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Powering ahead - winners of the 2009 Heads of the Valleys Innovation Awards

Powering Innovation in the Valleys

The third annual Innovation Awards in the Heads of the Valleys demonstrate that the region is still a hotbed of innovation.

THE Dowlais Engine House in Merthyr Tydfil, which once powered the largest iron works in the world, was again the powerhouse for businesses in the region as the venue for the third annual Heads of the Valleys Innovation Awards and Marketplace.

The event attracted a capacity audience of almost 250 people, who met with 34 Awards entrants and 34 exhibitors, all demonstrating that the region is still a hotbed of innovation.

THE 2009 AWARDS WINNERS ARE:

Most Innovative Social Enterprise (sponsored by Cardiff-based Capital Law) – New Pathways: Only organisation in Wales providing a single agency service for victims of sexual and domestic abuse. Innovative prison-based and recruitment initiatives.

Most Innovative Sole Trader (sponsored by HSBC) – Shabby Chic Antiques: Recycled antique furniture with a French shabby chic look exported to the US, China and Japan. Featured in June edition of Vogue and ITV's '60 Minute Makeover' programme.

Most Innovative Business with less than 20 employees (sponsored by South Wales Chamber of Commerce): SteriTouch Ltd.: Only company in Wales enabling any product to be made antimicrobial. The trademark is imaginatively used as a co-brand by over thirty companies including the world's largest remote control manufacturer.

Most Innovative Business with more than 20 employees (sponsored by BT): DecTek Ltd.: A unique global asset tracking solution for use in tracking

anything from luggage to livestock. Customers include 3M and GE Healthcare. Approved Technical Development Partner for Psion. Started DecTek Espania and DecTek USA planned.

Most Innovative Exhibitor (sponsored by Welsh Assembly Government Flexible Support for Business): Royvon Dog Training School. All the winners will be entered, along with HOVIP, for the Wales Innovation Awards. Likewise, the Award entrants and sponsors automatically become members of the Turning Heads Club. This is HOVIP's creative business network exclusively for HoV Innovation Award entrants, winners and sponsors.

The event was sponsored by the University of Wales Global Academy (Prince of Wales Innovation Scholarships initiative). Global Academy's Richie Turner, said: "The Award winners demonstrate the power of innovation to drive the Welsh economy forward and they play an important role in putting HoV back on the innovation map. The winners show that innovation really does make a difference to the business, to employees, to customers, to the local community and to the region. Many congratulations!"

Nick Corlett of SteriTouch Ltd summed up the excitement shared by all the winners when he said, "We were thrilled to win the award and extremely flattered that our efforts have been recognised. The Award means a great deal to us and will give us exposure to a much wider audience than we usually reach. We are proud to be winners."

The Award winners were photographed in a Formula One simulator – clearly demonstrating their ability to power ahead in the current climate.



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