

THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMIST

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THE FUTURE ECONOMY

THE NORTHWEST'S FUTURE ECONOMY: WHERE WILL IT COME FROM?

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Introduction

The bedrock of any modern economy is a thriving network of small and medium sized enterprises. The era of major single employers as the primary engine for growth is now largely outdated. Successful regions also focus on their assets - both physical and knowledge related - to become internationally competitive and distinct.

In the Liverpool City Region, it is now widely recognised that future economic prosperity will come from developments in and around the port, culture, tourism, innovations in green technology and the knowledge economy. Here at Liverpool Science

Park our focus is around developing, growing and nurturing companies in our knowledge economy, especially those in the life sciences, ICT and digital and advanced manufacturing areas. Working with our partners, it is our strategy to accelerate economic growth through the stimulation and support of business-led innovation. This will be achieved through a variety of initiatives including our thriving Graduate Enterprise Centre, which has already welcomed eight young entrepreneurs, the commercial serviced laboratories we are creating in conjunction with MerseyBio, which are due to open in the summer and are already attracting significant

interest, and through flexible new schemes such as our Starter Pods (more on these later in the newsletter).

Liverpool Science Park is increasingly a magnet for innovative businesses, and the community is starting to generate a real buzz. We are really proud of the success of our companies and of our own small part in their development, as they represent the future wealth of the region.



Chris Musson

AeroDNA

Helping the aerospace industry to fly high



Tony Guo, AeroDNA

Forward-thinking firm AeroDNA is on a mission to help Northwest subcontractors to the aerospace and engineering industry become more competitive.

Its cutting-edge multi lingual software and consultancy services are empowering SMEs to deliver services for as little as a quarter of their original costs.

AeroDNA works with companies to identify their low-complexity non-core activities, so that they can focus on the more important roles such as client interfacing and problem solving. The AeroDNA team, headed up

by Tony Guo, who has a PhD in Outsourcing, works closely with its clients to outsource the non-core elements of their businesses to low-cost economies, saving them time and money.

Tony Guo, Managing Director of AeroDNA, and a Shell LiveWIRE Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2010 'Hot 40' shortlist, explained:

“Our unique approach enables clients to achieve economy of scale while retaining the flexibility of an SME, and this collaborative, cost-sharing approach is key to the industry moving forward.”

Our international links are the bedrock of the company. Our reliable and trusted supply chains in China, Poland and India are slashing clients' costs by up to 75% in non-core elements of their business.”

Since its launch 18 months ago, AeroDNA has experienced rapid success. Its 20-strong team is set to grow by 10 - 15 staff over the next three months. It has a software development team based in Wuhan, China and a sales office in Shanghai.

Tony Guo, who is a University of Liverpool graduate, added: ***“The decision to locate the business at Liverpool Science Park has contributed to our growth. It's given us easy access to the University of Liverpool's research base and an excellent expansion opportunity which we are hoping to realise imminently.”***

For more information visit www.aerodna.com



GEC - the facts

- The first of its kind in the Liverpool region
- Exclusively for new and recent graduates
- 1,500 sq ft 24-hour facility on the ground floor of Liverpool Science Park's ic1 building
- Provides hot desks, high speed broadband internet access, registered office address, communal facilities and meeting space - for £80.00 plus VAT per month
- A joint venture between Liverpool Science Park, Liverpool Vision, Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Liverpool

Bursaries available for GEC!

The University of Liverpool is offering bursaries to 15 individuals – giving them six months' free rent in the GEC. The winners will be announced at the UoL's Rising Stars Competition in May 2011.



Left to right: Gareth Houghton, Shuttle Creative and Sarah Reay, Construction Marketing Experts

Achieving the pipe dream

From graduate freelancer to business owner with blue-chip clients – in just nine months

Young entrepreneur Gareth Houghton is just starting out in his career, yet he's already achieved what some businesses spend years working towards.

Having already delivered work for phone giants Orange and T-Mobile and a national financial institution, the design agency he launched in June 2010 is off to a very impressive start.

Shuttle Creative is one of eight start-up firms currently working out of Liverpool Science Park's Graduate Enterprise Centre (GEC). And with more soon to move in, this vibrant hub is proving the ideal base for the brightest and best graduates branching out on their own.

Gareth, 30, who graduated from LJMU in 2005 with a Master's in New Media Production, launched Shuttle Creative after recognising that the repeat business he was winning and contacts he had built made him more than just a freelancer.

"I know the economy is tough right now, but I didn't see that as a reason not to start my own business" Gareth explained, ***"And I'm really glad I did, as otherwise it's something I'd probably***

have regretted in five or ten years' time."

The GEC was created specially to support graduates like Gareth carving out businesses in the science and knowledge based sectors.

Gareth said: ***"With the GEC you get the best of both: running your own company without that sense of feeling alone. I have essentially stepped into a mini community of people all doing what I am doing, and it's a great opportunity to collaborate and make new business leads, not just in the GEC but across the science park campus. The whole move to the GEC has given my business a real boost and I'm now in a position where I'm ready to recruit, which I wouldn't have envisaged a few months ago."***

Gareth's creative campaigns have included a Christmas TV campaign for Liverpool's MET Quarter which he delivered in collaboration with two other creative agencies, and the design of outdoor media for high-end brands such as Orange, T-Mobile and TRESemmé.



Left to right: Anthony Condron and Andy Jones

Starter Pods

*Kick-starting our business with
Liverpool Science Park*

“Students leaving university should cast off old-fashioned ideas about what constitutes a graduate job and instead consider starting a business,” Universities Minister David Willetts said last year.

With a fifth of all recent graduates currently out of work – the highest unemployment rate for university leavers in over a decade - many recent graduates are doing just that. Andy Jones, 22, graduated from Liverpool John Moores University in 2010 with a degree in E-Business Technology and Management. Disappointed at what the job market had to offer, starting his own company seemed like the obvious solution. **“I realised that I could make more money and probably have more fun working for myself so I decided to set up a web solutions company and I haven’t looked back,”** Andy revealed.

Yooka was founded in October 2010 to provide economical solutions to smaller companies that need a

professional brand, website and image, but perhaps can’t afford to go to some of the bigger web development companies. The business quickly attracted clients across a broad range of sectors, including the fiercely competitive construction and transport industries. And with this growth came the need for professional premises to house the growing business.

“It was really important for me to have a professional ‘shop front’ in the city centre, and when I saw LSP’s Starter Pods they were perfect for the stage my business is at,” Andy said.

Yooka moved into one of Liverpool Science’s Park’s new contemporary Starter Pods in February 2011. The pods provide young businesses with small furnished IT-ready private offices, and access to meeting rooms and communal areas.

“It was daunting to start a business straight out of university, but doing it in a community like the Science Park makes it feel less daunting

Key Facts

The Starter Pods provide:

- Small one to two man private lockable furnished offices
- No deposit required
- Flexible terms with monthly rolling breaks
- Equipped with broadband and telephony as standard
- Access to a larger communal area
- Free use of six meeting rooms
- Air con
- Wireless
- Prices range from £200 to £350 per month depending on size

How do they differ from the Graduate Enterprise Centre?

- The offices are private rather than open plan
- Telephone handsets and direct dials are provided
- They give companies access to the six free meeting rooms on the Park

somehow. What’s more, you constantly bump into interesting people and potential business leads, even in the kitchen while making coffee! It’s also reassuring to know that if my business takes off quicker than anticipated, I can just move to bigger offices within the Park without any hassle.”

Andy has big plans for Yooka and hopes to expand the business into a full service company offering web design, SEO, print, PR and marketing and copy writing. He also has plans to establish a commercial photography business.

With five of the six Starter Pods already occupied by young start-up businesses, it seems the minister’s words of wisdom may have struck a chord.



Left to right: Andy Tatton,
Emma Hall, Oliver Hall

Running the empire from a touch pad

*Ultamation – creators of the ultimate
in environmental control systems*

Technology is everywhere; developing and changing daily. Innovations that promise to make our lives simpler, more economical and kinder to the environment have a key role to play in the future of our economy.

Here in the Northwest, energy and environmental technologies is a key business sector employing over 50,000 people and it continues to grow apace, despite the challenging economic climate.

The region is home to fast growing companies such as Eco Environments and Sign Lights, and a raft of exciting smaller firms with big ambitions making their names in the marketplace.

Award-winning Ultamation Ltd, based in Liverpool Science Park's innovation centre 2, at just three

years old, has an impressive client base spanning global brands to police forces and even Premiership footballers.

The cutting-edge firm, led by Managing Director Oliver Hall, develops smarter, simpler, more energy-efficient technology systems for organisations and private residences, which can be operated from the tap of a centralised control pad.

Ultamation designs and installs 'intelligent' systems which can control everything from heat, lighting, sound and pictures through to high tech security features. Each system reflects the client's requirements and lifestyle for maximum efficiency and environmental savings.

Oliver Hall, Managing Director, of Ultamation, said: ***"We are certainly seeing people getting wiser to the financial and environmental benefits the right technology can bring to their businesses and day-to-day lives. It is in some ways an education process, as many people are simply unaware of the extent technology can assist them as they go about their daily routines. Being based in the science park community with like-minded technology companies and the access to networks that comes with this is certainly helping us to spread the word."***

"Despite the wider economic challenges the country is facing, I can see great short and long-term opportunities within the technology sector, and we for one are looking to expand over the coming 12 months."

For more information please visit www.ultamation.com



Sir Howard Newby Q&A

1. In your role as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liverpool (UoL), where do you see the future economy of the Northwest of England coming from?

I see it coming principally from the knowledge economy. While we do clearly have other important areas of growth, not least Liverpool as a tourist destination, the knowledge economy has tremendous potential for the future. I chair an informal body called the Knowledge Economy Group. We recently released a report, the Knowledge Economy Plan, which audited the knowledge assets of the City Region, with a particular focus on biomedical, creative and digital and advanced manufacturing. It identified life sciences, digital and creative and advanced manufacturing as growth sectors.

2. Could you tell us more about these growth sectors?

Starting with life sciences, the City is a major international centre of excellence in biomedicine, with key strengths in the Universities, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, the teaching hospitals and the cluster of pharmaceutical companies in south Liverpool and elsewhere in the region.

Within the digital and creative sector, there is potential to develop something quite exciting, particularly with the advent of Salford Quays and the migration of the BBC. And in terms of advanced manufacturing, this area still has a major base in sectors such as car manufacturing and aerospace. While we need to remain competitive in a very globalised economy, the City has exceptional promise in terms

of further exploiting its knowledge assets.

3. As incoming chair of the LSP board, what are your aspirations for LSP in its fifth year of operations?

My aspiration is that it should become one of the key hubs of knowledge exploitation through the support and growth of high performance companies who can contribute directly to the growth of the City Region. There has been some evidence recently that when companies have grown to a certain level they have had to move elsewhere because of a lack of infrastructure and facilities, particularly laboratories – but the forthcoming laboratories at LSP will help to minimise that risk. I also look forward to the much needed third phase of LSP; it is important that we build on the considerable success to date and keep the momentum going. We need to continue to identify and support present and future high-performance companies which will become, not just SMEs, but the major sources of jobs and growth over the next two or three decades.

4. We are seeing a number of new very small companies coming into LSP. Do you have any advice for young companies starting out in business?

They need to have a very clear focus on what they can bring to the marketplace and they need to work incredibly hard in order to achieve it. There are still difficult barriers for young companies to overcome when moving from proof of concept to something that can be demonstrated to a group of potential investors. It is only with sound business

advice to help them take an idea and translate it into a commercial product, together with the appropriate support, that these fledgling companies will succeed.

5. Do you think even more could or needs to be done to retain and attract the brightest and best graduates in the Liverpool City region?

Yes, we do need to do more. I find that this City inspires huge amounts of affection among our graduates, in a way in which no other city I've worked in does. Our graduates genuinely regret leaving Liverpool, and the reason they do is often because there are not the opportunities for them here. It is important therefore that we address issues around innovation and enterprise. However, just as important is the regeneration of the City. The City needs to be a pleasant and stimulating place for people and their families to live. The key is to give people the economic and enabling support to base their work here but also to continue to regenerate Liverpool as an attractive and vibrant city where people want to come and live and work.



Sir Howard Newby

Tenant Talk

Welcome to Tenant Talk – a new section of the newsletter dedicated to LSP community news.

Congratulations to Instinctive Creations, awarded a £25K grant from the Technology Strategy Board for its multi-platform health-focused mobile app.

Well done to the team at Mando Group who raised £1,300 for Comic Relief by organising a 5K run and cake sale. See them in action! >>



Got news to share? E-mail Chloe.Young@liverpoolsciencepark.co.uk

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