*\*\* Welcome to the Thanet & East Kent Insider \*\*\***

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

Thanet & East Kent Insider  
27 August 2008

### **1. Business Rates**

There has been a surge of interest in this Chamber's campaign to reverse the disastrous effects of the Rating (Empty Properties) Act 2007 which came into effect last April. The imposition of 100% business rates on previously zero-rated empty commercial property has had a disastrous effect on the business infrastructure of England and Wales. Warehouses, factories and pubs are being demolished and regeneration in many areas has come to a virtual stop. We are pleased to note that Laura Sandys, a prospective parliamentary candidate for Thanet South, has recognized the importance of this issue and will be hosting a media event "Stop Degenerating Thanet" at 1500 hrs on 9<sup>th</sup> September at Unit 5 at the Old Timberyard, Manston Road, Ramsgate CT12 6AH. Television reporters and the national press are expected. Anyone with an interest in supporting the campaign is welcome to attend. We would be grateful if you would register beforehand so that we can prepare refreshments. Contact Laura direct by email to [laura@sandys.org.uk](mailto:laura@sandys.org.uk) with the subject line "Business Rates 9 Sep 2008" for details. Alternatively, email the Chamber at [admin@tekco.uk](mailto:admin@tekco.uk) and we will get back to you by return. This Chamber has prepared a full media pack complete with case studies for press enquiries.

### **2. Thanet College**

Congratulations to Thanet College for achieving a 98% pass rate in the recently published A-Level results. Further to the news in The Insider of 5 August 2008, the Thanet & East Kent Chamber is arranging a meeting with the decision-makers responsible for building the new Thanet College campus which is due to accept its first students in October 2011. With the main contractors soon to be announced, the Chamber is pressing the case for Chamber members to be the first port of call for contract work associated with the construction. We have received a sympathetic response and will keep members full informed of developments.

### **3. What Do I Call My New Company?**

Or my new product or my new service? Is the name important? The answer from the market place is usually, "Yes, very important". Basically, there are two choices – a descriptive name or a fanciful name. If the new name chosen is not descriptive then it is probably necessary to invest considerable resources in your target market to raise awareness. Hutchinson Telecom spent heavily on building the brand Orange following its launch in 1998. Seasoned professionals from the branding company Wolff Olins combined with the advertising agency WCRS to define the brand values, logo and soon to be famous slogan, "The future's bright, the future's Orange". It has been so successful that the current owner, France Telecom, has rebranded its own home-grown Wanadoo as Orange. It's interesting to note that Shakespeare, smart businessman that he was, gave all his plays a descriptive name. He would have done well with a lock-up in Northdown Road. Without a television advertising budget or the services of Wolff Olins, he named each of his tragedies after the principal character. Each history carries the title of a King. The comedies describe a main character or refer to the central theme. Do you get the feeling that Shakespeare would never have rebranded the chocolate bar "Marathon" as "Snickers"?

### **4. It will never happen to me**

We hope not, but it might happen to your company. "Prepare for the worst and hope for the best" is not a bad motto in the current business climate. Chamber member, NatWest, is offering Chamber members and readers of the Thanet & East Kent Insider an opportunity to attend a free seminar on managing business risks. This will include health & safety, legal obligations and how to avoid a clunking great fist knocking your business sideways. The presenters number some sizeable companies among their clients,

including Dubai and Glasgow Airports. The session starts at 0800 hrs on 25<sup>th</sup> September at Smith's Court Hotel, Cliftonville and should be finished by midday. NatWest's John Kirk has promised some nourishing food for all those attending. Proceedings will close around midday. To register and receive full details, contact John direct by email to [JOHN.KIRK@natwest.com](mailto:JOHN.KIRK@natwest.com) or ring his mobile tel: 07799 868436. Oh and yes, he did give permission to reveal his mobile number. Will he regret it? If you come on 25<sup>th</sup> September, you can ask him.

## 5. Calling All Buyers

Following our partnership with the Channel Chamber, we are at the testing phase with our version of a new online tendering tool. We invite members to test the system before its launch in September. The Business Network Online connects to the Ultimate Business Network - allowing you to generate business more effectively locally, regionally and nationally. It gives the opportunity to receive instant tender alerts via email and text, reach new markets and win new customers, thereby increasing revenue and profits. Sounds too good to be true? Why not give it a try. If you have a purchasing requirement and would like to access competitive pricing, reduce your costs as well as supporting the local economy, please go to <http://channel.thebusinessnetworkonline.com/> and register. You will then be free to add your purchasing requirement which will be sent to those chamber members registered on the system. Whether you would like to win new customers, increase your company profile, extend your network of contacts or simply obtain competitive pricing, join the Business Network Online.

## 6. Sponsors

As outlined in the anniversary edition of the Thanet & East Kent Insider, we welcome enquiries from sponsors. We are pleased to announce that from 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2008, the Insider will be sponsored for ten weeks by Girlings Solicitors "working effectively for you" and Adecco "better work, better life". Any Chamber member wishing to discuss any aspect of sponsorship of the Chamber is invited to telephone 01843 609289 for a confidential discussion with the Chamber Chief Executive.

## 7. Get the Money In

In previous editions of the Insider, we have pointed to the dangers of celebrating your star salesperson while undervaluing the individuals in your company responsible for making sure invoices are being paid on time – the Credit Manager. With the support of the Institute of Credit Management and Engee Accountancy & Credit Management, we have ten free places available on a credit management course scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> September here at the Thanet & East Kent Chamber. If you have ever experienced a problem in getting your customers to pay, this is the course for you. The session will run for 3 hours from 1330 hrs to 1630 hrs with a mid-session coffee break included. To register, email [admin@tekcc.co.uk](mailto:admin@tekcc.co.uk) with the subject line "Credit Management 30 Sep 2008". First come, first served. For a copy of the free Chamber guide to Credit Management, use the subject line "Credit Management Guide".

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