



Developer revolutionises commercial market

Pictured: (from left to right) James Oladujoje from GWD Media with Chris Fitzsimmons from SYIF and Zaffar Iqbal of GWD Media.

A Sheffield developer of bespoke software is breaking boundaries in modern technology to revolutionise commercial activity.

GWD Media, on Leeds Road, has expanded into three key sectors and increased staff numbers to more than 20 after receiving investments totalling £500,000 from South Yorkshire Investment Fund.

GWD Media, who won the Creative and Digital Industries Innovation accolade at the 2007 Sheffield Business Awards, is advancing from its origins in the development of internet kiosks to the creation of management software for public orientated technology.

This includes vending machines management software, providing businesses with the right tools to assess whether all its machines across the country are working properly and are sufficiently stocked without having to send an engineer out.

Additional areas of expansion for GWD Media include the creation of software for specialist kiosks offering digital photo prints and music downloads, exporting kiosk software via the internet and expanding the vending machine management system abroad, initially into Germany.

GWD Media is also starting a new project, working to

create digital screens for public transport services, providing passengers with information and advertising to fit in with their time of travel and exact location.

With the move into new fields, GWD has added six new employees to keep pace with the development. New software and hardware engineers, product managers and customer service advisors have all joined to meet the next stage of planned growth.

James Oladujoje, Chief Executive of GWD Media Ltd, said: "The funding from SYIF has enabled us to not only add more employees, but create new areas of business, including the vending management software.

"The expansion into the vending machine market enables us to use our technology in different sectors. We realised that new products would be needed if the company was to continue to grow and that extra staff were required to facilitate this".

Chris Fitzsimmons, Investment Manager for South Yorkshire Investment Fund, said: "GWD Media has constantly adapted itself and broken into new areas of business by using new technology and the expertise of its employees.

"The SYIF investment alongside funding from the Yorkshire and Humber Equity Fund will help them continue these developments and help them achieve the next stage of growth."

South Yorkshire to benefit from interim fund

Yorkshire Forward recently injected a further £4 million into South Yorkshire Investment Fund to ensure the Fund can continue to make investments until the end of 2008 while plans for a Successor Fund, which is set to launch next year, are finalised.

Tony Goulbourn, Chief Executive of SYIF, said: "We are delighted that Yorkshire Forward is investing in South Yorkshire. This reflects the strong working partnership we have with them. More critically, it will ensure that businesses can continue to access finance when they need it and that the momentum we have gained will not be lost.

"The additional funding means that we now have just under £10 million to invest until the end of the year so the message to intermediaries and businesses in this region is get in touch because we are actively looking for applicants.

"The Small Business Fund, which provides mainly unsecured business loans, has £1.1 million of the original fund to invest and our combined equity linked funds have £4.7 million left to invest. All our sub funds, including the Seedcorn Fund, will then use the additional £4 million that has been made available to fund further investments."

SYIF is now continuing to work closely with Yorkshire Forward and Partnership Investment Finance (PIF) to develop plans for a Yorkshire-wide Successor Fund which will build on the success of the existing SYIF and PIF funds.

Added Tony: "More than £50 million, including Money with Management, has been invested by SYIF in South Yorkshire businesses. This has been crucial to the region's economy, helping to generate business growth and will provide a return of £20 million, creating a foundation for the future investment in the region."

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Welcome...



...to the 20th edition of Profile.

It is astonishing to think we have reached this many editions of the Profile newsletter, helping to keep people informed of the investments made by South Yorkshire Investment Fund, as well as the success stories of companies in the region.

The publication has been a vital tool for SYIF and in this time of change will continue to be useful in bringing the latest developments on the Fund to the forefront with our intermediaries, partners and businesses.

An example of this is the front page story which highlights Yorkshire Forward's decision to provide an additional £4 million to ensure SYIF can continue to make investments until the end of 2008.

In our last edition we mentioned the partnership SYIF had created with BiG Business Loan Fund in Sheffield to deliver their Microloan Fund. We are pleased to announce that SYIF is also working closely with our partners Donbac Microloan, which also provides funding for new companies.

As with every edition of Profile we like to highlight the businesses who have received backing from SYIF. In this issue we cover investments from a wide range of sectors, an example of the diversification of the Fund and the industries in South Yorkshire.

This includes software developers GWD Media, Develop-U who specialise in business improvement techniques, food business Delicious Alchemy and printing company Intoprint.

Remember SYIF provide seedcorn, loan and equity linked investments, ranging from £1.5k to £2.5m, specifically to help small and medium businesses meet the gaps in funding they need for growth and development.

If your company is requiring financial assistance, please give us a ring on 01709 386377 or email us at info@syif.com and we can explain how we can help you.

Tony Goulbourn
Chief Executive
South Yorkshire Investment Fund

Golden future ahead for Delicious Alchemy

A fast-growing Sheffield food company is set to take a bite out of the retail market after a cash injection means they can expand their business nationwide.

Delicious Alchemy based at Framlington Road, Norfolk Park, produces gluten and lactose free products for restaurants, hotels and caterers throughout the UK.

The company is now launching plans to develop food lines for national supermarkets after receiving £15,000 from South Yorkshire Investment Fund.

Emma Killilea, Managing Director of Delicious Alchemy, said: "As a business we have enjoyed a lot of success and expansion in a very short space of time. We are one of the leading suppliers of lactose and gluten free foods in the country after only forming in December 2006.

"We already have one product in Sainsbury's stores but we are looking at launching a new product by the end of October that will be supplied to a wide range of stores and chains.

"SYIF's investment is a vital cash injection that will be used for a range of working capital to launch the new products, including packaging costs and purchasing stock".

Emma founded Delicious Alchemy after discovering she had wheat intolerance. She came up with the idea for a company which would cater for people on restricted diets.

Emma studied food science and marketing at Sheffield Hallam University before founding the business soon after and recently became a board member of Creative Sheffield. She said: "The last 18 months have been fantastic. I believe we have a range of products and a service that sets us apart from the rest. We have received several industry awards for our food and the future is certainly bright."

Delicious Alchemy was introduced to SYIF by Alan



Pictured (left to right): Grahame Lunt from SYIF with Joanna Ellis, Business Link Yorkshire, David Rowley, assistant manager at Mount Pleasant and Emma Killilea of Delicious Alchemy.

Scott and Joanna Ellis from Business Link Yorkshire, while the company also received a loan of £15,000 from Nat West.

Grahame Lunt, SYIF's Investment Manager, said: "The company has established itself within the market place and their products are very well received.

"These are exciting times for the business as they look to consolidate their position in the suppliers market, whilst also looking at developing products to sell direct to the consumer through some of the country's biggest retailers."

SYIF funding still available for businesses

South Yorkshire Investment Fund has reiterated its message that almost £10million of funding remains available for businesses to take advantage of.

The announcement was made to intermediaries, who work with SYIF and businesses in the region, at update events around South Yorkshire.

SYIF Chief Executive Tony Goulbourn indicated that money remains from SYIF's current Fund and a £4million interim fund from Yorkshire Forward, ensuring that South Yorkshire businesses can continue to access finance up to the end of 2008 and beyond.

More than 200 people attended the events which were staged in Doncaster and Rotherham.

The events provided a SYIF update to intermediaries in the area, informing them of the funding packages available. This included presentations covering business loans, equity linked packages, seedcorn finance and micro-loans.

Tony said: "The message is all about continuity and it is important that we communicate that to intermediaries, who give us the deals."

SYIF was able to feedback on the independent survey it compiled with intermediaries on their performance and position in the market and how conditions for SME finance will change in the short to medium term.

The online research received responses from approximately 70 intermediaries, with the majority indicating that accessing finance was a problem for every business group, but particularly for new start-ups (89 per cent) and early stage technology based businesses (83 per cent)

Although the finance gap is still seen as affecting SME businesses in South Yorkshire, a positive finding was the high level of agreement that SYIF products do help to fill it.



Pictured (left to right): Angela Allison, Executive Director at Donbac with Patrick Gillespie at www.adoptajellybaby.com and Fiona Greaves SYIF Loans Manager.

South Yorkshire businesses boosted by microloan partnership

Two of South Yorkshire's most successful enterprise funding organisations have joined forces to provide microloans to new start up and existing businesses in the region.

The partnership between South Yorkshire Investment Fund and Donbac Ltd means small and medium sized enterprises across the region, which are unable to raise all or part of the finance they need from their bank have access to funds.

The Donbac Microloan can provide new start up businesses or those trading for up to six months, with loans between £1,000 and £5,000. Businesses that have completed six months of trading are eligible for loans of up to £15,000.

Similar to SYIF's partnership with the new BiG Business Loan Fund in Sheffield, the Donbac Microloan will target people across the rest of South Yorkshire who struggle to raise funds from banks because their venture is too early-stage or they may have experienced problems with poor credit history.

SYIF will distribute the loans and collect repayments while Donbac will assist with the completion of the loan agreements.

Tony Goulbourn, Chief Executive of SYIF, said: "In the current climate, economic factors will impact upon small businesses' ability to get financial backing. The Donbac Microloan can provide a way around that.

"Donbac is an organisation with a rich tradition of successful investment and this partnership is another great opportunity for SYIF to support sustainable business

growth and increase the success rate of locally-owned companies in the region."

The Donbac Loan Funds were established in the late 1980s with £2m funding from British Rail to help generate the local economy and provide accessible lending for start up businesses in Doncaster.

Donbac is an authorised lender under the SFLG scheme and continues to supply secured loans of £15,000 and over plus equity packages to businesses in the Doncaster 'travel to work' area.

Angela Allison, Executive Director of the Donbac, said: "The coming together of two large-scale secondary lenders can only be good news for the small businesses and entrepreneurs in South Yorkshire.

"The credit crunch means it is a tough time for SMEs but this partnership puts us in a stronger position to continue supporting enterprise and regenerating the economy."

For more information on the Donbac Microloan contact Angela Allison on 01302 341070.

Intoprint into new premises after loan

A South Yorkshire printing company has grown from the front room of a Rotherham home to a 13,000 square foot site in Sheffield.

Intoprint, which produces a range of printing services, was founded in 1992 by Richard Lax, using his parent's house in Barnsley Road, Thorpe Hesley, as his headquarters.

Since this humble beginning, the company has grown year on year and recently moved to their new location in Ecclesfield after gaining a £60,000 loan from South Yorkshire Investment Fund.

Bob Lax, Richard's father and co-Director of Intoprint, said: "Richard set up the business from our house. We installed a printing press and had to strengthen the floorboards to cope with the weight!

"It was quite bizarre and not very practical. Soon though we secured more suitable premises and moved out of the house.

"Since then we have grown year on year, with increased business, staff numbers and turnover. We outgrew our premises in Rotherham and needed to move to a much larger



Pictured (left to right): Richard Lax, co-Director of Intoprint, with Grahame Lunt from SYIF, Bob Lax, co-Director of Intoprint and Alan Scott from Business Link Yorkshire.

location, which is just the other side of the M1 from the house we started out in.

"Our new base is over five-times bigger than our last location and meets our expectations of continual growth and expansion in the future.

"The relocation would not have happened without the financial backing of SYIF. Their support is greatly appreciated, as without them we would have been stuck in premises we had outgrown."

The move coincided with the business achieving a £1 million turnover first time and our team growing to 22 employees.

Intoprint were introduced to SYIF by Alan Scott from Business Link Yorkshire.

Grahame Lunt, SYIF's Investment Manager, says: "The relocation of Intoprint shows just how far they have come as a business. To have moved from a Rotherham house to a sizeable base such as the one in Ecclesfield in little over a decade is a great achievement."

Business Link Yorkshire: An intermediary's view



Pictured: Business Link Yorkshire's Alan Scott.

Business Link Yorkshire is a Government funded service designed to promote enterprise.

Business Link is coordinated nationally, while local delivery is driven by the nine Regional Development Agencies in England. In Yorkshire and Humber, Business Link Yorkshire delivers the funding provided by Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Development Agency.

A major part of the advice provided by Business Link Yorkshire is sign-posting businesses to organisations that can help growth and this includes South Yorkshire Investment Fund (SYIF).

Through Business Link, small and medium sized businesses have gained access to the varied range of funding packages from SYIF.

Alan Scott, Business Advisor, who introduced many of these deals to the Fund said: "In times when bank lending criteria is being reviewed and more restricted, many businesses are finding it increasingly difficult to gain access to funding to help them grow."

However, SYIF remains in the market to provide gap finance, helping to ensure contingency in deals for

the many businesses still looking to expand.

Alan added: "In their planning to move to larger premises some of my clients have taken advantage of four-year loans, alongside significant bank support, to ensure all costs were fully covered.

"Similarly businesses moving from rented to freehold premises have taken up SYIF loans at an early stage to ease the deal at the outset.

"I have been working with an early stage company where SYIF provided the working capital. A young lady entrepreneur had successfully secured a major retailer customer in its food product and had some bank support alongside SYIF. This is an example of how finance from both banks and SYIF can work together very well.

"Business Link Yorkshire is pleased to continue working closely with SYIF and is well placed to advise any business on its expansion plans using its independent and impartial advice and diagnostic approach."

For more information on Business Link Yorkshire, call 0845 604 8048 or visit www.businesslink.gov.uk/yorkshire

Forward thinking company moves ahead with investment

A forward-thinking business development company is moving ahead in the market place, thanks to a £25,000 investment.

Developing Performance Partnership Ltd (Develop-U), based in Rotherham, received the loan from South Yorkshire Investment Fund to help them bring in more business and market their services more widely.

Develop-U specialises in business improvement techniques, helping major national clients, such as Linpac Packaging and General Motors, to improve their operational systems.



Pictured: Sam Morris from Develop-U with Andy Chaffer of SYIF and Simon Jones from Develop-U.

They also offer a range of fully-accredited courses in health and safety and management training, designed to increase staff effectiveness, with consistent impact on each individual's behavioural changes and thereby influencing positive organisational culture changes.

Sam Morris, Managing Director of Develop-U said: "The investment from SYIF has gone towards marketing Develop-U and our services more widely. As a result, we've recently secured major contracts to up-skill the workforces of three large employers; one in West Yorkshire, and two in the East of England. The numbers involved will create financial security for our business for the next four years.

"SYIF has been a huge help, they have really assisted our cash flow. A substantial amount of the investment has gone towards our new website, www.develop-u.co.uk and through marketing ourselves we have become able to chase business more freely.

"The money will also help fulfil our new contracts by supplying working capital assistance."

Andrew Chaffer, Business Director at SYIF said: "Develop-U is a pioneering company who deserve to flourish in the market place. SYIF are delighted to have played a part in helping them secure major contracts and we look forward to watching the company grow in the coming years."