

# The Medway Innovation Centre continues to grow

At the BAE Systems campus in Rochester, the first commercial incubator for NSR continues to grow and now boasts 26 businesses. Many entrepreneurs are ex-service people running businesses from health and safety to security

**We spoke to three of our entrepreneurs; first, we heard from Garrie Owens who is managing director of LearnInvicta**

“LearnInvicta is passionate about helping service personnel reach their full potential. We provide professional teaching qualifications to personnel of all ranks to enhance future career options. Since 2006, over 500 military personnel have had the opportunity to become qualified assessors and verifiers, and undertake continual professional development towards Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status (QTLS). This has allowed the military training establishments and service charities to provide qualifications that recognise the personnel’s military skills and has also allowed a professional match of their training and qualifications to their civilian counterparts. This approach of helping instructors gain professional recognition for their skills is already improving recruitment.

LearnInvicta also works with the military guard provost service (MGPS) piloting NVQs in security along with proving recognition of the skills MGPS personnel already possess. The programme is competency based and helps the individual perform their duties to recognised professional standards.

Basing ourselves at the MIC has been one of the most crucial business decisions we have made. It has allowed us to grow significantly in the time we have been here. We could not have provided the technical, service and security infrastructure at this level of cost anywhere else. The business development support we receive from the centre director and the customer service our clients receive from the centre sup-

port managers has enabled LearnInvicta to punch well above our weight in the early years of our growth. The ability to speak to other business owners on a daily basis is simply unmatched. I would always look to work with MIC clients first for our business infrastructure. To date we have sourced our communications, marketing and web functions from within the MIC. We have provided our service to other clients, so we too have gained direct business from being here. This is a growing business community and we are really pleased to be part of it.”

**Jim Castle, CEO of Corporate & Executive Solutions Ltd shares his experience of the centre, their service offering and why they moved here**

“Corporate & Executive Solutions have been based at the centre for 18 months and in that time have gained major international customers. We chose the centre because of its unique location within the BAE Systems campus and the high quality of business services and mentoring available. There is no doubt in my mind that this was the correct decision and it has definitely helped us win major contracts.

The Medway Innovation Centre is a friendly and supportive place, where your business will grow surrounded by likeminded people

We provide security risk management and research consultancy services to corporate and other customers. The company has specialist, in-depth expertise in Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP), in the conduct of advanced security research projects and in providing corporate security management support, by way of undertaking specific programmes on behalf of clients. We are independent of equipment vendors. The core competencies underpinning the consultancy practice are a fundamental practical and theoretical knowledge of risk concepts and skills, from strategic to ‘coal face’. This is made possible through an in-depth grasp of the operational, technical, management and academic aspects of protective security and a firm understanding of user requirements.”

**Finally we spoke to Mensah Software CEO, Robert Faulkner**

“Mensah have developed an internet based Asset Management and Inspection system to manage the full lifecycle of assets from purchase to decommission and mobile inspection against a defined standard. The software is designed around the Application Service Provider model so no installation or configuration is required as users log in via the internet. Inspections are carried out via a PDA that can be synchronised over the air or docked to a PC. Following successful implementations, Mensah are investing in research and development to take the software into health & safety in the construction industry and for various applications supporting critical infrastructure.”

Looking forward the centre aims to increase its client base and help more companies to successfully grow in the NSR marketplace. ●

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