

Rewarding excellence – whatever the business challenge

Is your business continuing to out-perform peers in setting the standards? Have your teams excelled in what are the worst economic conditions for two decades? Has your enthusiasm and ambition for growth remained un-dented?

If so, it's time to enter the Westcountry business awards, Business Challenge 2010, supported by the *Western Morning News*.

The awards are now open for entries with five categories that "offer something for every business", say the judges.

"We want to hear the compelling stories of triumph, commitment and endurance that we know have shaped the Westcountry's business scene for many years and have given us a robust economy with which to weather the current recessionary challenges," said Western Morning News editor Alan Qualtrough.

Entries are being sought from across the four counties that make up the peninsula, including Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, West Dorset and South Somerset.

Businesses can be large or small, long-established or new, with five awards categories to ensure there is an opportunity for every firm to seek recognition for the business successes.

The five awards categories this year are:

- **Corporate Responsibility** – recognising those businesses that are achieving commercial success in ways that respect people, communities and the environment in an innovative way
- **Business Excellence** - recognising well established businesses that strive to be market leaders and demonstrate operational excellence
- **International Trade** – recognising a strong track record in international trading, with a focus on expansion or ambition to expand further and a clear strategy to drive forward that ambition
- **Business Innovation** - demonstrating how outstanding innovation has achieved commercial success and created increased opportunities for the business
- **Regional Contribution** – a new award that seeks to define those companies that have produced positive economic or social impacts for the regional economy

The judging panel this year has been drawn from our recognised business leaders, past winners, the Western Morning News and the sponsor firms. Among them are: Tim Jones, chairman of the Devon and Cornwall Business Council; Carleen Kelemen, vice chairman of the IOD Devon and Cornwall and Director of the Convergence Partnership; and Liz Parks, business editor of the Western Morning News.

The sponsors include Bond Pearce, KPMG, RBS and Twofour.

Steve Hadley, Partner at Bond Pearce LLP, said: "We know how tough it is out there and yet so many local firms are continuing to thrive by being innovative and not allowing the recession to derail their ambitions. Through Business Challenge, we want to showcase them as examples of best practice."

Ian Brokenshire, Senior Partner at KPMG's Plymouth office, said: "These awards are a time for celebrating business excellence in whatever shape or form it comes, in what are very testing times. The judges want to hear from businesses of all sizes so we can recognise their achievements."

Martin Wright, Relationship Director, RBS Corporate Banking, said: "We have introduced a new regional contribution award this year to reflect the importance businesses in the Westcountry place on investing

locally for the greater good of their communities and the regional economy. This is the first award of its kind and will be hard won."

Paul Tarplee, Managing Director, Twofour Digital, concluded: "As part of the mix, we will be looking for ways in which businesses are being dynamic in the use of the new technologies and tools at their disposal and seeking new and progressive ways of working to gain competitive advantage. This is all about innovation and the Westcountry has a long legacy of thinking outside the box, which is vital for the region's reputation both in the UK and internationally."

Following the judging process the finalists will be invited to a Gala Awards dinner on October 21, 2010, at St Mellion International Resort where the winners will be announced.

Full category and entry details plus entry forms can be found online at www.businesschallenge2010.co.uk

The closing date for entries is Friday 11th June 2010, when judging will begin. Shortlisted entrants will be announced in September in the Western Morning News.

Ends

Photographs:

Photographs are available from the Western Morning News on request.

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