

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Making business connections...

Spring 2010

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Women's Enterprise Day at Belfast Castle

Celebrating Women's Enterprise Day at Belfast Castle were our members with (l-r) Eileen Sung, OFMDFM; Christine Boyle, WIB Chair; Belfast Lord Mayor Naomi Long; Eileen Johnston of Invest NI; and keynote speaker, Inez McCormack

Thursday 4 March 2010

'Connect: The Power of Networking'
(5.30 – 8.30pm)
Belfast City Hall
A joint event with the
Belfast Enterprise Network

Thursday 25 March

'Joint Networking with NI Chamber of Commerce'
(12-2pm)
Grand Opera House,
Belfast

Thursday 22 April

'Policing Your Business'
(12-2pm)
Ramada Encore, St Anne's
Square, Belfast
Guest Speaker: Judith
Gillespie, PSNI

Thursday 20 May

WIB Business Forum 2010
Full details to be confirmed
Please note this date in
your diary as this event is
not to be missed.

Friday 11 June

*Anne Widdecombe Charity
Lunch in Aid of Action
Medical Research*
12.30-3pm
Belfast City Hall
Guest Speaker: Anne
Widdecombe

Chair's Message



These are indeed challenging times; but it is often times of challenge that lead to innovation and positive change.

It is my belief that organisations now more than ever should acknowledge and value the special talents of women, talents that are uniquely suited to meet the business challenges ahead of us.

Women tend to lead organisations differently to men. Please don't interpret this to mean better or worse, rather that men and women exhibit different kinds of leadership attributes. This is an important point to note, as while I am saying that women should have a role in shaping the future of business, I am not suggesting that the attributes they exhibit are better than those of men. Rather, women see the world differently than men, and those differences represent 'added value'.

I believe there is a need for more women to join men in shaping the future of business. Why? Because the leadership attributes women exhibit are particularly effective in a complex workplace full of ambiguity. In addition, today there are more women graduating from college and obtaining business and other professional degrees. There is a proliferation of women-owned and led small and medium sized businesses. There is an increase in women's professional networks. And there is a growth of investment firms that view women as potential business leaders.

I know that many of you reading this are already displaying excellent

leadership skills in a range of important positions.

Some of the recent guest speakers at our events have been great role models for female leadership; for example, Mary Davis, Caroline Casey and Angela Knight to name just a few. Looking ahead, I hope that future role models will emerge from among our own membership.

**Christine Boyle, MBE,
Chair**

Chair Christine Boyle and Nicki Bayes raise a glass to members' businesses for a successful 2010



Members take part in a facilitated networking activity



Women in Business members network



Women in Business events are supported by Invest NI

Let's Build a Women in Business House!

Women in Business are delighted to announce that they have taken on the Habitat challenge to build a house right here in Northern Ireland. We will of course require help in the form of volunteers! The project is in Madrid Street in East Belfast and will require 200 volunteer home-building days.

Part of an international charity, Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland is a Christian cross-community movement for regeneration and reconciliation within and between communities in Northern Ireland and around the world.

The Madrid Street Project will offer a hand-up to homeownership for local families in East Belfast on lower incomes who are prepared to build their own home alongside the volunteers as part of Habitat's unique self-build programme.

If you have hidden talents as a plasterer, tiler, bricklayer, joiner, etc – or would like be willing to give it a go - we want to hear from you. Our volunteers will work in groups of 15 for a day, with professional supervision. The target for each WIB volunteer will be to raise £100. We hope to raise £20,000 that will go towards the work that Habitat carries out in schools on integration.

"It will be a great opportunity for networking and learning, while at the same time giving something back to the community," said Chief Executive, Roseann Kelly.

Keep an eye on our website and emails for more news on this project and for a schedule of our build days. To book a day or register your interest, please email us at info@womeninbusinessni.com



Encouraging members to help them build a home in East Belfast to Support Habitat for Humanity are (l-r): Nicki Bayes, Jackie Trainor of Habitat and Roseann Kelly.

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new members who have joined Women in Business recently.

Beryl Bickerstaff
Patricia Black
Eileen Boyle
Valerie Brown
Bronagh Bryan
Mags Byrne
TeresaCampbell
Marie Casparsson Buser
Kathryn Clingen
Anne Dargan
Michelle Dobbins
Henrietta Ellison
Denise Falls
Aoibheann Fearon
Ellen Finlay
Julie Foy
Ciara Glennon
Liz Gough
Lisa Hamilton
Kelly Hanvey
Emer Harrington
Frances Hill
Deborah Johnston
Ellen Johnston
Jo Keating
Anne Kelly
Siobhan Kelly
Tanya Kennedy
Mary Mackle
Heather Major
Claire McAteer
Claire McAuley
Jane McCallum
Susie McDonnell

Beb Media Ltd
Creative Solutions
Face Inclusion Matters
True Channel
The Cultural Exchange
Byrne Consultancy
Fpm Accountants Llp
Inspiring Personal Dvelopment
ShredBank Ltd
Rapid Change Consultancy
Aviva
Beauty Boudoir
BT Ireland
Bóthar
Your Money Garden
Aviva Risk Management Solution
Malone House
Talestotell
Baillies Auto Refinishers
Barclays Commercial Bank
Holistic Events Ltd
Bank Of England
Business in the Community
Invest NI
Save the Children
Belfast Cognitive Therapy Centre
Access Recruitment
Business in the Community
M Mackle & Co / Thyme Training
Business in the Community
Business in the Community
Clic Sargent Northern Ireland
McCallum Partnership
Three Creative Company

Claire McFarlane
Susan McIntyre
Gillian McKee
Cathryn Mcoscar
Anne Monaghan
Lisa Murray
Victoria Murray
Kristina Murray
Christine Naylor
Moya Neeson
Martina O'Connor
Jill O'Neill
Patricia O'Rourke
Kathryn Quinn
Suzanne Reardon
Carmel Rodgers
Claire Scarborough-Martin
Norma Shearer
Stephanie Sheerin
Sue Small
Lucy Smyth
Veronica Smyth
Caron Sullivan
Kelly Talbot
Julie Taylor
Thana Thammavongsa
Penny Thornberry
Nuala Tohill
Belinda Whyte
Wendy Willis
Fiona Willis
Monica Wilson
Eileen Wilson

Abbey
Cartel Client Review
Business in the Community
Belfast Castle
Am:pm Communications Ltd
Business in the Community
Look QS Ltd
Kristina Murray Solicitors
Rockport Ventures Llp
Morrow Communications
Socit Ltd
Business in the Community
Business in the Community
Relaxation Innovation
Simply Posh Limited
Carmel Rodgers Psychology Services
The Stroke Association NI
TWN Ltd
Fitzwilliam Hotel
Belfast City Council
Le Studio Bronze
Rally School Ireland
Rok Formations Ltd
Radisson Blu Hotel Belfast
Integrity NI
Whoosh Ltd.
Fitzwilliam Hotel
Heartsine Technologies
Bank of Ireland
Cavanagh Kelly Accountants
Cinderella's Slipper
Disability Action
Ebusiness Ni Ltd



Website Makeover

If you look at the WIB website now, we hope you'll notice its new look and new features!

The whole site has benefited from a thorough makeover and technical rebuild, to bring it completely up to date. This modernisation work, which has been carried out by Dreamscape Design, followed careful consideration and the development of a brief to ensure our members current and future needs are being met.

Among the new features online now are:

Business Forum

Not all members get to attend events. Through this forum we hope that our members will have 24/7 access to the support, encouragement and advice that contact with WIB members brings. Post a query, answer a query, start a discussion; the forum is for WIB members only and certainly adds value to membership.

Members Submit

Further interaction is available in the members' area where you can submit your own news stories or events to the WIB site. This is a great opportunity for you to use the site to promote your business and keep the information up-to-date.

Business Information

Again for members only, this area will have up to date "Business Information Fact Sheets". Approximately 50 different guides are available for download, covering topics such as Market Research to Becoming VAT registered. Also within this section will be Business Opportunity Profiles, which are an excellent source of information if you are at start-up stage. This information has been licensed for member use only.

Member to member discounts are some other features which we have included to ensure a great online facility for WIB members. Also check out our social media sites on facebook, linked in and twitter.



WIB Makes Connections with Business in the Community

Business in the Community has launched a new three-year mentoring programme, Connections, with funding support from ESB Independent Energy.

The programme aims to bring together owner-managers of small businesses with in-house experts from larger mentor companies to help address a small business' specific development issues, facilitate the sharing of best practice, and encourage responsible growth.

Issues that the programme will address include:

- Marketing & sales
- Financial planning and procedures
- Business & strategic planning
- Staff recruitment & management
- New product development
- Export marketing & trade development.

We at Women in Business are delighted to have secured on behalf of our members the opportunity to access the Connections programme's support. Fifteen places each year on the programme have been reserved specifically for WIB member businesses. The programme is free of charge.

To find out more about the programme, or to apply, contact Heather Major on 028 9046 0606 or at heather.major@bitcni.org.uk



Agreeing to offer Women in Business 15 places a year on the new Connections programme are (l-r): Christine Boyle, WIB; Susan Kinane, Managing Director, ESB Independent Energy; and Heather Major, Connections Manager, Business in the Community



WIB - Look to the future

This year, we are pleased to announce that Women in Business has sponsored the 'Young Business Person of the Year' award category. This category for under-35 year-olds recognises outstanding work of young professionals in any aspect of business activity – male or female.

Belfast Telegraph Northern Ireland Business Awards in association with bmi.

The closing date has passed for entry to the Belfast Telegraph Awards' nine categories with BMI, but we hope that some of you will have entered.

The Awards are an ideal platform for businesses throughout Northern Ireland to showcase their work and expertise. The nine categories in the awards recognise the business team of the year, excellence in marketing, exporting, service to business, innovation and people development. New categories for 2010 are Excellence in Technology and Best Small/Medium Size Business.

Karren Brady, West Ham's new chairperson and Sir Alan's latest advisor on hit BBC programme 'The Apprentice', will be the keynote speaker at the gala awards dinner, to be held in the Ramada Hotel (Shaw's Bridge) on Thursday 25 March.

As an Awards category sponsor, Women in Business will have a table at this great event. Look out for a member email nearer the time for information on putting your name into the hat for the draw for places at our table!

If you would like to consider booking your own table at the event, contact event organisers JPR for further information: mail@jprni.com or 02890 760066.



Fortune favours the brave - Invest NI's Growth Programme



Invest Northern Ireland looks at the support available to help business grow, even in difficult economic times.

Invest NI is aiming to support the growth plans of 800 indigenous businesses across Northern Ireland each year through its Growth programme. This might seem ambitious in the current economic climate when most people are currently focusing on coping with surviving the short to medium term rather than launching new ventures.

Yet playing it safe now may mean missing opportunities. There are two sides to every story and

while it's true that people are cutting back on areas of expenditure, there are opportunities for products and services that specifically suit today's more thrifty climate, as well as continuing opportunities to sell to those least affected by the downturn – the affluent. Moreover, in hard times people will spend on affordable luxuries to lift the mood, and in any economic climate essential services remain largely unaffected.

So growing a business in a recession is not as foolhardy as it may seem.

To find out more about taking part in the Growth Programme, contact us on 0800 223 0266 and please reference WIB.

She wants to **stand out**

They're ready to **sit down**

Invest Northern Ireland
Building Success
Compiling Wealth

Want your business to grow?
Talk to those who know

0800 223 0266
www.growthni.com

Prescribed by Invest Northern Ireland and part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Sustainable Growth/Investment Programme for Northern Ireland.

Three Key Messages for Successful Business Development

The Ulster-Babson programme is one of a range of business development programmes available at Masters and short course level from the University of Ulster Business School. It is an outworking of the well-established strategic relationship between the University and the American Babson College and involves a week long study / networking visit focused on Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Transformation.

"Thirty entrepreneurs and business development executives from Northern Ireland who recently completed the Ulster-Babson programme gained

three crucial bits of advice - among many - that will shape their business development strategies well into the future," WIB member Maureen Fox from the University reports.

Message 1: Real value is created when businesses grow

Case studies, interactions with US entrepreneurs and venture capitalists all reinforce the message that from a US perspective the expectation is "high business growth or not at all". Adopting this mindset helped many of our local entrepreneurs and



Belfast City Council business events

Belfast City Council runs a range of business events and programmes, many of which are free of charge to businesses based in the Belfast City Council area. Below is a small selection of programmes on offer that may be of interest.

The Whys and When of Export Documentation 25 March 2010

This workshop aims to dispel any confusion and provide companies with a clear picture of what export documentation is required for. Participants will discover why and when export documentation is required along with instruction on how to complete them correctly.

Cost: Free to small businesses based in the Belfast City Council area.

Smarter Procurement Programme

This programme can help small-to-medium sized businesses (SMEs) and social enterprises identify and take advantage of new sales opportunities in the public and private sector. Cost: £100 + VAT (per person).

executives to view their businesses through a much more challenging growth lens.

Message 2: Innovation is core; if you stand still you die

Participants were challenged to consider transforming innovation as well as the incremental innovations we are all more comfortable with. Marian Binns, Global Purchasing Buyer, from Caterpillar (FG Wilson) summarised the value of this theme: "True Innovation is more about transforming the way we do things instead of minor changes and modifications. True innovation delivers real customer value and competitive advantage."

For more information on business events and programmes, visit:
www.belfastcity.gov.uk/economicdevelopment

For more information, or to register, contact Economic Development Officer, Ruth Rea.
Tel: 028 9027 0482 or 028 9050 0518 Email:
rearuth@belfastcity.gov.uk

Enterprise Workshops

Belfast City Council has also launched a new series of enterprise workshops for 2010. Small business owners can avail of a range of practical expertise and access one-to-one mentoring to help develop their business.

For example, a workshop on 'Practical Sales Techniques' will take place on 20 April. These workshops are free to small businesses in the Belfast City Council areas.

This programme is funded by Belfast City Council and the European Regional Development Fund. Please note that Invest NI client companies and retail businesses are not eligible for these workshops.



To find out more about the enterprise workshops contact Rhonda Lynn, Tel:028 9027 0229. Email:
lynnr@belfastcity.gov.uk
www.belfastcity.gov.uk/businessprogrammes

Message 3: Entrepreneurship, ask the right questions!

Live case studies based on the experiences of the Babson Professors brought the group face to face with the critical issues that entrepreneurs face. Models presented helped the group to filter ideas and develop the opportunities that would deliver true competitive advantage.



Babson College, Massachusetts

If any member is interested in taking part in a future Ulster-Babson programme, please contact Dr Adele Dunn for more information: aa.dunn@ulster.ac.uk



Anna's House... ...Boutique Hotel!

Many of you may remember the presentation WIB member Anna Johnson gave at The Pump House in February last year (before Sean Weafer), when she showed slides and talked about her guest accommodation business just south of Comber, Co Down – Anna's House.

She wanted to share some good news about her business with us.

“Shortly after my appearance in front of you, *Sunday Times Travel* magazine provided their readers with a list of the 100 Best Hotels in Europe charging under £100 and Anna's House was the only place featured in Northern Ireland. So at a stroke the *Sunday Times* elevated us from B & B to Boutique Hotel - and we shall not argue! Indeed, it is not unusual for our guests to comment that we easily match a Five Star Hotel in quality. But it's fair to point out that, while we do cater for special functions, we normally only serve breakfast and are very lucky to have excellent restaurants on our doorstep, including the fabulous Danny Millar at Balloo House. Such recognition is a great advertisement for our work.

“May I wish you all a successful and, more importantly, a Happy and Healthy New Decade.”

For more information on the organic and eco-friendly Anna's House Country House B&B, visit www.annashouse.com or Tel: 028 9754 1566

Making a fashionable business connection

The famous quote: ‘It's not what you know, but who you know’, became a reality for Elaine McComb (pictured) of e-fashionmedia, and Susan Gilchrist of Newtownabbey In Touch magazine, when they attended their first Women in Business event, the Women's Enterprise Day celebration, at Belfast Castle in November 2009.

During the networking stage of the event, the two new members exchanged their background details and swapped business cards, and as they say, the rest is history.

Shortly after the event, Susan contacted Elaine about fashion editorial she needed for the magazine. After a meeting to discuss ideas, and a few phone calls, a deal was done and both were happy. Through the networking opportunity at the Women in Business event, Susan met a contact who helped her in her business, and Elaine gained work in a very competitive market.

For more information, contact Elaine at: info@e-fashionmedia.co.uk and Susan at: susan@newtownabbeyintouch.com



Elaine McCombe





Clare McFarlane introduces



Clare McFarlane, who works as a local Business Manager with Santander, explains that she helps support new and existing businesses across Northern Ireland with their banking and finance needs.

“My proposition to my customers is that I would like to help them save money **by reducing their bank charges or make them money by paying a higher rate of interest on their surplus deposits**. What business, particularly in the current environment, doesn't want to explore that opportunity?”

“Having worked in the banking industry for almost 16 years I have a wealth of experience, skills and

expertise in helping business customers manage their finances today and support their plans for their future.”

Commenting on our network, Clare said: “I joined WIB in November 2009. Having looked at one or two other networking groups and dismissing them, I knew immediately that WIB was different and that it would definitely work for me. With a focus on networking in a comfortable environment, I enjoy attending the events and have already established some good relationships. I am looking forward to really building on those relationships in 2010.”

“I represent one of the world's strongest and most efficient banks, Santander, which has outperformed its UK retail competitors for the last two years. Santander has continued to deliver profits in what has been one of the most challenging economic periods most of us can ever remember.

“Whether you run your own business, are involved with a local church, charity, club or credit union, it is likely that I can enhance your current banking arrangements.”

To find out more, contact Clare on 07720412036 or drop her an email: clare.mcfarlane@santander.co.uk

Name change for Radisson Blu Hotel

Some of you will have attended one of the successful Women in Business lunch events that we arranged last year in the Radisson hotel at the Belfast Gasworks, with the help of WIB member Kelly Talbot, the hotel's Director of Sales. The hotel has had a change of name to Radisson Blu Hotel Belfast. Kelly explains why.

“This renaming is part of a total brand change of name, which includes seeing all UK hotels formerly flying the Radisson SAS flag becoming Radisson Blu. It follows the announcement last year that Radisson SAS Hotels & Resorts was being rebranded as Radisson Blu Hotels & Resorts. The small, but significant name change marks the latest step forward in the Radisson SAS success story and reflects the natural end of Radisson's links with the SAS Group following Rezidor's IPO back in November 2006.”

Kelly says the new name is being celebrated through a series of Blue themed promotions, special offers



and events. Next time you visit the Radisson Blu Belfast check out the water feature in front of the hotel. The hotel has recently added two 9 metre high fountains, which are under-lit with blue lights to reflect the Blu name.

For more information on Radisson Blu Hotels & Resorts, visit www.radissonblu.co.uk or contact Kelly:

Tel 02890 434 065380 659



Dynamic growth at dcp strategic communications!

WIB Member Anne Monaghan sends us news of exciting developments at dcp strategic communications (formerly the Davidson Cockcroft Partnership).

“The company is embarking on a new year with a new brand and new faces marking growth and ambition. Founded in 1995, dcp are dedicated communication professionals handling a range of accounts large and small from across the retail, business, corporate, IT, community, government and charitable sectors.

“Managing Director, Gwynneth Cockcroft has built a strong customer base, an established reputation and an enviable network. Adding capacity and strength in a range of sectors, dcp have recently made a number of key appointments. I have been appointed Account Director with responsibilities in public affairs and corporate account management, while Joanne Sweeney, formerly Crockard, and incoming Chair of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, becomes a senior dcp consultant. dcp has absorbed Crockard Communications and Joanne adds her extensive public and private sector communications experience to the team. In mid-January, consumer pr expert Rachel Morgan also joined dcp to work on behalf of a growing number of well-known brands.

“It’s certainly unusual in the business and PR industry to have so many high profile women working under the one roof. But it’s not completely a women’s world, as dcp can call upon a number of male heavy hitters such as Geoff



Hill to provide journalistic experience, insight and contacts; while consultant Jonny Ireland admirably holds his own in this strong female team! The team comprises 12 members of staff, supported by a freelance team of five.

“2010 promises to be an exciting year for dcp. With uncertainty in the political process, dcp offers direct, confident politics and with business facing further squeezes and the likelihood of public sector cuts dcp clients can expect decidedly creative proposals.”

To find out more, visit www.dcp.co.uk

The dcp team: seated left to right are Gwynneth Cockcroft and Joanne Sweeney, and behind are Jonny Ireland, Rachel Morgan and Anne Monaghan



Anne Dargan of Rapid Change Consultancy



A People centre approach from Rapid Change

Anne Dargan has recently joined Women in Business, following the launch of her own organisational development consultancy, Rapid Change.

Anne has 25 years’ experience of organisational development from her time within a global, private telecommunications company.



Travel Counsellors business going from 'strength to strength'

WIB Member Andrea Kirkpatrick has worked in the travel business for 18 years, starting as a junior travel consultant and progressing up through the ranks to Branch Manager. She set up her own business, as an independent travel agent, franchised to the established Travel Counsellors group in 2004.

"Over the years I had gained a wealth of knowledge on all aspects of travel and have arranged all types of holidays, from Mediterranean sun, to weddings abroad, honeymoons and worldwide tailor-made holidays. I was also awarded the Kuoni long haul college diploma."

"As an independent travel agent I have access to over 400 different companies. I am not restricted to certain tour operators therefore I can search for great deals, whatever your travel needs. I recognise that not everyone is free to discuss their travel arrangements during the working week. Using award winning technology enables me to work from home and means people can contact me at times when most other travel agents are unavailable, including evenings and weekends."

Andrea is optimistic about the year ahead and reports that she had a good year in 2009.

"Despite the rumors that people were cutting back on their holidays and fearing the threat of redundancy, I had a successful year in 2009. Not only did I achieve my best ever month for sales in December, but I had my best year for sales overall in 2009!

"People work hard all year and they look forward to some form of holiday in the year, whether it is a short break or a full week away in the sun. The booking trend has changed. More people are holding off booking, hoping for a 'late deal', therefore, while my advance bookings may be down, my last minute sales have increased.

"My business is growing from strength to strength. I believe this is due to my friendly and professional service, my independent advice and having the best financial protection in the industry! Not to forget of course the support I receive from Women in Business."

It also helps Andrea that Travel Counsellors has been named the UK's Best Travel Agent at the 23rd annual Guardian and Observer Travel Awards for a third time. Readers were asked to rate the quality of service they received on their holidays and Travel Counsellors scored a highly impressive 99.7% overall.

"As a Travel Counsellor my aim is to provide you with a unique level of personal service and exceptional travel advice, offering you tailor-made travel arrangements at highly competitive prices," Andrea adds.

Contact Andrea by email andrea.kirkpatrick@travelcounsellors.com or telephone 0845 058 7054, or visit www.travelcounsellors.co.uk/andrea.kirkpatrick

She explains: "Rapid Change Consultancy specialises in creating a learning organisation; one that will achieve business growth through its people. It also offers a people-centred approach to change management, proven to accelerate return on investment.

"Organisations need to keep evolving and swiftly, if they are to remain successful in today's rapidly changing environment. It is more important than ever to focus on the development of your people, identifying strengths, talents and opportunities for

succession planning. Investing in such practices can reduce threats of redundancy or worse, closure," Anne stresses.

Anne says she can help clients build a more flexible and innovative workforce, which translates to the bottom line.

To contact Anne Dargan: Tel: 02892 693194 or visit www.rapidchangeconsultancy.com

Whoosh! 10% off

Whoosh Ltd, an event catering company based on the North Coast, was set up in 2008 by member Thana Thammavongsa.

“Whoosh provides a range of catering services for corporate and private events across Northern Ireland,” Thana explains. “Its concept is however different from the norm, as Whoosh’s unique menu is made up of a blend of Southeast Asian food, such as the increasingly popular Thai food. Whoosh has a real passion for food and we use only the freshest ingredients to produce healthy, tasty and nutritious high quality dishes.”

Whoosh is building up a great portfolio of corporate and private clients and is continuing to attract clientele from all areas. “As a new business, building up a strong network of contacts has been a priority and key to Whoosh’s success. After attending several WIB events as a non-member, I became a member last July. Every event is organised with such a high level of professionalism and efficiency that it makes it so easy and comfortable to meet new faces and build up relationships with other businesses. Through WIB, I gained new business contacts, new clients and new friends,” commented Thana.



A member samples Whoosh! catering from Thana Thammavongsa at their promotional stand at our W5 October event.

Whoosh is offering WIB members a discount - 10% off your next booking! Add a little spice to your events and impress your guests ... Call Whoosh!

For further information: www.eatwhoosh.com or e-mail info@eatwhoosh.com

Mrs Beeton's Recipe for Survival Solutions

When Mrs Beeton produced her book of “Household Management”, the housewives of the 1860s were provided with solutions to their household problems. Inspired by Mrs Beeton’s philosophy that counteracting basic problems and improving processes can improve the job in hand, WIB member Julie Collins has come up with just the ticket for businesses in the 21st century recession, through her consultancy company, Survival Solutions.

“Survival Solutions” consists of a number of consultants who audit the day-to-day chores and ‘housekeeping’ of a business,” Julie explains. “From processes as simple as form filling to filing, making sure there’s just the right amount of stock in the cupboard and enough timely cash coming in to pay for it, we ensure you have the right information available at the right time to make decisions. We will work to create a bespoke recipe of efficiency and cost saving activities, ensuring your business can run smoothly.”

This year, Julie, supported by the Moore Stephens accountancy practice, will set up a number of new and innovative, free-of-charge workshops.

“Their aim will be to provide businesses with the starting blocks of their own survival recipe, whether encountering difficulties, or purely to ensure that they undertake a method to avoid problems in the future. Everyone attending the informative ninety minute workshops will also be given a Mrs Beeton style Business Management pack to take away, full of useful tips and proactive suggestions,” she said.

If you would like to secure your free place, provided on a limited first come, first served basis, please email help@survivalsolutions.co.uk



Julie Collins, inspired by Mrs Beeton's recipes for success offers business Survival Solutions

Deirdre Brady wins Business Woman of the Year Award



Patrick Moffat from WG Baird presented Deirdre Brady with the Business Woman of the Year Award

Congratulations to WIB member, Deirdre Brady, CEO for TinyLife, Northern Ireland's Premature Baby Charity, who won the prestigious, Ulster Tatler Business Woman of the Year Award.

The Award was announced at the Ulster Tatler People of the Year Awards ceremony at the Waterfront Hall. Nominations to the 12 Award categories were made by votes from members of the public. A judging panel of experts from the media and industry then made the final selection.

Feel good now!

Feel Good Now Ltd is the brainchild of Sharon Crawford, a transformational speaker and author on how to live more effectively the Law of Attraction, for health, wealth and happiness! Sharon believes that many of us delay our happiness, saying, 'I'll be happy when...' but her concept is to empower people to feel good now - for if not now, when?

Sharon tells us about a new series of workshops she will be running.

"Feel Good Now Ltd ran a very empowering workshop in Belfast on Saturday 27th February, entitled 'Whose Life Is It Anyway - how to take charge of your life & feel good now!' At a time when many

Speaking of Deirdre's award the panel concluded: "Thanks to Deirdre's tireless work, she has made a giant difference to the fortunes of TinyLife through her business and professional skills, all while being a mother of five children. She has raised the profile of a vital charity which has helped so many affected by the trauma surrounding premature births, miscarriage and still births."

Thrilled to receive the award, Deirdre commented: "There was no one more surprised than me to learn that I had been short-listed for the Ulster Tatler Business Woman of the Year award, and I was even more shocked when I actually won. It takes a great team behind you to succeed in business and I am delighted to accept the award on behalf of staff and volunteers of TinyLife."

Deirdre also tells us that there was a double celebration as at that time, TinyLife had also achieved the Investors in People award.

She added: "The charity last year celebrated 21 years of providing emotional and practical support to families of premature and ill babies across Northern Ireland. The services we provide would not have been possible without the support of the general public and local business. My thanks to everyone who has helped come this far."

For more information visit, www.tinylife.org.uk

people are only just surviving, feeling at the mercy of external events, there are some people who are not only thriving, but are positively prospering, both personally and professionally right now! Would you like to be one of them? If so, take control of YOUR life with both hands and see you there!"

Workshops are also running on additional dates in other areas. The investment for the day is £50 - and WIB members will qualify for a 10% discount (simply enter the code OFF10).

To reserve a place or find out more, visit: www.feelgoodnowltd.com

Women in Business Programme

The new Women into Business programme was officially unveiled at the WIB event at Belfast Castle to celebrate Women's Enterprise Day, on 18 November.

Women into Business is an exciting online programme (womenintobusinessni.com) developed and run by Women in Business NI Ltd. It is supported by Invest Northern Ireland, the European Social Fund, the Department for Employment and Learning and Belfast City Council. Through its online portal, the Women into Business programme provides access to all the information and support services women need when considering entering or returning to the world of work.

The programme has also

launched its own Facebook page, Twitter account and Linked-In profile, which provide regular updates on the programme.

Since its launch, the new website has been buzzing.

Eva Garland and Rosemary Morrison, the programme's marketing team, have been busy spreading the benefits of logging on to the innovative scheme to women around Northern Ireland who are currently economically inactive. They also keep in touch regularly with the membership community through email and messages posted to the busy online forum and blogs.

Advertising Campaign

Members may have noticed signs of the January 'Bags of Opportunities' advertising campaign that was run. There was a series of newspaper, radio and billboard advertisements during the month, supported by editorial coverage of the programme.

Membership growing

The new programme was also promoted at a number of events, including our own WIB events, when Eva and Rosemary set up promotional stands.



Rosemary is delighted to report that the numbers of women signing onto the programme online is growing steadily. By early February, more than 500 women were using the website for information and support in their job quest.

New Year, New You Event

The programme had hosted two informal coffee mornings for members in December, but its first big event took place on 27 January in the Wellington Park Hotel Belfast.

"Our first event was a tremendous success," comments Rosemary. "It focused on the theme 'New Year New You!', offering new members an opportunity to meet up in person – in addition to exchanging news and views online. Eva and I enjoyed meeting so many members, hearing their feedback on the website and discussing with them their suggestions for enhancing the programme. The feedback on what they gained and how they enjoyed the event's two experienced and popular guest speakers, Billy Dixon and Letitia Fitzpatrick, was also very positive."

Billy Dixon gave a light-hearted, yet informative workshop on 'personal image and how to present yourself'. Letitia Fitzpatrick, well known from her 26-year career as a journalist and television presenter, who is herself taking on the challenge of a new career as a motivational speaker, spoke on 'Building self-confidence'.



Belfast Lord Mayor Naomi Long visits the Women into Business stand at the programme's launch at Belfast Castle



Member views

Claire Broome from Belfast, who signed up to the programme, commented ahead of the January event: "I worked full-time until November 2008, when I decided to take a career break to support my ten-year old son as he prepared to sit the school transfer exams.

"I heard about Women into Business while taking part in a 'Go For It' programme last September and October. I thought that it could offer me more ongoing support and I signed up. I have decided to be a freelance model for life drawing classes and artists as it offers more flexibility around working times. I'm looking forward to attending the New Year, New You! event as it will be good opportunity to chat to people face to face to find out more information on running a small business."

"It's a very good website and programme," said Susie McDonnell from Downpatrick who has benefited from the services it offers, after she took a redundancy package. "I heard about womenintobusiness.com at a seminar I attended before starting the 'Go for It' new business programme. I logged on and found that this was something that really suited my needs."

Susie said that she has attended several events she saw listed online and is finding that these are "a great way for me to build up a network of business contacts locally". She added that, "there is also a lot of support from the team that administers the programme," and that she feels "I am not alone in my job search."



Rosemary Morrison welcomes the guest speakers, Letitia Fitzpatrick and Billy Dixon at the January event.

Mentoring Mondays launched

Ever evolving, the programme also introduced a new form of mentoring support on 1 February. 'Mentoring Mondays', will continue every Monday, via the Women into Business forum. "This is an excellent opportunity for members who are thinking of starting their own business or require career advice or guidance," Eva explains. "Our mentors will reply to member questions or queries within 24 hours, offering the fruits of their experience – at no cost to members."

Latest News!

After considering the needs analysis undertaken at the last event, two days of workshops and mentoring were organised for the Women into Business members at their request.

One workshop took place on 1 March on 'Free Careers Advice' to help members unsure of their future career direction, followed by a 'Looking at self-employment seminar'.

The following day, 2 March, a second workshop took place on 'CV Writing and Interview Skills. Those attending were then offered individual appointments to discuss their employment or self-employment options with their mentor.

Further mentoring dates will also be arranged to satisfy member demand. For further details contact eva@womenintobusinessni.com



Eva Garland (left) Women into Business Marketing Administrator with member Susie McDonnell at the womenintobusinessni.com stand at the 'New Year, New You' event.



Member Mags Byrne, guest speaker at our February event.

Marketing with Social Media

Member Mags Byrne, who was our guest speaker at the February event, on the topic of 'Business Growth through Social Networking', has prepared this article for us.

It's long been recognised that word of mouth is one of the most powerful forms of marketing. However, it's no longer prevalent that information is shared in face-to-face communications - increasingly people are expressing their views and opinions online. As a result, more and more businesses are adopting social media as part of their overall marketing strategy.

"One in four SMEs in the UK are using social media to connect with customers, according to research published by Daryl Wilcox Publishing. The survey revealed that 27% of those questioned used social media platforms such as blogging, Twitter, Facebook and online forums as part of their marketing activity." (www.utalkmarketing.com)

When we hear the term social media we often think of the big platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc. You may be using these sites already in your personal life, but have you thought about how they could benefit your business?

Social media is more than just social networking. It includes social bookmarking, forums and discussion sites, media sharing sites such as YouTube, Flickr; Blogs, podcasting and much more. Incorporating these online tools into your everyday marketing plan is an excellent way of staying in touch with the latest industry news and research for your business, keeping up-to-date with customers and potential customers and being able to listen to what they are saying - and of course keeping an eye on your competitors too!

Effective social media marketing is all about engaging your customers, finding out what they are interested in and then providing them with useful information and advice on your business products or services. It's really just another form of customer relationship management, but conducted online.

At Mags Byrne Consulting we can help you to demystify social media and make it fun to discover and integrate the fundamentals into your marketing plan. We will get you up and running, seek out a follower base, help you engage in the conversation and enable your business to become an invaluable source of information. Essentially we can help you discover how to quickly tap into the social media buzz and make it work for you!



Contact Mags Byrne Consultancy: Tel: 028 8778 4466

<http://magsbyrne.co.uk>

<http://twitter.com/magsbyrne>

<http://uk.linkedin.com/in/magsbyrne>

Top Marketing Tips for 2010

Elaine McKeown, of Elaine Marketing has kindly drawn upon her extensive marketing experience to prepare a list of top marketing tips to share with WIB members.

- **Know your customers**

Who they are?

What they buy?

When they buy?

How often do they buy?

Date of their last purchase?

- **Build a customer database**

Use this information to try to encourage customers to buy more or to offer other products/services that they might be interested in.

Make sure what you offer is relevant and up-to-date

Review the data regularly and update it as needed.

- **Look for new customers that have a similar profile to your current customers.**

- **Customer service**

Make sure this is to a consistently high level and cuts across the whole business.

Train your team and let them know what level of service you and your customers expect.

Remember, it's much more expensive to recruit new customers than to retain existing ones.

- **Research the market**

Look for new trends.

Are there opportunities for you?

Are there potential new markets?

InvestNI's business library has market and consumer reports on all sectors.

- **Monitor the competition**

Know who they are.

What they are doing – promotions / products / pricing.

Know how they are getting their product / service to market.

What are their customer service standards – why not phone up and find out

- **Do a SWOT – and be honest with yourself**

Internal strengths and weaknesses.

External opportunities and threats.

If you do your research fully then this shouldn't be too difficult

- **Find what makes you different from your competitors**

- **Sell the benefits NOT features**

What need are you satisfying

- **Communications strategy**

Consistency pays – make sure every media is consistent with your brand image and values.

Co-ordinate your activity across the year.

You don't need a big budget just make the most of what you have and use it to reach your customers in the way that suits them.

- **Write a marketing plan and stick to it**

Follow up on all your leads.

Measure your activity.

And don't give up.

Marketing isn't a precise science but if you produce a well thought out plan and are consistently sending messages to the right people, in the right way and at the right time then eventually your efforts will pay off.

So, go for it in 2010 and let's see all member businesses grow!

For further information visit

www.elainemarketing.com or ring Elaine on 028 9048 8671.



Network Events Round up

The Women in Business events programme has been going from strength to strength. The guest speakers invited to our autumn and winter events were all highly impressive and extremely interesting. Each made their own unique contribution to a series of successful events. We are pleased to report that the number of our members attending the events is increasing steadily.

If you attended several of the recent events, you will surely agree that our events provide you and your guests with a great opportunity to network and make valuable new business contacts, while learning some valuable business tips from the guest speakers. There's time to chat and meet new people over the refreshments, as well as through the structured networking activities that are part of each event.

Don't forget that the monthly events also offer you the chance to promote your business. You can set up your own promotional display or table, or leave leaflets and business cards on a shared promotional table – and all at no charge!

There's also been a great take up of the 'Members Two Minutes of Fame' slots available. We've had many very impressive short presentations from a range of members on their business products and

services. If you would like to book a slot at a forthcoming event, contact us on 0845 6076041.

We would also like to thank Invest NI and record our appreciation for their ongoing support of our events programme.

Over the next few pages you will find a brief snapshot of each event that took place between September 2009 and January 2010.



Members engaged in a speed networking activity at our October Event

WIB Business Lunch Series

Following feedback from members, Women in Business launched a series of business lunches. The aim is to give invited guests and members the chance to network and comment on business issues in a more informal and intimate setting.

The first WIB business lunch was held at The Radisson Hotel in October, while the second lunch also took place in the hotel in November.

The first lunch as all to date have done provoked lively and stimulating discussions. One guest commented afterwards: "I just wanted to thank you for lunch

today. I think these informal gatherings are a great idea and give members the opportunity to really get to know and understand other members businesses. Great venue, great food and great company."

Recent lunches took place in January at the Radisson Encore, while in February lunch took place on Wednesday 24 February in the Fitzwilliam.

If you would like to place your name on the list to be invited to a future lunch, please contact WIB on 0845 6076041.

Special Olympic Inspiration from Mary Davis

The first event of the season was attended by over 100 members and took place on 10 September in the Ramada Hotel, Shaw's Road, where we played host to a high profile 'special' guest.

Mary Davis, Managing Director of the Special Olympics for Europe/Eurasia, spoke about her career to date and how she came to lead the Special Olympics management team in 58 countries and chair the Irish Government's taskforce on Active Citizenship. She said, "My whole life has been about breaking down barriers and offering opportunities to help all of us realize that each individual has something to offer in life."

Outlining some disparities in conditions that still affect working women, Mary reflected that changes in attitudes and legislation are still required. But, she encouraged us saying, "It's the thousands of small steps that we can take individually that can bring us from aspiration to the achievement of change and equality."

Taking full advantage of the 'Members Two Minutes of Fame' slots were Lorraine McAleer of Learning Space NI, Louise Cahoon from Access Recruitment, Sara Bell of the Yamaha Music School and Andea Kirkpatrick of Travel Counsellors.

There was a great range of member stalls and promotional tables at the event, which those attending enjoyed visiting.



Christine Boyle (WIB Chair), Mary Davis (Special Olympics) and Ellen Johnston (Invest NI) line up at the start of the September event.



Three members meet at September's event



Those attending the September event take part in a facilitated networking activity



Karen Kerr of Cats Protection receives information from Belinda Whyte, Bank of Ireland at one of the member stands

Sales Techniques for Business Survival and Growth



Guest speaker Michael McIntyre's crystal ball recommended that members improve their sales skills! With Michael are Alan Morrow of Invest NI (left) and Christine Boyle



Michael McIntyre captivating the members



Dawson Nangle Tumelty members promoting their business

W5 hosted our well-attended and lively October meeting as over 70 members gathered to pick up tips on preparing for the end of the recession.

Guest speaker Michael McIntyre of Envision Management Consultants forecast that the recession would end soon and that businesses should double their selling efforts and be better prepared for the recovery.

During his seminar Michael encouraged businesses to spend more of their time selling - to redefine who their customers are, target them directly and to use the most effective form of selling - the old fashioned face-to-face meeting.

The highly successful event also provided a great selling platform for members as three business women took their 'Two Minutes of Fame' on stage, Cai Graham of Cai Graham Photography, Catherine Greeves of Wise Monkey and Sohaila McKee of McKee Design. An additional nine members had set up promotional stands that were visited by members before and after the presentation. A structured networking session also allowed them to exchange contacts and information.



Catherine Greeves makes use of the 'Two Minutes of Fame' slot

Sales MasterClass

Acting on feedback from members at the event, Women in Business also organised a Sales Masterclass with Michael. It was held on the 2nd December in the Raddison Blu Hotel, subsidised by WIB. All 15 attendees spoke very highly of the benefits of the class.

Women's Enterprise Day celebrated at Belfast Castle

The annual Women's Enterprise Day was marked locally on Wednesday 18 November by our event at Belfast Castle.

The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Councillor Naomi Long, opened the event. She said: "It is important that we celebrate the role of women in business, women who are entrepreneurs and who are driving forward this economy."



Belfast Lord Mayor Naomi Long addresses members

"Women in Business play an important part in encouraging and developing female entrepreneurship. Events like this provide valuable access to learning and expertise and are an opportunity for female-led businesses to link and network together and its event programmes is crucial in maintaining and fostering development of this sector."

The Lord Mayor, a qualified engineer, said it was also important to support women who worked in non-traditional sectors. Also, although she claimed a gender barrier still existed in Northern Ireland, she added, "What we need to do is not focus on the negative but celebrate the positives to encourage other young women to become entrepreneurs"

The event's keynote speaker was Inez McCormack, an influential trade union, women's and human rights activist and Chair of the Participation and Practice of Rights Project. She also spoke about the importance of female entrepreneurship and the contribution female led business make to the local economy. "If you are a women entrepreneur you



A Porsche helped promote member's Rally Ireland business

should take risks... Failure should not be viewed as failure but as an important way of learning in Business. What is important is to support women coming into the economy. Women are not the problem, they are the solution, but need to be supported," she said.

Four members took up the 'Two Minutes of Fame' slots to tell the many attendees about their business: Kathy McKenna of Construction Register Ltd; Jean Johnston of Serenity Stress Management; Lorraine Milne of Westfield Health Scheme; and Kathryn Walls. The foyer was packed with members' promotional tables.



Belfast Telegraph Business Editor, Lindsay Fergus with member, Dolores Vischer of DVPR

2009 like a Game of Snakes 'n' Ladders...

Over 80 members came together for lunch on 8 December at Ten Square Hotel to celebrate Christmas. In what proved to be an excellent event, Chair Christine Boyle likened the last two years in business to "a game of snakes 'n' ladders".

In her end of year address, Christine described how the recession has brought many businesses back down to earth, but while many had slipped down a 'snake', there are many ladders ahead that we can climb up to prosperity and opportunities with every roll of the dice. Christine encouraged businesses to get back in the game; a game is no fun without players! She referenced recent comments by Angela McGowan, Chief Economist at the Northern Bank who declared that the local economy pulled out of recession in the second half of 2009.

Christine also called on businesswomen across Northern Ireland to contribute to strengthening the private sector, as a strong private sector will be required to sustain the recovery and balance imminent cuts in public sector spending.

Also speaking at the event was social entrepreneur Caroline Casey, founding CEO of disability charity, Kanchi, and the O2 Ability Awards. Ms Casey delivered a truly inspirational address on how she overcame her blindness to become one of the world's leading voices for disability awareness. She described how she finally had to admit to herself and the world that she was blind and how through achieving her dream of training elephants in India it led her to establish a worldwide foundation for the promotion of disability awareness in business.

She applauded the women in the room and gave them her five rules: never give up, live the dream, don't fear failure, surround yourself with positive people and be dangerous.



Christine Boyle (left) and Roseann Kelly (right) welcome Caroline Casey of Kanchi and Sharon Polson of Invest NI



Facilitated networking with a festive twist



Members get into the Christmas spirit

Members enjoyed their Christmas lunch at Ten Square

Focus on Finance at Stormont



Preparing to update members on issues relating to banking and finance were (l-r): Ellen Johnston of Invest NI, Christine Boyle WIB Chair, Angela Knight Chief Executive of the British Bankers' Association and Anna Lo, MLA

Banking and financial issues were on the agenda in January at our annual event in Parliament Buildings at Stormont. Anna Lo, MLA was our host.

Juliana Sloan, WIB Board Director, with more than 25 years experience of working within the financial services industry, introduced each of the evening's distinguished panellists:

- Caroline Banks, a leading Independent Financial Adviser from London (and member of the Million Dollar Round Table).
- Eileen Sowney, Director of the AIB bank Group.
- Dawn Purvis, MLA and member of the Assembly Finance and Personnel Committee.
- Angela Knight, CBE, Chief Executive of the British Bankers' Association.

The themes of trust and confidence that banks and financial advisors need to restore and build up among customers were developed in the presentations made by Caroline Banks and Eileen Sowney.

Dawn Purvis presented a clear picture of the difficult financial position the Assembly and Northern Ireland is currently in. She stressed that it would be the creative ingenuity of our people – and their entrepreneurship – that would revitalise our economy.

She reminded us that 80% of NI GDP comes from our many small and medium-sized businesses.

Presenting the evening's keynote speech, Angela Knight gave a fascinating account of how the recent financial crisis and recession has impacted upon the banks and in turn the economy. She said: "The banking industry is listening, it is changing, it does understand its responsibilities in underpinning the economy and it understands its responsibilities to society. We have stepped up to the table for change and we are not walking away." She gave examples of the new strategies and policies being developed by banks to help our economy recover.

In a lively question and answer session, the panel addressed questions from members on issues of concern that included access by small business to short and medium term finance from the high street banks and women's personal pensions.



Members with Anna Lo, MLA



Speakers Angela Knight (left) and Eileen Sowney with WIB Chair Christine Boyle

Lifetime Honorary Membership for Roisin

Roisin McDermott was taken completely by surprise when she was awarded lifetime honorary membership of Women in Business.

Presenting the special award, Chair Christine Boyle paid tribute to Roisin's crucial role in the birth of our network.

In 2000, Roisin worked at LEDU. She coordinated a business development programme that brought together a group of ten women who with her encouragement and much support went on to set up Women in Business in 2002.

Roisin joined the network's original Board and served until she stepped down in May 2009.

"Roisin provided sound business and committee experience, venues for our Board meetings – and in particular the fruits of her experience in applying for funding support from a range of channels," Christine Boyle said. "Plus, throughout we all enjoyed her good humour. She has been a great colleague and friend to the network."

Reflecting on the network's growth and achievements since its inception, Roisin said: "Our original group of founders had a passion to reach out to other women to share contacts and experiences. Looking back upon some of the recent events, I find that the network has gone way beyond my humble original ambition for the group and has shown the professionalism that women can achieve."



Chair Christine Boyle presents Roisin McDermott with honorary lifetime membership of our network.

WIB Member Benefits

- Free monthly innovative & topical networking events with key speakers
- Joint events with other business networks
- Facilitated networking at all events
- Information on business training and support programmes
- Free WIB Newsletter - where members can promote their business
- Interactive website with exclusive member areas
 - o Members Forum
 - o Submit Member Articles
 - o Business Information
 - o Member to Member Offers
 - o An online business directory for members
- Members ezine - an opportunity to promote your business
- "2 minutes of fame" – opportunity to showcase your business at WIB events
- Free distribution of promotional material at events
- Free stands at events
- Networking opportunities with local business owners
- Opportunities for free PR/Promotion through press coverage
- Free telephone legal advice line from Stewarts Solicitors
- Specialist seminars
- Business Lunches
- Half price membership of the NICCI
- Discounted entry into the IOD
- Free mentoring through the Connections programme (criteria applies)

To advertise in the Women in Business Newsletter

Contact Women in Business on 08456076041 or e-mail info@womeninbusinessni.com for details of advertising rates and sponsorship in 2010.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

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