



University of  
**Strathclyde**  
Business  
School

# PIONEER



**Companies  
that play  
the sex card**

**COMMERCIAL TECHNOLOGY CHINESE WISDOM  
VIRTUAL NETWORKS BIOFUEL RESEARCH**



TACKLING TOUGH TIMES

Each year SBS provides the research for the Scottish PLC Awards, examining the performance of Scottish PLCs across a range of criteria. This year, as reported in this issue, has seen a marked change in attitudes to performance.

Although still firmly grounded in an examination of financial results, press and trade commentaries and broker reports all feed into the judging panel to provide context and insight into their recommendations.

A constant theme this year is that we found companies had had to work harder, and more imaginatively, but the best performers were managing the downturn successfully, through a focus on innovation, concern with sustainability and the recognition that value creation goes beyond singular concern with that of shareholders.

Much has been said in the press on the culpability of business schools in the causes of the credit crunch and its consequences. Uncritical acceptance of the managerial hierarchy does little to advance the challenging thinking we need to do to confront what went wrong, and the 'uncritical manager' is not what SBS is about.

Our students are involved in the business world from the beginning of their studies, and we are keen to make everyone, from first year undergraduates onwards, think about personal responsibility and ethics in business – as well as the need for commercial success.

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Professor Susan Hart, Dean, Strathclyde Business School



# Uloma is in the running for Student of the Year



Uloma Jide-Afonja is a full-time MBA student

► Students of Strathclyde Business School continue to shine in AMBA's Student of the Year Award with the MBA student nominated by the school for the 2009 award once again selected for interview in London.

Uloma Jide-Afonja (37) is studying on the full-time MBA programme and she was chosen to represent Strathclyde in this year's MBA Student of the Year Award, run by AMBA and sponsored by *The Independent*.

Uloma, from Nigeria, was selected as one of 10 students to be interviewed at AMBA headquarters in May. Four will go through to the finals in November, with the winner being named at the Association of MBAs' gala dinner.

AMBA chief executive Jeanette Purcell said: "The *Independent* MBA Student of the Year Award is fast becoming established as the ultimate accolade for accredited MBA students. Each year we receive a growing number of applications from business schools all over the world and the quality of students nominated for the award never fails to impress."

SBS has had one outright winner, Stephen Koeppinger in 2005, and several students have made it to the finals, including Mamta Singhal last year, Madhav Bellamkonda in 2006 and Duncan Cumming in 2002.

## PROFESSORS HELP LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN

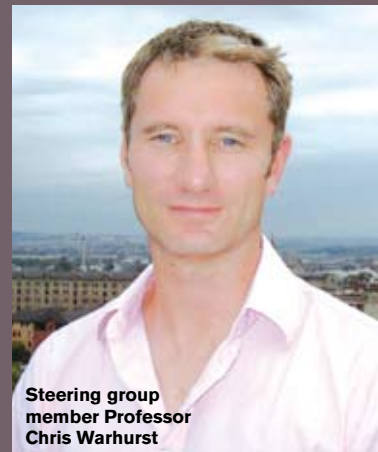
► Professor Chris Warhurst of the Scottish Centre for Employment Research is working in a steering group for the Poverty Alliance to develop a Scottish Living Wage.

The Living Wage Campaign, which has received backing from the Scottish Government, trade unions and faith groups, was launched in May in Glasgow.

Professor Christine Cooper of the Department of

Accountancy & Finance was an academic adviser in the calculation of the Living Wage figure for Scotland, which came out as £7 per hour.

The launch was attended by MSPs and the leader of Glasgow City Council, Stephen Purcell, who was given the first 'award' in Scotland for an employer paying a Living Wage after the council increased the pay of all their low-paid staff to the Scottish Living Wage level.



Steering group member Professor Chris Warhurst

## SALTIRE FOUNDATION STUDENT SUCCESS

► A group of Strathclyde students has been given the opportunity of a lifetime after securing places on the prestigious Saltire Foundation's 2009 International Undergraduate Internship Programme.

A total of 40 placements was offered to students across Scotland and nine Strathclyde undergraduates have been successful in gaining a placement, with seven

from the Business School. The Saltire Foundation aims to generate a pipeline of confident, entrepreneurially driven executives, equipped to seize the opportunities Scotland has to offer. Projects for 2009 include posts with such companies as Bayer Healthcare, RBS Securities Japan, Bilfinger, Roche and the Wood Group, in Europe, America, Asia, the Middle East and Australia.

# Strathclyde contributes to Anglo-Irish biofuel project

► BioMara, a €6 million biofuel research project, has been launched with the Department of Economics on board as a research partner.

Started in April, the project is a joint UK and Irish initiative that aims to demonstrate the feasibility and viability of producing biofuel from marine algae. Sustainable, industrial-scale biofuel production has become an urgent challenge, with the European Parliament calling for 10 per cent of road transport fuel to come from renewable sources by 2020.

BioMara has received €4.9 million from the European Union's INTERREG IVA Programme, with additional funding from Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the Crown Estate, Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish government.

The Strathclyde team will consider the economic, social and techno-economic aspects of the generation of biofuel from algal biomass, primarily seaweed. The funding for this element of the project is €500,000 over three years.

Strathclyde's named investigators are Professor Kim Swales, Professor Peter McGregor, Dr Karen Turner and Mr Grant Allan. The primary task is to identify the benefits to the local Scottish and Irish communities that will be affected by these developments. The project builds on the department's expertise in local economic modelling.

Professor Kim Swales said: "The Economics

Scottish energy minister Jim Mather (first left) meets project team members



Department was asked to join this consortium in order to measure the economic benefits that will accrue as a result of the development of algae as a biofuel. The project focuses on activities in the west of Scotland and the northern counties of Ireland.

"It was the strength of the department in local economic modelling which attracted the consortium.

The project extends the scale of energy-environmental modelling undertaken in the department: existing work analyses the economic impact of renewable electricity production and the general effects of energy efficiency improvements."

More information can be found at [www.biomara.org](http://www.biomara.org)

## and...

### BENEFIT OF EXPERIENCE

Three of Scotland's leading entrepreneurs took part in a discussion evening hosted by the entrepreneurship group of Strathclyde Business Forum, established and run by Department of Management students. Taking part were Strathclyde University alumni and Entrepreneurial Exchange board members John McGlynn (founder of the AirLink Group), Scott Allison, (managing director of Abica) and business angel investor Nelson Gray, winner of the European Business Angel Award 2008.

### COUNSELLORS GO ONLINE

Local counsellors who support MBA and MSc students at the business schools' nine international centres now have a virtual 'community of practice' online. Developed by Dr Catherine Demangeot, Iain Small and Derek Irving of the business school, it will allow them to share practices, exchange materials and to interact with Glasgow-based subject co-ordinators, teaching faculty and learning support staff.

## Awards highlight companies that made the best impression

► Strathclyde Business School was once again the research sponsor for the Scottish Business Insider plc Awards.

Rory Bremner entertains Scotland's business achievers



The awards were held on 22 April at Glasgow's Hilton Hotel and top impressionist Rory Bremner was the guest speaker.

Strathclyde's independent research provides impartial data to help the judges to make their decisions, with site visits carried out for the innovation, global reach and sustainability categories.

Co-ordinated by SBS learning resources manager Christine Reid, the process involves six academics interviewing key staff from around 10 companies. Christine explained: "The detailed research and analysis of all Scottish plcs enhances the overall credibility of the awards process. A wide range of evidence is studied each year as our role as research sponsor is to carry out rigorous independent research."

The academic staff involved this year included Professor Sara McGaughey (Department

of Management), Professor John Finch (Marketing), Dr Jill McBryde (Management Science), Professor Robert Kalin, Dr Elsa Jaoa and Peter Booth (the David Livingstone Centre for Sustainability) and Richard Grey (Accounting and Finance), who assisted with the financially orientated awards.

### THIS YEAR'S WINNERS:

- Scotland plc of the Year – Aggreko
- Large plc of the Year – Aggreko
- AIM/Mid-cap plc of the Year – Craneware
- Sustainability – Robert Wiseman Dairies
- Innovation – ProStrakan
- Global Reach – Weir Group
- Large Private Company of the Year – Brogan Holdings
- Medium-Sized Private Company of the Year – Wood MacKenzie Ltd
- CEO of the Year – Tom Cross, Dana Petroleum.



# MAKING SEX SELL

**PROFESSORS CHRIS WARHURST AND DENNIS NICKSON OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LOOK AT HOW AND WHY SOME COMPANIES SEXUALISE THEIR EMPLOYEES**

**A** number of recent surveys have recognised how the workplace is now increasingly a common venue for romantic liaisons.

Surveys from around the world consistently report that around 40 per cent of respondents have been involved in a workplace romance – often leading to marriage, suggesting that the workplace is a surrogate dating agency. As a consequence, many employees try to make themselves attractive at work through dress, comportment and language.

In the past, companies have either tried to ignore or even ban this employee sexualisation – usually without much luck. Now, however, some companies are deliberately encouraging it as a commercial tool to help boost sales. This corporate strategy among some service organisations is the theme of a recent article we have published in *Gender, Work and Organization*.

The article considers the case of Hooters, an American restaurant chain. The company employs, in their words, “Hooters Girls”, who are expected to portray the “All-American cheerleader, girl-next-door” look, which is the corporate image that the company is seeking to present.

The company expects its waitresses to dress sexily in short, orange shorts and a choice of a tight tank top or a tight T-shirt. The company has publicly stated: “Sexual appeal is legal and it sells”. And that certainly seems to be the case with the company having 450 restaurants in the US and worldwide, with a presence in 26 countries, including, most recently, China.

Waitresses joining Hooters are expected to sign up to an environment which, according to the company’s employee handbook, “is based on female sex appeal” and “one in which joking and innuendo based on female sex appeal is commonplace”. The policy that the waitresses sign also states: “I do not find my job duties, uniform requirements or work environment to be offensive, intimidating, hostile or unwelcome.”

Although some campaigners regard this type of work environment as being less harmless fun and more offensive, intimidating, hostile and unwelcome, the restaurant chain’s business strategy has survived a challenge in the US courts, which upheld the company’s right to promote itself on the basis of female sex appeal.

In the article we describe how this company is different from a number of other service organisations in industries such as tourism/hospitality and retail in deliberately sexualising employees as a corporate strategy. Of course, there are many other examples of companies alluding to their employees’ sexuality or even tacitly attempting to use it to attempt to attract more customers. An obvious example is the airline industry

and the way it has portrayed cabin crew. The first cabin crews at the beginning of commercial flying were men. It was only towards the end of the 1930s that airlines initially experimented with stewardesses,

though this use was by no means universal. For example, the forerunner to British Airways, British Overseas Airways Corporation, started formally to recruit female stewardesses only in 1947 – and as late as 1960 it was still recruiting an equal number of male and female flight attendants.

As more women began to be employed as flight attendants during the 1960s and 1970s, companies became much more willing to use sexually suggestive advertising. Delta’s “Ready when you are” and National’s “I’m Anne, fly me” are two of the more infamous examples. More recently, Virgin Blue, a low-cost airline operating in Australia, has been characterised in the press as the world’s sexiest airline. The company has advertised itself with the tagline, “Plane fares,





beautiful service". However, the difference between examples of this nature and Hooters is that the latter translates its advertising explicitly into a particular look, that of sexy waitresses, which is then used to attract customers to the restaurant.

In trying to explain the differing 'looks' that many service organisations try to create, we have previously developed the idea of aesthetic labour. This idea refers to the way in which many bars, restaurants, hotels and shops look to hire employees who best fit their corporate image. In the popular imagination this has been translated as people being employed on the basis of "looking good" or "sounding right". However, not all companies want good-looking employees; often they just want employees with a particular look

– or the right look for the company. Book stores hire 'bookish'-looking workers for example, while high-end retailers employ workers who look like models and who wear company stock to show customers how they might look. Another example is the retail company B&Q, which in the past has targeted older workers as they present an image of experience and so an understanding of DIY and home improvements.

While Hooters is the most extreme example of how an organisation can sexualise its employees, other organisations may go some way to sexualising them: for example, in the way managers interpret clothing and appearance standards.

We cite one example of how managers in a leisure organisation would require female workers to wear their dresses off their shoulders. Some male managers would even sometimes physically pull these dresses down into that position. In this way, potentially neutral dress and appearance standards are sexualised by managerial intervention. However, these interventions are often limited because organisations fear breaching sex discrimination legislation or incurring the wrath of trade unions. In side-stepping this issue, a company such as Hooters is different. Its sexualised employees are part of its product. As it advertises, the "blonde wood décor" is complemented by its "blonde bombshell Hooters Girls".

The company justifies this strategy by referring to the fact that sex appeal

is prevalent elsewhere and seemingly everywhere. "Newspapers, magazines, daytime talk shows and local television constantly emphasise a variety of sexual topics to boost sales," says the company, and its "Girls" "have the same right to use their natural female sex appeal to earn a living as do super models Cindy Crawford and Naomi Campbell," according to the company.

It also seems that the company has few recruitment problems. One researcher we cite reveals that when a new restaurant opened 800 women applied for 60 waitressing jobs.

The company has deliberately mobilised the sex appeal of its employees to create a particular style of service. In such cases employee sexualisation is not just permitted, it is actively promoted and significantly prescribed by employers as a corporate strategy.

The Hooters attempt to create a sexy look for its employees raises a lot of issues. Feminists, for example, point to the dangers of the company managing to mainstream and to have legally condoned the objectification of women as a business strategy.

The obvious point that might be made is that there is no male equivalent of Hooters, though we do recognise in the article that with more men now working in restaurants and bars, for example, men are also being sexualised by employers. For example, we cite a study that found that female customers were looking to be served by "hunkier waiters".

Others may be much less interested in the controversy created by the likes of Hooters and might attempt to justify this approach as simply being a bit of harmless fun. This latter view was the one held by the then editor of the trade magazine, *Caterer & Hotelkeeper*. Commenting on the opening of the first Hooters restaurant in the UK in the late 1990s, he suggested: "Blatant titillation has become widely accepted in the selling of countless commodities, from fast cars to chocolate bars, from drinks to holidays... If we are not offended by this, we shouldn't get upset about Hooters."

As organisations become more sexually charged, both in terms of workplace romance and in terms of using staff sexuality to either implicitly or explicitly sell a service, there is a need to consider a number of practical and ethical issues. These are likely to vary across a number of different organisations, and we recognise in the article how sexual behaviour that would potentially result in a sexual harassment lawsuit in one context could be part of a job description in another.

Understanding why and how these aspects differ is an important part of the contemporary landscape of a variety of different workplaces; and especially those that involve a direct interaction between the employee and customer.



# Scott changes direction to become a mobile virtual network operator

► Scott Allison originally studied electronic and electrical engineering at Strathclyde, but he quickly realised he was more into devising products and their practical uses than actually designing and building the circuit boards inside – so, after a year, he switched to the business school and started again.

As well as studying marketing (graduating 1999), Scott was busy setting up his own business, Freedom Phones, which sold mobiles and accessories online to consumers across the UK.

“Thanks to the internet, a mobile phone and a messaging service, I was able to handle enquiries and fulfil orders outside of lecture time,” he says, “but it’s true I didn’t spend much time in the library!”

“Initially at university I was motivated to earn some money from something I was passionate and knowledgeable about. I knew that mobile phone ownership was only one in 10, but would reach saturation point within about five years. I set myself the goal of pursuing a career in mobile communications and the target of one day becoming the chief executive of a mobile phone network operator.”

Scott’s goal has been realised and his entrepreneurial career path has taken him to the position of managing director of his own company, abica.

“After finishing university, I gave myself a year to decide whether or not I would continue the

business full-time, or get a ‘proper job;’” he says. “I did apply for some of the graduate recruitment programmes, but didn’t get past the interview stage. They probably realised I’d be better working for myself.

“I obtained funding from a minority shareholder and the bank, secured premises and set up the limited company. That was in 2000.

“In 2005 I recognised that the next opportunity was the business market, so I came together with three other local businesses already operating in that sector and renamed the company. At that point we set ourselves the goal of becoming a mobile virtual network operator (MVNO), which we achieved towards the end of last year and rebranded the company once more, to abica.

“Thanks to our wholesale agreements, we now have our own packages, tariffs, customer services and billing so we have ownership of the customer and can provide an end-to-end service to SMEs for fixed line, broadband and mobile services.”

As managing director, Scott leads the company strategically to fulfil its long-term plans. He has built a strong management team to assist him as abica goes from being a regional player in central Scotland to a company that will soon operate UK-wide.

Scott realised he wanted to be an entrepreneur rather than an engineer



“An eventual IPO (Initial Public Offering) is a possibility in the future to fund the expansion across the UK and possible acquisitions of competitors,” says Scott. “I made up a shortlist of candidates for a chairman’s position and Rod Matthews (founding CEO of Scottish Telecom) was the perfect choice – well connected in Scotland and in the City, and decades of telecoms experience. His input has been invaluable since he joined abica last October.”

Scott has no fear of the big companies in the telecommunications sector, believing that abica offers what larger companies do not: personal, tailored service.

“It’s true we are David to their Goliath, but that’s what attracts customers to abica. We’ve found SMEs are fed up with being treated like second-class citizens to consumers and big corporates, so we provide personal account management, honest and transparent pricing, and an advanced web-based portal, which is called ‘my abica’, that allows businesses to manage their telecoms spend intelligently.

“I don’t think our competitors are too concerned about us just now, but that will no doubt change as we expand across the UK and take more clients from them.”

**SMEs ARE FED UP WITH BEING TREATED LIKE SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS**

## FUZZYWORDS

GET DEFUZZED WITH OUR 11TH STROLL THROUGH THE JARGON ALPHABET

**Out of runway:** The point where you realise that, no matter what you do, it will be impossible to meet an approaching deadline. “We’re just about out of runway. We’ll never make next week’s launch.”

**Car parking:** A good idea raised at a meeting that has no place

in the present discussion and so has to be left for another time. “We’ll park the car on that idea.”

**Web 2.0:** Collective name for the various kinds of social software designed to bring people together over the internet – email, online journals and social networking

websites such as MySpace and YouTube.

**Mompeneur (also Dadpreneur):** Someone who specifically starts up in business to continue working and earning money, but still acts as the full-time parent of her/his children.



# Deirdre brings home a wealth of knowledge

► International business life seems to suit Deirdre Walsh. After graduating in business and legal studies, she took up a position with a financial services multinational in Scotland and shortly after moved to the company's international business development department.

At the same time, Deirdre began an MBA at SBS, knowing that her new role would involve some foreign travel. During her studies she visited Germany and Hong Kong, but managed to continue her studies, thanks to the flexibility of the MBA programme.

Deirdre worked initially on development plans for expansion into India, but then senior management informed her that there were plans for the development of a new joint venture for the company in Hong Kong: a change of plan from which Deirdre never looked back.

"Four weeks later, instead of moving to Mumbai as planned, I was checking out my new office in Hong Kong," she says.

Deirdre spent four and a half years in China, learning Mandarin Chinese in the process. Her final project in China was to manage the establishment of the largest joint venture life insurance company in mainland China.

"The MBA grounding in management skills and training proved invaluable, in particular during this final phase of work in China. While it proved challenging to adapt to the Chinese way of doing things, the thought processes and management practices were still necessary to bring a large team of people together and ensure the successful completion of such an enormous project," says Deirdre.

With this significant success, and following almost 10 years abroad, Deirdre's thoughts turned to home: Ireland. After a disappointing six-month stint with an outsourcing company in Dublin, she began work setting up her business, ChinaGreen, in 2005.

Today, ChinaGreen is one of Ireland's leading providers of professional China skills to Irish businesses. Deirdre and her staff in Dublin and Shanghai help their Irish clients to find local companies to do business with in China. Their

to reduce the risk and uncertainty for our clients so they can capitalise on a China advantage."

ChinaGreen has positioned itself as the first port of call for these businesses, from assisting in developing an approach plan for their assault on China to identifying and evaluating prospective buyers, suppliers and supporters. It then provides the ongoing support, from first visit to the building of long-term relationships and eventually agreeing contracts.

While being an entrepreneur hadn't been a

“ THE MBA GROUNDING IN MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND TRAINING PROVED INVALUABLE, IN PARTICULAR DURING THIS FINAL PHASE OF WORK IN CHINA ”

clients then deal directly with matched Chinese companies, supported by the ChinaGreen range of analysis, support and engagement services.

ChinaGreen now deals with a broad range of Irish companies operating in almost every key sector of Irish business – manufacturing, engineering, food, technology, chemicals, construction and professional services – ranging in size from small family-owned businesses to large Irish-based multinationals.

"For many Irish businesses, even starting to think about dealing with China can be daunting. There is real value and opportunity to be had in China, but sometimes fear of the potential risks prevents companies from taking action. We aim

life's ambition for Deirdre, it became a natural progression. The business and legal skills learned at university, the knowledge gleaned from her MBA and her start-up and management skills from Hong Kong and China – plus the contacts with China and her Mandarin Chinese language skills – positioned Deirdre perfectly to set up ChinaGreen.

"Moving from a big company, it was a little daunting to be setting up a venture with initially only myself to fall back on," she admits. However, Deirdre has found great benefits in the building of a strong business network outside of just a strong client listing: "In Ireland, as in China, we do business through relationships."



Deirdre Walsh – chosen in May as one of Ireland's featured entrepreneurs in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2008 Report

## GET NETWORKING!

To anyone thinking about setting up a business, Deirdre recommends taking full advantage of networking opportunities provided by enterprise agencies and, despite the economic climate, she believes now is as good a time as any to think about setting up a new business – but only if the business provides a product or service that people want.

"Just because we're in a recession, it doesn't mean that being able to make something cheaper is going to guarantee sales," she says. "Making widgets cheaper

this year won't make any difference if they're still widgets no one wants to buy!

"ChinaGreen is uniquely positioned to provide expertise and assistance to Irish exporters looking to access new Chinese markets for their products and to Irish importers looking to reduce costs through working with China.

"In straitened times, ChinaGreen is well placed to facilitate those connections between Ireland and China in a way that will benefit both countries, and ChinaGreen itself."

# Richard's electronic stethoscope is on track to become a commercial reality

► Strathclyde bioengineer Richard Boyle is on his way to making his technological idea a business. And that's thanks to a Fellowship Programme run by Scottish Enterprise and the Royal Society of Edinburgh – with the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship playing a key role as training provider.

The Fellowship Programme pays a year's salary for the Fellow and provides a development fund, as well as a network of mentors and experts to advise on how to launch a successful business. Fellows are required to take part in an intensive programme of business training at the Hunter Centre to help them turn their technologies into businesses.

Training is geared to the needs of scientists and technologists, taking in the basics of market assessment and how to structure a company to detailed business planning and raising finance.

Richard completed an MEng in Electronic and Electrical Engineering with Business Studies in 2004 and he is now pursuing an Enterprise Fellowship, hosted in the Bioengineering Department, with the intention of starting up a small business based on the electronic stethoscope technology he is developing.

The dual-probe digital stethoscope turns down the volume of the normal sounds of the heart, allowing doctors to listen for abnormal murmurs that occur when the heart valves are not opening and closing properly. Although most heart murmurs are harmless, abnormal murmurs can be either an early sign of heart disease or, in young

children, a congenital condition such as a hole in the heart.

Richard began the Electronic Stethoscope System project as part of a doctor of engineering degree in medical devices, working with the departments of Bioengineering and Electronic & Electrical Engineering. He explains: "This new technology could help GPs, hospital doctors and paediatricians isolate any abnormal sounds and help them hear more accurately whether a murmur is suspicious. The digital stethoscope can also be attached to a portable hard drive so that readings can be downloaded and sent directly to a cardiologist if required."

Richard applied for the Fellowship Programme while he was developing a prototype of the system. He started the programme in October 2008 and is due to finish in September. As part of the application process, he presented to a wide range of members from the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Scottish Enterprise, the Hunter Centre, a number of technical experts and some venture capitalists.

"I recently presented my idea to a panel of experts who currently work in businesses, and their advice was invaluable," says Richard. "I'm currently refining the prototype for use in the Golden Jubilee Hospital. The staff there have been helpful in suggesting improvements and testing the device.

"I have a great relationship with the staff in the Hunter Centre. In particular, executive director Anthony Keating has a very hands-on role in the programme during

the two day-long events in the month and in providing advice throughout the year.

Lesley Hetherington has given lots of time in teaching and advice on the future of the business, while Jonathan Levie has been excellent in providing financial training and Frank Craig has been really helpful in giving advice for identifying sources of funding."

The Hunter Centre has provided Richard with formal training on start-up advice, financial models, human resources, sources of funding and other entrepreneurial advice he found "relevant and extremely useful". The centre has also set up a number of opportunities to meet with entrepreneurs vastly experienced in setting up companies.

"The training has been invaluable in progressing the technology towards commercialisation," says Richard. "I've learnt so much from both the training and the opportunities to meet with financial experts, technical experts and business experts and I believe these opportunities have greatly improved the chance of successfully commercialising the technology."

Richard urged anyone with an original idea interested in starting a business to contact the Hunter Centre or Strathclyde Business School's Research & Innovation department. "I also got great assistance from the Strathclyde Entrepreneurial Network, particularly Chris Rafferty. There is so much help and assistance within the university.

"I'd encourage anyone who thinks they have a good, original idea and wants to start a business to apply for the RSE/SE Fellowship Programme."

## CUTTING-EDGE SUPPORT FROM THE HUNTER CENTRE

The Hunter Centre is working with a group of 13 Fellows, including Richard, who entered the Fellowship Programme in October 2008.

Anthony Keating, executive director for the Hunter Centre, says: "The development of high-value, technology-based businesses is one of the most significant challenges facing the Scottish economy. Scottish universities have an outstanding reputation for teaching and research in science, engineering and technology, but if that potential is to be fully realised, teaching and research has to come out of the lab commercialised and translated into high-value businesses with growth potential.

This requires an additional set of entrepreneurial, business-orientated skills and this is what the Hunter Centre provides to the programme's Fellows.

"We provide a specialist programme of commercialisation training that is specifically targeted at the practical and strategic issues surrounding the establishment, financing and development of a new high-technology business. The training provided by the Hunter Centre has been acknowledged as a leader in its field with technology Fellowships from two of the UK's most prestigious Science Research Councils now sending their Fellows to the Hunter Centre to be trained alongside their Royal Society colleagues."

Richard Boyle has learnt how to maximise the commercial potential of technological developments

