



Embargoed until 1st October 2012

Oldham man named North West Entrepreneur of the Year

A local businessman is proving that 'Business is Good for Britain' after transforming the fortunes of an IT company specialising in bespoke software for the travel industry.

Craig Dean has played an influential role in a record-breaking year for Web Applications UK, 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 Application US and driving the opening of an office in Colorado later this year.

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, who is a member of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, is one of five 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 the RBS Group.

Other successful companies in the region include:

- ChargePoint Technology (Achievement in International Business)
- Eco Environments (Business of the Year)
- Museum of Liverpool (Excellence in Customer Service and Marketing Campaign of the Year Awards)
- National Museums Liverpool (Sustainability)
- Trafford Centre Limited (Commitment to People Development)

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**