



**Embargoed until Nov 30th 2012**

## **Thomsons Online Benefits claim the British Chambers' Excellence in Innovation Award**

A company that has revolutionised the benefits industry has been awarded the Excellence in Innovation title at the British Chambers of Commerce Chamber Awards.

Thomsons Online Benefits, which employs 280 people at its offices in London, Romania and Singapore, beat off competition from hundreds of companies to win the prestigious honour, sponsored by Dell.

The company impressed judges with the way founding entrepreneurs Michael Whitfield and Chris Bruce turned an initial £25,000 investment into a global business turning over £34million by the end of 2012.

They used a vision for moving the benefits sector from manual and paper-based processes to online systems, supporting high profile clients such as Apple, Deutsche Bank and JustGiving to design, administer and manage the best schemes for their employees.

Innovation has always been at the forefront of the duo's thinking and its latest advancement - 'Darwin' - has captured a number of sector 'firsts'. Over 500 guests were on hand at the Guildhall in London to witness the culmination of the competition, which is the flagship event in the Chamber's 'Business is Good for Britain' campaign.

Joining Thomsons Online Benefits on the podium were eight other organisations, including an eco-friendly hair salon, an entrepreneurial funeral director and an international wholesale exporter.

The winners were:

- Austin's Funeral Directors' Claire Austin (Entrepreneur of the Year)
- Biotec Services International (Achievement in International Business)
- Elan Hair Design (Sustainability)
- Freshney Place Shopping Centre (Marketing Campaign of the Year)
- Prism Total IT Solutions (Excellence in Customer Service)
- Ramsden International (Business of the Year and Outstanding Business Achievement)

- Simply Bows and Chair Covers (Most Promising New Business)
- The Trafford Centre (Commitment to People Development)

President of the British Chambers of Commerce Martyn Pellew said: “At the start of this year we asked businesses to show us why they are good for Britain and I’m delighted with how they have responded.

“We had a record number of entries from all over the UK, with some excellent tales of innovation, job creation, growth and export success.”

He continued: “Thomsons Online Benefits is a fitting winner of the Excellence in Innovation Award and shows what can be achieved with a committed management team and a strong vision.”

“Innovation is a catalyst for business growth and success is only set to increase over time, many congratulations to the whole team at Thomsons Online Benefits - a worthy winner” announced Aisling Keegan, Executive Director, Dell UK & Ireland. “We see businesses winning in today’s difficult economic climate are those that have taken innovative technology to heart and which have placed it at the centre of everything they do. Dell is proud to work with businesses of all sizes, every day to help build technology solutions that are right for their needs.”

Now in its 9th year, the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2012 are supported by the RBS Group, BT Business, Dell, DHL Express, Westfield Health, Club Wembley and Acua Limited.

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### **British Chamber Awards**

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**.

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