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Greater Manchester duo claim Chamber Awards win

An Oldham software entrepreneur and Manchester's premier shopping, leisure and dining destination are proving that 'Business is Good for Britain' after securing two of the main titles at the Chamber Awards 2012.

Web Applications UK's Craig Dean beat off challengers from across the region to win the Entrepreneur of the Year Award for the North West, with Trafford Centre Limited impressing the judges in the Commitment to People Development category (sponsored by Acua Limited)

The latter, which boasts more than 200 stores and 60 restaurants, cafes and bars, has rolled-out 'The Trafford Centre Way', a world class training programme to improve employee development and customer service across all of its staff and managers.

This has resulted in a host of benefits, with a 17% reduction in the number of complaints last year, 90% customer satisfaction and accreditation to the Investors in People Gold Award.

President of the British Chambers of Commerce Martyn Pellew said: "There has never been a more important time for businesses to showcase the amazing work they are doing on a day-to-day basis.

"The Chamber Awards is a perfect platform for them to do just that and receive the recognition and profile they deserve for helping move the economy forward and create employment, often in local areas."

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2012 is committed to finding the best businesses in Britain through a series of regional heats followed by a National Final, due to be held at London's Guildhall on November 29th.

Now in its 9th year, the competition is one of the showcase events for the 'Business is Good for Britain' campaign that highlights the role of business as a positive force for the UK recovery and the success of local communities and individuals.

Craig Dean impressed judges with his contribution to Web Applications UK's record year, including securing major new contracts with blue chip clients such as Wyndham Worldwide, the National Trust, the Hoseasons Group and The Camping and Caravanning Club in the process.

Under his dynamic leadership, the Oldham-based company has worked tirelessly to develop customised 'accommodation only' reservation software solutions whilst investing heavily in the creation of a Centre of Excellence, which is designed to give all of its 80-strong staff the latest skills and personal development opportunities.

Global expansion is also on the agenda, with the entrepreneur already establishing Web Applications US and driving the opening of an office in Colorado later this year.

Craig Dean and the Trafford Centre, who are both members of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, are two of six regional winners in the North West, who will now go forward and compete for the national titles in their respective categories. All will have a chance to win 'Outstanding Business Achievement' and a £25,000 cash prize courtesy of RBS Group.

Other successful companies in the region include:

- ChargePoint Technology (Achievement in International Business)
- Eco Environments (Business of the Year)
- National Museums of Liverpool (Sustainability)
- Museum of Liverpool (Excellence in Customer Service and Marketing Campaign of the Year Awards)

Martyn concluded: "A record number of firms have taken part this year, all determined to prove that 'Business is Good for Britain!'"

The Chamber Awards 2012 is supported by the RBS Group, BT Business, Dell, DHL Express, Westfield Health and Acua Limited.

For further information or to book your place at the National Awards Final, visit **www.chamberawards.co.uk**

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Notes to Editors

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) is the national voice of local business.

The BCC sits at the heart of a powerful nationwide network of Accredited Chambers of Commerce, serving over **100,000 businesses** across the UK, which **employ over five million people**.

For more information visit: **www.britishchambers.org.uk**