

Press Release

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Wenta Pioneers Innovative Support for Start Ups

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Wenta Pioneers Innovative Support for Start-Ups Innovative business support service My Incubator has marked its first anniversary by scooping a national award for its successful mentoring of start-ups and small firms.

My Incubator was launched by Wenta, the local Enterprise Agency for Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, in Stevenage in November last year to offer pre-start and start-up businesses a modern facility to base their business where they would receive intensive support from highly skilled business advisors.

One year later My Incubator has scooped an award for innovation from the National Federation of Enterprise Agencies (NFEA). A second My Incubator facility was opened in June 2010 in Luton and more are planned. Chris Pichon, Chief Executive of Wenta, said: "We are offering the next generation of entrepreneurs the support they need to turn their business dream into a reality. "As well as first class business centre facilities, our expert advisors are constantly on hand to offer much needed guidance, support and training through those challenging early months."

My Incubator is free of charge for successful applicants for the first three months while they develop their idea, work on their business plan with an advisor and get their business started. Chris Pichon added: "The business support network is undergoing fundamental change across the UK and this will continue throughout next year. In such uncertain times My Incubator provides a much needed beacon of light for start ups who are working hard to make their venture a success but need expert, ongoing, guidance on the best way forward."

In addition to its focus on innovation through My Incubator, Wenta also provides business advisory services, property management and education and schools training.

The My Incubator model will be rolled out across other parts of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire in April 2011. Each one will form part of a strategic support network providing access to multiple business advisors across the region. Chris Pichon added: "We want to ensure that, irrespective of where the start up is based, they will still have access to the most targeted advice and guidance available which will significantly increase their chance of long term success."

If you would like to find out more about My Incubator, please call 0845 371 0891 or visit the websites www.wenta.co.uk and www.myincubator.co.uk.

Notes

- The **btc** is owned by Stevenage Borough Council and managed by Wenta Innovation, a division of Wenta one of the leading Enterprise Agencies in the East of England.
- The **btc** is being re-launched later this month following a multi million pound development to transform the centre into the primary Innovation and Technology Centre in Hertfordshire, aimed at supporting knowledge based businesses and promoting innovation within the local community. This exciting new development is the Council's vision to create quality business space and support in the heart of the town's business community and it is part of a £7M investment funded jointly by the Council and EEDA, the Regional Development Agency and the Government Growth Area Fund.
- The **btc** is the longest serving Enterprise Hub within the region promoting networking, the sharing of knowledge and cross trading. Working to develop innovation and inspire enterprise, the **btc** also works with local schools, colleges, regional agencies, other enterprise hubs and universities to offer educational visits, work experience, mentoring and training.
- Wenta is a not for profit organisation independently funded through the ownership and management of its two business centres in Watford and Potters Bar and management of the **btc** in Stevenage. These business centres comprise workshops and offices with a combined space of over 100,000 square feet, let on monthly licence terms to small businesses. Wenta also attract funding from a number of public sector organisations including Business Link East, Job Centre Plus, local authorities in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and EEDA.
- In addition to incubation and managed workspace Wenta's service offering includes business advice, guidance, training, graduate and undergraduate work placements and a comprehensive enterprise awareness programme to schools, colleges, and universities.