

Welcome to the second BiG Newsletter of the new term.

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The BiG Challenge 2011 launches with a visit from the Deputy Prime Minister

A special launch event took place last month on the 5th of November at Red Tape Studios in the heart of Sheffield's Creative and Digital Industries Quarter.



"I believe that entrepreneurialism is about not accepting the way that things are. It's about believing in yourself and genuinely believing that if you have a dream, you can achieve it. It is about saying that through your own initiative and your aspirations and efforts, you can create a different and successful future for yourself."

- The Rt Hon Nick Clegg

BiG Challenge 4 opened with a live launch at Red Tape's Virtual Classroom. Interactive digital links connected the studio to classrooms across the city as Deputy Prime Minister, The Rt Hon Nick Clegg joined David Grey MBE, Chair of the Local Economy Board, to open proceedings and award prize certificates to interim winners from school and college entries. Last year's winners Young Money spoke about their journey as developing entrepreneurs with highlights from their trip to sponsor DLA Piper's offices in Hong Kong.

DPM Nick Clegg was presented with a unique pair of earrings for his wife Miriam by creative jewellery-makers Mifo from High Storrs School, who scooped the top award. Second prize winners Snapshot Magazine showcased an array of young talent from Sheffield College and the team was commended for its focus on partnership with local businesses.

Phoenix Digital Media of King Ecgbert's school were complimented for their forward thinking in creating an online business without borders and L.L.T.J of Newfield School were supporting everyday learning with a range of essential pens,

pencils and school paraphernalia.

The Deputy Prime Minister gave the following message to all of the students, who had clearly impressed him:

"The get up and go that you have demonstrated in the BiG Challenge so far, is a standing rejection of the view that the way things are, is the way things have to be in the future. I congratulate you all."

Mr Clegg went on to reiterate his best wishes on Twitter, his Tweet read:

"Good luck to all the inspiring young entrepreneurs I met in Sheffield today at the Big Challenge event."

Finally, David Grey thanked all the schools, businesses and sponsors for their support. He noted how much can happen in a year - remarking on the change of circumstances for DPM Nick Clegg - and threw down a gauntlet to all the enterprising students in the city,

"This is a city where enterprise thrives - let's see what heights you can reach this year! Let BiG Challenge 4 commence!"

THE **BiG** SHOP

Following the success of last year's BiG Challenge, this year's competition promises to be bigger and better with well over 200 teams selling products and services across Sheffield.

To make sure that teams have every opportunity to market and sell their products, a new online shop has been developed for schools taking part in this year's challenge. The BiG Shop is an e-commerce website like eBay or Amazon, which is designed to allow teams to reach a wider market 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The site was designed at Notre Dame School and was presented by Headteacher Jim Conway at the official launch of this year's BiG Challenge at Red Tape Central, attended by Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg. Since then, 8 schools/colleges with over 100 teams between them have registered to use the BiG Shop and are uploading products and services onto the site daily.

Just like eBay or Amazon, the BiG Shop is easy to use, with everything you need from a help centre to a scrolling screen showing all the products on sale across the shop. To begin, School Enterprise leads are given access to the site and shown how to upload and manage online sales. Teams can then include the website in their marketing campaigns to draw customers in. To view and place orders on the site, customers have to create a user account using the register feature. All confirmed orders are then paid for by

the customer on collection at the host school, after which he or she can give the product a review using a 0-5 rating system.

Most services and non-perishable products can be sold in the BiG Shop. Currently, products in the shop cover a diverse range, everything from t-shirts to mugs and stained glass windows. To get an idea of what's on sale in the shop, take a look at the 'List all products' section of the website:

www.bigchallenge-shop.biz

Having a presence on an e-commerce website can increase sales, but only if customers can find what they're looking for. So, the site comes with all the help and information that teams need to make products stand out, from tips and tricks on selling different size products to a help centre where you can ask any general or technical questions. Teams using the shop might want to include information about it to potential customers to get them using the shop not

only to view the products on sale but to order them online. Some teams taking part in this year's BiG Challenge will already have developed or created a website, blog, or other forms of online advertising. The BiG Shop is the perfect opportunity to turn the interest generated from other websites into direct sales.

Teams can only register to use the site through the School Enterprise Lead who will manage the account. Coordinators can request an account by emailing:

info@sero.co.uk

If you would like to register as a customer, you can do this by using the register option on the site.



www.bigchallenge-shop.biz

A conversation with Yvonne Lee

Successful business owner Yvonne Lee runs Jam Jar Beads, an independent craft shop in the heart of Sheffield. We caught up with her to find out what challenges she's faced and what advice she has for budding entrepreneurs...

What is Jam Jar Beads?

I opened Jam Jar Beads about a year ago at the start of the year. It's a craft business that sells beads and locally handmade jewellery. We also run workshops, parties, and hen do's.



Why did you decide to open a shop in Sheffield?

There are lots of bead shops around other cities, and there used to be one on Ecclesall Road which closed down a couple of years ago now, so there isn't one in Sheffield. I think beads are very tactile, and are things you want to look at and view. My customers tend to shop on the internet as well as come to my shop. So I tend to try and get quite unusual beads that they might not buy on the internet because they're not sure how they'd look.

What's been your experience of running a retail outlet in the present economic climate?

When I first opened, I wasn't sure if I would get the help I needed. But in the end, my application for a loan with the bank was OK and I also got some help from BiG who gave me a grant. Because I

sell the raw materials at a very low price, people come in to make presents for people instead of buying them ready-made elsewhere, so it's worked quite well for me because people are looking to me as an alternative. Also, people are looking to learn new skills. There's a real renaissance of craft with people wanting to 'make-do and mend', so the workshops I run have been really popular with people seeking to learn how to make their own jewellery rather than having to buy it.

What are the benefits of having a shop location in the city centre?

I specifically wanted a city centre shop because I think footfall wise it is better. And because there's only my shop that's a bead shop in Sheffield, I wanted it to be accessible to everybody. There is a lot of passing trade - I get a lot of students who come by the shop who don't necessarily make jewellery regularly, they just feel like making a bracelet one day so they pop in. A lot of people, especially mothers with young kids come in and decide to spend the afternoon making a bracelet because there's a space in the shop for people to sit in and make things.

What's been the biggest challenge you've faced?

As a small business, the biggest problem I've come up against is trying to compete with big firms because sometimes people don't appreciate that small businesses aren't the same



as big businesses. People come in and say things like, "I can get that cheaper at WHSmith", but they don't understand that, as a small business, you cannot compete with a huge international company. Advertising is always difficult because it costs a lot and you don't always get much return for it. So, you have to know how to advertise to the right people.

What sorts of opportunities are out there for young entrepreneurs wanting to set-up a business and run a shop?

Given the current climate, there's a lot of help available because people want spaces filled in the city centre. There are also things like SENTA and BiG that are there to help you setup your shop, so you've got the support if you need specialist knowledge. There are also many networking events happening, so you can meet the right people. Really, there's a lot of support for people who want to get into it and maybe don't know how to go about it. When I set up the shop, all I had was what I knew, so it's nice to have people there to tell you what else you need to consider.



DLA Piper support the BiG Prize

Sheffield's global legal practice, DLA Piper, is teaming up with the BiG Challenge for the second year to host a fabulous 5 days overseas business trip for the winning team.

You'll probably have read how DLA supported the last BiG Challenge by taking the winners to their offices in Hong Kong. Young Money, from Fir Vale School, had an amazing time not only soaking in the sights of one of the world's most prestigious cities, but also working with the expert

DLA Piper team to develop their business ideas.

So, if you win this year, where does your business team want to go?

Steve Sly, the Managing Partner based in Sheffield, has invited every team to vote for their ideal destination from six DLA Piper locations worldwide. There is no guarantee that the most popular destination will be the final

choice (there are sometimes other factors to consider) BUT there are some very exciting possibilities.

The six DLA Piper locations to vote on will be revealed shortly, so keep an eye on the BiG Challenge website.

The most popular destination and – more important – the choice made by our sponsors will be announced on 21st January!



Find out more about DLA Piper and their international offices at:
www.dlapiper.com/global/locations

Made in Sheffield and the BiG Challenge

The Made in Sheffield brand is world famous – it has been for 200 years and is at the centre of the city's ambitious 21st century marketing strategy unveiled in November.

There will be just one BiG Challenge business that can make the most of that global reputation – the team that wins the special Made in Sheffield prize, which is being awarded for the first time this year.

Speaking alongside the Deputy Prime Minister at the BiG Challenge 2011 launch in November, Made in Sheffield chair Charles Turner emphasised how the power of our city's brand is even more important in the 21st century global economy. When you can design and sell great things from home, the key is making money from the repeat process, which means understanding manufacturing and having a big enough reputation to make people sit up and take notice.

Which teams will qualify? Your team will be considered for this award if you are:

- Designing a product from metal or other materials
- Basing your business on a manufacturing process – designing something once and making it many times

The smart teams will be those who explain how they have succeeded in this in their final report.



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