



**Business Information
from Business Link**

**- a responsive and professional
service to help your business succeed**

"We've all heard that 'information' is vital to success in the modern business world. But what sort of information are they talking about - and how do you lay your hands on it?"

In its simplest terms, 'information' provides answers to questions. It provides the facts and figures to help you take decisions for the ongoing good of your business.

That's fine - as far as it goes. In today's competitive and fast-changing world, however, information resources need to be more broadly-based to meet the challenges and opportunities of a new commercial landscape.

With this and the future success of local businesses very much in mind, Business Link Chester & Ellesmere Port have established a dedicated and highly professional Business Information Service.

Whatever the type or size of your business, you now have ready access to a wide range of resources which provide all the information, advice and support you need to ensure your continuing success.

The major information services available from Business Link include:

INFORMATION RESEARCH

This is essential in assessing and evaluating economic and market trends, competitors' activities, business opportunities, rules and regulations.

Specific expertise is available in the following areas:

- * Market and competitor analysis
- * Credit checks
- * Grants/funding information and advice
- * Locating suitable premises
- * Identifying product developments
- * Sourcing new suppliers
- * Checking patents, trademarks etc
- * Tracking EU programmes and directives
- * Sourcing technical standards
- * Checking legal compliance

MAILING LIST SERVICE

Generate new business by post! Our regularly updated national database of 600,000 limited companies can be used to create lists tailored to your own new business 'targets'.

Relevant criteria include size of company, turnover, sector, geographical area or postcode. The

information can be supplied on data disc, printed list or label formats.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

Regular users of Business Link Information Services should consider the benefits of our Subscription Service. The twin benefits of an ongoing personal service from a designated team member, together with attractive price discounts make the Subscription Service a highly cost-effective option.

OTHER SERVICES

- * Support in establishing effective information services
- * Ongoing maintenance and development of your in-house information resources
- * Assistance in sourcing management and technical staff
- * Press monitoring service - regular subject-specific reports on national and local periodical articles
- * Translation service for major European languages

Examples of recent success stories

Well over 1,000 companies used our Business Information Services during 19XX. Many are now regular customers. The facts speak for themselves:

- * Our mailing list gave a local chemical company its best-ever sales leads
- * Our advice on grants fraudsters saved local firms £000s.

- * With Business Link assistance a local wood-products manufacturer secured a £20K RSA grant
- * A new chemicals supply company received full research support in importing, distribution and market research

For further information on any service listed in this fact-sheet, please call the BUSINESS INFORMATION HOTLINE on 01244 0000000

(Reverse)

The Business Information Team

A highly experienced team of three information professionals provides all our customers with a high quality of service and commitment.

The team is led and managed by **Mxxx Cxxxx** (Senior Information Officer) who also develops new products and services using the latest electronic media. **David Exxxx's** primary role as Information Officer involves organising and maintaining the provision of company, product, service and market information, whilst **Charles Hxxxxxx** has been seconded from the DTI as a grants, property and government services specialist.

MARK CXXX - Senior Information Officer

Mark entered the business world in the fast-moving 1980s when he was Information Officer for the Merseyside Innovation Centre in Liverpool. During this period, experience was gained in the fields of technology, manufacturing techniques and management. Many links were forged with other business information providers in the north-west

and with technical specialists nationwide. Key skills were also acquired in information management and research techniques.

In addition to being a qualified linguist in French and Italian, Mark gained an MA in Information and Library Studies from Liverpool John Moores University in 1994, and has since been admitted as a Member of the Institute of Information Scientists.

DAVID EXXXXX - Information Officer

David has a first-class honours degree in Information Studies from Liverpool John Moores University as well as post-graduate qualifications in Business Information and Marketing. He is also a Corporate Member of the Institute of Information Scientists.

Before university, David was a manager for several years with a local authority public library. After graduating, he worked for a national training company, successfully setting up and managing a fully computerised business/training information centre.

As Information Officer with Business Link, David has undertaken several large projects. Among these are: helping a client to develop business in Northern Ireland by pinpointing key initial contacts; identifying and alerting specialist stone-work companies in Britain to tender for the refurbishment of a prominent building in Moscow.

CHARLES HXXXXX

Charles' broad experience with the DTI has proved especially useful since being seconded to the Business Link Information Team in 1994.

After graduating in Business and Finance Studies, Charles' work at the DTI included a period with the Inward Investment Team; working with Manchester and Salford City Action Team to help rejuvenate the inner city economy; and dealing with grant claims as part of the DTI's Regional Selective Assistance Monitoring Team.

At Business Link, Charles has dealt with requests as diverse as finding an ostrich farm in the UK, sourcing supplies of bulls' semen, and translating \$3 trillion into Japanese yen! On a day to day basis, he deals with business information enquiries and takes responsibility for all business grant and loan enquiries, along with requests for the availability of business premises in the area.

Charles also helped start the grants service at Business Link which gives businesses the opportunity to have their grant applications prepared and presented to the DTI using the services of a local independent grants consultant.

For further information on Business Information and other Business Link services, please call the Hotline number today - or return the reply paid card/coupon below.

BUSINESS INFORMATION HOTLINE
01244 000000

ENDS

Business Advice
from Business Link

- a systematic and personal approach
to effective business development

"Opportunities and problems are part of the maddening mix of business life.

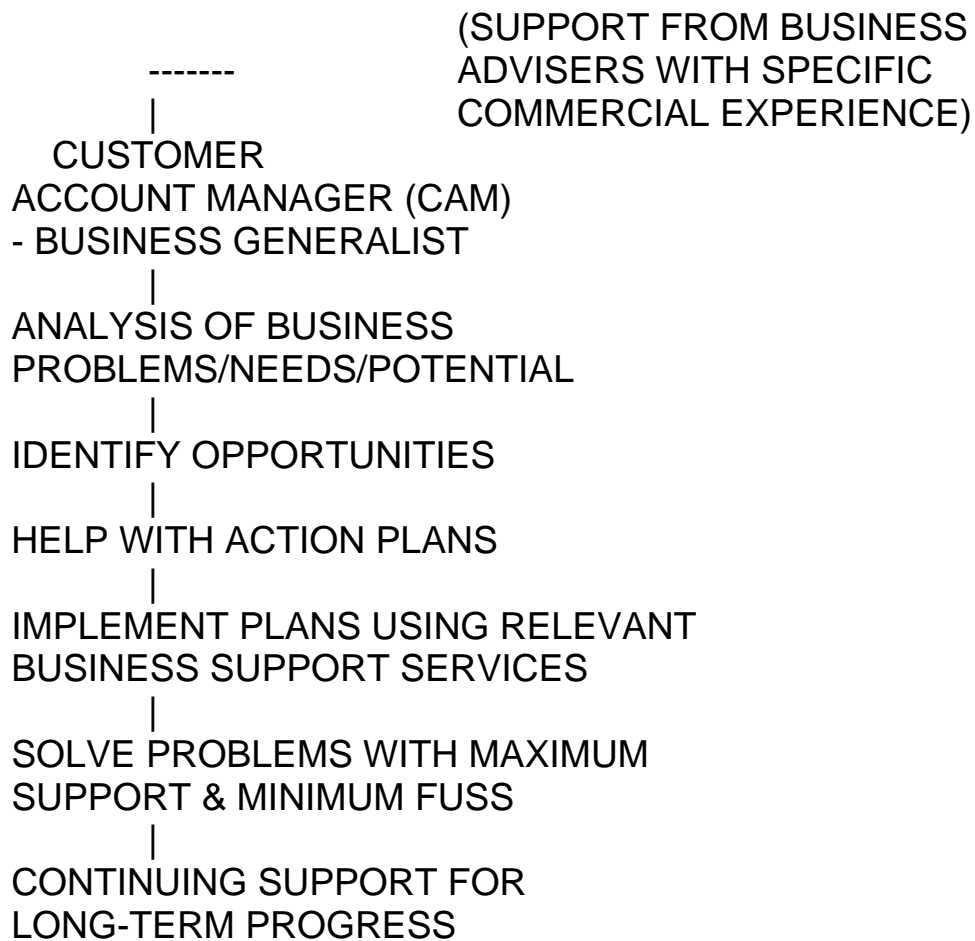
So what's the best route to take for quality advice from experienced professionals?"

Business development is close to the heart of everyone who owns or runs a business. Whatever stage your business is at, you'll appreciate the high value advisory services available from Business Link Chester & Ellesmere Port.

Our carefully assembled team of business advice professionals are highly experienced in the practical issues that can help or hinder business growth. With your own dedicated Customer Account Manager (CAM), you can begin to realise the full potential of your enterprise.

The approach we take is thorough, systematic and, above all, simple to implement. With your continued involvement, action plans can be devised and set to work - with results that could come as a pleasant and profitable surprise!

Here's how it works...



Two examples of 'advice in action'...

Top motor dealer Two Mills Honda was one of only 19 Honda outlets nationwide selected to franchise the £75,000 NSX sports supercar after submitting a business plan prepared with the help of Business Link.

Equally impressive was the saving of ten local jobs when Business Link stepped in to help buyers acquire a manufacturer of concrete castings which had been forced into liquidation. The new company, Turnstone Precast, was established after

a detailed business plan and financial package was prepared by Business Link. They won the backing of the bank and other lenders and the company is now set to become one of the largest of its kind in the region.

Here's how CAMs can work for YOU...

The role of your specially designated Customer Account Manager (CAM) is to help your business grow by drawing on his own experience and the other support services available at Business Link.

Specifically, this includes information and advice on:

- * Business strategy and change
- * Financial management and planning
- * Management training and development
- * Marketing and sales
- * Quality systems and procedures
- * Information technology
- * Export planning

Other services include:

- * Business review and health checks
- * Diagnostic and consultancy services to help small firms analyse and improve their business, including a subsidised management consultancy

For further information call the Business Link
Advisory Service Hotline on 01244 00000

(Reverse - CVs/Hotline/Reply-paid coupon etc)

ENDS

Innovation & Technology **at Business Link**

-helping you to turn exciting new ideas
into profit-making reality

"We've had some great business ideas in the past, but never seen them through. The problem is: how do we know which ideas to develop - and where do we find the time and money to make them work?"

Innovation is a powerful force for progress in the modern business world. It's all about introducing new ideas to the business and making sure they work.

That will enable you to steal a march on the competition, gain market share and increase your firm's profitability, long-term stability and success.

Innovation is the life-blood of business. It brings change. Makes it work. And often develops the original idea into opportunities that are even more exciting!

Every business must innovate - or die. It's worth remembering, however, that innovation does not need to be expensive or 'hi-tech'. What it must be is relevant to how your business can develop its full potential.

With the practical advice, information and expertise available from Business Link Chester & Ellesmere Port, we can help you turn innovative ideas, methods and materials into impressive bottom-line profits.

Here's how it's done...

We provide the framework for success through our Innovation Technology Advisers - or ITAs. Their wide business and technological experience can help local firms to benefit from confidential and independent advice on how to create opportunities from innovation and technology.

Uniquely, through Business Link, your ITA can provide total business support from under one roof. This includes:

- * Direct and easy access to innovation and technology, information and advice to help your business achieve growth and enhanced profitability.
- * Advice on local and government initiatives to support innovation
- * Information on seminars and visits to help you achieve 'best practice'
- * Providing access - through contacts at local, regional and national levels - to services and opportunities for innovation and business growth
- * Providing financial help to fund specialist advice and expertise on technological problems.

It could be YOU!

Typical businesses to benefit from initiatives through Business Link are established team-managed firms with more than five employees and an annual gross turnover in excess of £100,000.

No local company is ever turned away, however. Of equal importance in making the 'link' work is how well you can demonstrate a determination to grow and succeed at both a personal and corporate level.

Initial discussions, advice and guidance are FREE. Only after a specific course of action has been recommended is the customer responsible for any costs involved. In certain cases, help may be available to offset some or all of these costs.

There's no doubting the high value of the innovation and technology advisory services available within Business Link. They are also easy to access, responsive to your specific needs, and flexible in the way they're supplied.

For further details, please call Mike Mxxxx on the Innovation & Technology Hotline today on 01244 00000.

(Reverse)
CVs/Hotline No./Reply-paid coupon etc)

ENDS

Quality Consultancy Services
through Business Link

- a comprehensive approach to improving and implementing quality management

"We've always left quality to 'quality control'. There's plenty of talk nowadays about 'quality management' - but isn't it just another business school fad?"

Improving the quality of your company's products or services calls for a thorough appraisal of existing quality management systems.

Relying on intuition and established procedures isn't necessarily best practice in today's competitive business environment.

Equally, you cannot expect quality control specialists to see and influence the many factors which affect quality within a company.

Enhancing quality standards is one of the final frontiers in winning market share and retaining customer satisfaction. 'Quality' delivers efficiency, secures reputations and enhances a company's image. In short, it can make your company more profitable and secure its long-term future.

Some ways of improving quality management are relatively straightforward - others less so. In both cases, the quality consultancy services available through Business Link Chester & Ellesmere Port can implement procedures which will transform your approach to quality management.

A practical approach to quality

The high calibre team of Quality Consultants assembled by Business Link have extensive experience in the private sector including proven expertise in the design and implementation of Quality Assurance Systems.

Yours specially designated consultant will provide high quality hands-on advice covering:

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

It is vital to have systems in place which will establish how your company operates and maintains an effective quality policy. Our consultants will tell you how to attain the internationally-recognised quality standard known as BS EN ISO 9000 (formerly BS5750). In addition, we can advise on the relevant quality criteria necessary to satisfy the main certification bodies including BSI, NQA, YQAF, LRQA, BVQI and so on.

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM)

TQM is an approach to improving the effectiveness and flexibility of businesses as a whole. It is a way of organising and involving the whole organisation - every department, every activity, every single person at every level. It is only through company-wide improvements in the quality of work done that an organisation becomes truly effective.

TRAINING FOR QUALITY

This is probably the most important factor in improving quality and it should form a major part of your quality policy. We will work closely with you to create a training plan which is systematic, ongoing and objective. Responsibilities should be defined

alongside objectives and there should be provision for monitoring and measuring results.

Quality Consultancy - a total service

- * Initial quality assessment
- * Design and implementation of operational procedures
- * Production of quality manuals, procedures and associated documentation
- * Quality awareness and auditor training
- * Pre-registration assessments
- * Independent quality audits
- * BS EN ISO 9000 (BS 5750) revisions
- * Process improvement
- * Total Quality Management
- * Cost savings through quality
- * Training for quality
- * Possible grant assistance

For further details on Quality Consultancy Services, contact Mike Lxxxxxxx today on the Business Link Hotline...01244 000000

(Reverse)
CV/Hotline/Reply-paid card)

ENDS

Grants and Loans Services **from Business Link**

- professional guidance on

securing business finance

"We'd like to look into what grants are available, but there seems to be quite a few cowboy firms around who promise the earth. How does Business Link operate its grants services?"

Most people in business are aware that grants are available for specific areas of financing. What you may not know is that the sums involved run into many millions of pounds every year.

Unfortunately, this has attracted some unscrupulous operators whose professionalism could be called into question. When it comes to raising finance through legitimate grant assistance, you need to be satisfied that any fees you pay are going towards the best presentation of your case.

At Business Link Chester & Ellesmere Port, we have highly experienced grants consultants with proven track records who will take a realistic and objective view of your likely eligibility for grant aid.

Just one phone call is often enough for us to tell you whether or not your project will qualify. To further assess your likely eligibility, we can arrange a free appraisal visit by one of our grants consultants.

You control the costs...

To find out whether you qualify for a grant costs nothing with Business Link. If, however, you decide to apply for a grant and need professional help in

preparing key proposal documents, fees are then charged.

Some are payable in advance to cover preparation costs and to ensure that there is a commitment from you, the client. The bulk of our consultants' fees, however, are dependent on the success of your grant application. In other words, whatever the outcome, you won't be seriously out of pocket!

Grants are available for a wide range of projects including:

CREATING/SAFEGUARDING JOBS
PURCHASING CAPITAL EQUIPMENT
TRAINING
PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS
BUSINESS CONSULTANCY
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
EXPORTING
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION &
CONSERVATION
STARTING A BUSINESS

Whatever your investment plans, call us first to establish the likelihood of grant assistance.

The Business Link Hotline is:

01244 00000

- or return the reply-paid coupon below.

YOUR CONTACT IS MIKE LXXXXX.

(Reverse)

Mike Lxxxxxx

Mike is a graduate Quantity Surveyor who worked for major international corporations before setting up his own business consultancy and training company in 1990. After five successful years in this role, he joined Business Link as Commercial Activities Manager where his responsibilities include grants consultancy, quality consultancy and the Regional Supply Network.

Charles Hxxxxx

Charles helped start the grants service at Business Link which he joined from the DTI in 1994. His broad experience there included a period with the Inward Investment Team; working with Manchester and Salford City Action Team to help rejuvenate the inner city economy; and dealing with grant claims as part of the DTI's Regional Selective Assistance Monitoring team.

For further details on Business Link Grants and Loans Services, call Mike or Charles today on

01244 00000

- or return the reply-paid coupon below.

ENDS

Regional Supply Network
at Business Link

***- meeting local purchasing needs
with local business suppliers***

**"Travelling far and wide for new business and
decent suppliers is a crazy waste of**

resources. So what is Business Link doing to change all that?"

It makes plenty of sense to do business locally. Whether you're buying or selling, the process is quicker, simpler and more cost-effective. It provides greater flexibility and responsiveness, and business runs that much more smoothly!

Recognising these advantages, ten Regional Supply Offices (RSOs) covering the whole of England were set up in April 1995 with the support of the DTI and Business Link. The aim is to bring local suppliers and purchasers together within their own region. In particular, Regional Supply Offices will:

- * Help purchasers to find the most competitive sources of local supply
- * Provide new business opportunities for competitive local suppliers
- * Encourage the spread of best practice, supplier development and local supply chains

How you can benefit from the Regional Supply Network

If you're buying...

We are offering a FREE additional resource for purchasing professionals. Under your instructions and working to your brief, we will assess and match competitive suppliers with your needs. This could prove especially useful if you're having difficulty sourcing a particular skill or component. Our search begins locally, but if necessary we will extend this to a regional or national basis.

If you're selling...

An initial meeting will enable the RSO to assess your potential to tender for local business opportunities. From feedback obtained through potential purchasers of your products or services - as well as RSO staff and Business Link colleagues - you will acquire valuable information on how to make your business more competitive.

For further details, please contact Graham Axxxxx on the Business Link Hotline:
01254 0000000

(Reverse)

Graham Axxxx (Regional Supply Officer)

Formerly Group Purchasing Manager at Manchester Steel and a Senior Buyer at GEC, Graham has been a purchasing professional throughout his working life. This experience has been put to excellent use as Regional Supply Officer for Wirral, Chester and Ellesmere Port where dozens of enquiries worth millions of pounds have been handled since August 1995.

Mike Lxxxxx

Mike is a graduate Quantity Surveyor who worked for major international corporations before setting up his own business consultancy and training company in 1990. After five successful years in this role, he joined Business Link as Commercial Activities Manager where his responsibilities include grants consultancy, quality consultancy and the Regional Supply Network.

For further details on the Business Link Regional Supply Network, call Mike or Graham today on

01244 000000

- or return the reply-paid coupon below.

ENDS

Design Advice from Business Link

- a creative approach to commercial success

"We're all supposed to be 'design conscious' these days - but what does that mean, and what impact could design have on my business?"

Design is a key element in differentiating any business from its competitors. The influence of effective design - or lack of it - can be seen clearly in every aspect of the business, including the balance sheet!

That's because effective and creative design conveys quality and flair. It creates interest and adds value. Quite literally, it can mean the difference between a successful business - and the also-rans.

At Business Link Chester & Ellesmere Port, we can offer specialist and practical advice in four vital areas of design:

- * **PRODUCT DESIGN** - The development of finished products incorporating engineering, production and aesthetics eg. consumer goods - appliances, telephones and toys; machinery and furniture.
- * **GRAPHIC DESIGN** - Items produced to help promote a business eg. logos, signs, brochures and catalogues.
- * **INTERIOR DESIGN** - The layout and appearance of any commercial environment eg. reception areas, showrooms, exhibitions and factory spaces.
- * **PACKAGING DESIGN** - items to help sell or protect products eg. packs for food or drinks, structural or transit protection.

Design for YOU

Andrew Arditti is the specialist Design Adviser for the entire CEWTEC area. Andrew's background in commercial design means we can provide specialist advice and support for almost any type of business.

- * A methodical approach begins with a general audit of your company's design activities. This will identify the particular areas needing attention. Appropriate and cost-effective solutions will be proposed.
- * We have access to a wide range of expert design services.
- * Advice will be particularly useful to customers who may not have considered design help before.
- * Grants may be available which pay up to 50% of the fees where an external design consultancy is used.

For further details, please contact Andrew Arditti on
the Business Link Hotline:

01244 00000

(Reverse)

Andrew Axxxxxx - Design Adviser

A background in product design with leading consumer appliance companies together with design consultancy experience has given Andrew the commercial perspective which is so valuable to Business Link customers. Proven expertise in product development, strategic thinking and computer skills underpin a professional consultancy service in creative commercial design.

For further details on the Business Link Design Advice service, call Andrew today on

01244 000000

- or return the reply-paid coupon below.

ENDS

Buzzwords Website:

http://www.buzzwords.ltd.uk/public_sector_copywriter.htm