

worthing & adur chamber of commerce

**Worthing & Adur
Chamber of
Commerce & Industry**
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SPOTLIGHT ON ... ELECTRONIC TEMPERATURE INSTRUMENTS

If you've ever marvelled at the food on BBC Two's The Great British Bake Off, you may be surprised to know Worthing-based Electronic Temperature Instruments – a recent winner in our Adur & Worthing Business Awards – should take some of the credit. Managing director Peter Webb reveals what makes this company so hot and why Edwina Currie's his heroine...

How would you describe the business?
We make electronic thermometers, primarily for the "food chain" – so from farm to plate – to help businesses maintain good food hygiene. Our customers include Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Starbucks and Nandos.

We make about 100,000 thermometers a year and have distributors around the world, but especially in the USA, Scandinavia, Australia and New Zealand. Some £2m of our £7m annual turnover is exports.

What were you doing before starting this business?
I worked in electronics as a production engineer for a company in Rustington but spotted a gap in the market – catering thermometers for everyday use.
When Edwina Currie went on TV over the salmonella-in-

eggs crisis, suddenly commercial kitchens needed to have thermometers by law and that changed everything.

She's our hero, really! My wife Miriam and I set the business up in 1983 and haven't looked back.

How many people work for ETI? We have 110 staff and only four live outside the area, so we're very much a Worthing company. Plus, we use as many local suppliers as possible, such as for plastic mouldings and labels.

But you have a global reach, don't you?
Yes, we're especially strong in America. They have

huge barbecue competitions with more than 1,000 barbecues in a field cooking for 24 hours! And the thermometer they use is our Thermapen.

It looks like a folding penknife and measures the temperature in four seconds!

Do any customers have quirky uses for your devices?
Ghost-hunters use our non-contact thermometers to test for cold spots during spook-hunting weekends.

How did your products come to be featured on the BBC TV show The Great British Bake Off?
Several celebrity chefs, like Rick

Stein, use our products and I think he recommended us to the Bake Off production team.

Why Worthing?
I went to school here and just stayed! We still live right in the town and we love having both the Downs and the sea nearby.

What plans do you have for the business?
Our future is in technology, so we're looking at ways to measure temperatures remotely using Bluetooth – so a restaurant owner could receive a text message in the night at home to say a fridge has just broken down, rather than turn up to find a pool of water.

What difference has being a chamber member made?
Chamber president Peter Bennett has been very supportive and given us advice. It's also been a useful means of contacting other businesses and we've found the talks and training helpful. Winning two awards recently has been a great reflection on the staff – they're very loyal, which has contributed to our success.

Where can people find out more? They can visit etiitd.co.uk, email sales@etiitd.co.uk or call 01903 202445.

Interview by Ann Bird of AB Business Training
info@ab-business-training.com



Firms told how to avoid being fried by blaggers

Last month's chamber breakfast was on the topical subject of blagging.

This was less an insight into how to get away with an extra sausage and slice of fried bread provided by our welcoming hosts the Ardington Hotel – more a guide to what the verb "to blag" means in business terms.

Three speakers defined the term and its implications to around 30 members.

First up was chamber president Peter Bennett, of solicitors Bennett Griffin, who explained the legal implications of knowingly or recklessly obtaining or disclosing personal data or information without the consent of the data controller.

Peter explained how access to personal data held by an organisation was regulated by the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and comes within the scope of the Information Commissioner's regulatory powers.

If you think all this legal stuff has little to do with you; then think again.

remembering that, according to guidance from the Information Commissioner's office, you need to make sure all "those involved in recruitment and selection are aware that data protection rules apply and that they must handle personal information with respect".

For any businesses that hold client data you may need to register as a data controller, for more information visit www.ico.gov.uk

Sheila Hall from Clear Computing ran through the IT implications of data storage, or perhaps the more headline-grabbing implications of data loss – when that memory stick is left on a train or stolen from the back seat of a car.

Sheila advised people to sit down and review the internal security practices of their businesses.

Having an independent security management audit carried out will highlight any non-compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Be sure to create the necessary security controls to make your business totally compliant, thus



All about blagging: the breakfast audience listen intently to some top tips

avoiding a hefty fine from the ICO.

Finally, Fleet Street newspaper journalist Ann Bird of AB-Business-Training.com, who trains businesses to make the most of media opportunities, revealed how reporters don't have to resort to phone hacking to obtain

information – they have lots of other canny methods to find news stories.

For example, if reporters go to visit a company, they'll look to see which other visitors have signed in recently, they'll study notice boards, overhear useful conversations and so on.

Plus, they'll possibly obtain the best information when their interviewee thinks the interview is over.

The journalist puts away their notebook, but throws in another enquiry along the lines of "Thanks, I think I've got all the information I need...Oh, by the way, what was that I heard about an employee quitting in a hurry last month?"

The answer might suddenly become the main thrust of the story, even though the interviewee thought it was not part of the interview!

So, that was blagging in its various forms and by the end of the breakfast gathering, members had certainly discovered ways to avoid being grilled or burnt by information meltdown.



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