

North and East Herts Federation of Small Businesses newsletter – April 08




Passionate About Business Dinner – another fantastic event for East Herts FSB

Over 120 members, guests, local politicians and education providers dined, socialised and built contacts side by side at another highly acclaimed event for the East Herts FSB branch. Guests were also wowed by Derek Williams of the Wow Awards fame, and the cold evening warmed up with Susan Heaton Wright and Vicky Mycroft. In addition to everyone having a very productive night, £575 was raised for the Garden House Hospice through generous donations and contributions from guests

Cllr. Mike Carver of East Herts Council fed back the following to our Branch Chairman Theresa Huxley:

“I would like to offer a huge thank you and congratulations to yourself and your committee for such an excellent evening. I was very proud to represent East Herts Council as one of your sponsors. I am sure that we will continue to work closely together in the future and help to strengthen FSB even further. Again many thanks”

The evening also received many more very positive comments including:

-  Good value, good contacts and good fun
-  Yes great to meet a wide selection of businesses
-  I absolutely loved the talk given by Derek Williams of the WOW awards and found it very inspiring

We also received a number of suggestions for further events and these will be taken into account in future plans.

Unfortunately a significant number of our members were disappointed because our tickets sold out before they had booked theirs. So we would recommend that when we announce our next event you book early to avoid disappointment.

Finally many thanks to the many people who gave their time and financial support to Passionate About Business. Please also see the end of this newsletter for details of our regular events.

FSB East Herts is looking for volunteers to represent local businesses

The local FSB Region is setting up a Regional Policy Committee to work with the Area Policy Unit and with the Branches in the Region. The aims of this new committee are to further the interests of small businesses with local authorities and enterprise organisations such as our district and borough councils. They will be tackling issues such as:

- getting local councils to be more proactive in helping small businesses to apply for Small Business Rate Relief
- provision of improved or free business recycling for small businesses,
- lobbying local police about taking business crime seriously,

- and having a say in local policies for car parking, road charging and congestion charging

We are looking for volunteers from East & North Herts who would be interested in becoming our branch's representatives on the new committee. So if you want to have a say in local policies that affect our business community, please contact Tim Weaver for more details at tim.weaver@wise.co.uk.

Crime in the Community

Suggestions are invited on how the police can improve their relationship with the public, increase public confidence, maximise neighbourhood policing units and achieve an effective and open criminal justice system. Businesses can have their say here:

http://interactive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/forms/domestic_policy_and_strategy/ccreview-consultation/consultation.aspx.

Small businesses' raw deal from energy companies

BBC Radio 4's You and Yours did a piece about how small businesses are being shafted by energy companies – misleading sales pitches, fixed contracts with expensive cancellation clauses, 90-day notice periods and other such examples of dodgy activities. Here's a website: www.smallbusinessenergy.org.uk.

Please complete the FSB's full membership survey - Lifting the Barriers to Growth. Closing date – 6 April

Every two years, the FSB carries out the **Lifting the Barriers to Growth** survey, a comprehensive survey of the entire FSB membership, and in 2006 nearly 20,000 members responded, which was fantastic. The aim of the survey (the largest of its kind)is to find out exactly what business owners are thinking on a number of small business issues and to let FSB members have their say.

The results are also very important when putting our messages across to government ministers, civil servants, MPs, local authorities and others involved with influencing the lives of business owners.

We encourage you to invest 30-40 minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire either on line or on your paper copy http://www.fsb.org.uk/surveys/fsb_ltb_2008.htm

Upwardly and financially mobile with 123 Send

With the season of County Shows, farmers markets, fetes and outdoor music concerts kicking off (now the snow has gone) members and fellow business owners might want to take advantage of the fantastically cost effective, completely mobile credit card terminal called - 123 send which costs £22.50 / month. These machines are ideal for anyone on the move – including mobile mechanics, therapists, plumbers, training providers etc.

Given the FSB's buying power on terminal rental and Streamline Merchant accounts, the rates are seldom beaten. For more

information about all forms of credit card acceptances call Maree Atkinson on 077364 71568.

Olympic contracts up for grabs

Having deprived the French of the chance to host the Olympic Games in 2012, the organisers of London's sporting bonanza are looking for small businesses to work on a glut of public sector contracts. Businesses can register on www.competefor.com and they will be alerted if a contract comes up that matches their capabilities.

Want some TV fame?

Graham Black at ITV News is looking for examples of small businesses that are feeling the effects of the credit crunch. He can be contacted at graham.black@itn.co.uk

Business IT guide

The Business IT Guide (<http://www.businessitguide.com/self-help/home/>) is a free online tool, developed by e-skills UK alongside 200 small businesses. The Guide can be used by anybody within a small business to explore how IT can help their business make money, save time and avoid problems. It only takes a few moments to register and access 100s of high quality, independent guides, tips and facts covering a wide range of topics.

24 April – a fantastic event at the marketing department of University of Hertfordshire

Marketing@UH is an innovative programme run by the University of Hertfordshire Business School. Designed to help businesses and organisations develop their marketing activity, and teams of students work with clients to formulate marketing plans. This event is packed with an excellent array of guest speakers and businesses are encouraged to take an afternoon out to get some new ideas. More details can be found on one of the longest URLs ever – but a must!

http://perseus.herts.ac.uk/uinfo/schools/business/news-and-events/mba-and-lmps/marketinguh/marketinguh_home.cfm

Members' forthcoming events

We are delighted to report that our two regular monthly meetings have had a fantastic start to 2008. There were 55 people at the February evening meeting and fantastic turnouts at the more formal style breakfast meetings where you get a chance to tell others about your business. Dave Lawson of Fingerprint FO emailed us and said,

" Good to meet you all this morning at the FSB breakfast and I look forward to the next one in April. It was an interesting setting, and very diverse group – well worth getting up for "

The meetings are friendly and very interactive but one thing is certain you will make more contacts and get your name out there.

More and more members see the massive benefits of meeting other business owners face to face and getting to know their contacts. So please come along, armed with your business cards and entry fee.

There is no need to book.

Date	Venue and time	Guest speakers
1 April	The Bell Codicote 7pm	Kate Adam How to improve your marketing
29 April	Westmill Farm Ware 7am	
6 May	The Bell Codicote 7pm	Dominic Bellamy i10
27 May	Westmill Farm Ware 7am	
3 June	The Bell Codicote 7pm	Mike Busby How does Pay per Click work for your website? How your business can benefit

What's coming up

We also have Paul Davies from the Coop Bank coming to the evening meeting in October and FSB Medical in November.

Your ideas welcome

If you have any ideas for interesting speakers please let us know their details