

## Local Businesses Reaping Rewards From Knowledge Network

If you've never dipped into the pool of knowledge at your local University before - it's time to take the plunge, according to a Dunstable businesswoman.

The University of Luton's business expertise has impressed Annette White so much, she wants to tell everyone. Annette, Marketing Director of PC Help Centre Limited in Dunstable, joined the University's Knowledge Network and is delighted with how it has benefited her business.



She explained: "It has been an excellent return on investment, for myself and for the business. We have met potential investors and other useful business contacts. I have found the Master Classes and Workshops to be informative and productive, and I've benefited significantly from the free 'Web: Working for Women' course."

Annette went to the launch of the Knowledge Network, a networking organisation set up by the University for small and medium-sized businesses, at its Putteridge Bury campus last June. She said: "There was a phenomenal turnout for the event with people from different industry sectors.

"The speakers were excellent, and the event was set up to be very interactive. We weren't being preached to, we were asked what we wanted, how we wanted it to be driven.

"Events, such as Master Classes and Workshops, have been really informative. The subjects were appropriate, because they asked the right questions in the first place. I recently went to a Master Class called 'How to succeed in the e-business era', and it covered everything I needed to know.

"The 'Establishing and Maintaining Databases' workshop was excellent - the academics doing it were second to none. You would normally have to pay huge amounts for this kind of knowledge - from financial advice to writing business plans. But because the courses have European Social Funding, they are free!

"The networking is excellent too, not only with other local businesses but with academics. And if they can't help you, they have contacts who will."

Annette works with her father, Adrian, who set up PC Help Centre in 2000. "Initially it was me going along to the University events but I told my father, who is technically-orientated, how good they were, and now he is a complete advocate.

"We've met potential investors and other business contacts who have been so useful, it has persuaded us to expand.

"We have a two-pronged approach - the help centre is designed to fix PCs in the local area, plus we have developed a suite of diagnostic and monitoring tools called ReviveR, for use within critical PCs and servers. Our new knowledge will help us drive the ReviveR side of the business forward.

"The University has also set up the M1 Knowledge Exchange with Cranfield University and we have been involved in different aspects of this, again widening our network. We also didn't have a lawyer and, through the contacts we have made with the University's Enterprise professor, Alan Barrell, we have first-rate lawyers now.

"There are so many things to learn at these events - you really need to discover it for yourself."

Gary Kirby, Project Manager from the University of Luton's Knowledge Network, said: "We're delighted that the Network has helped bring success to a local business. It demonstrates again that joining the network

not only provides you with the opportunity to learn new business skills through seminars and workshops, but it is also a gateway to making new business contacts, either through meeting other local business leaders, or through introductions to external business organisations such as investors. The Knowledge Network provides so many opportunities for local businesses and it's all free."

For more information on how the University of Luton can help you with business expertise, contact the knowledge hub team, the University's gateway to business and the community, on 0800 328 5334 [knowledge@luton.ac.uk](mailto:knowledge@luton.ac.uk)

### **About PC Help Centre Limited**

pchelpcentre.com offers a range of scalable products and services to best meet clients' and partners' network support requirements.

PC Help Centre has developed and owns the patent on ReviveR, a suite of intelligent diagnostic and system monitoring tools used in mission-critical equipment such as PCs, servers or manufacturing control systems. The patented technology is being used by companies such as: Teradyne Inc, Expodata Systems, and Business Systems (UK) Limited.

PC Help Centre also provides bespoke personal design services using our patented technology, which allows customers to meet their specific needs in performance objectives, cost, quantity and delivery. Visit [pchelpcentre.com](http://pchelpcentre.com) for more details, or call Annette White on 01582 672606