

## Help on hand for your small business

With the current economic climate [small businesses](#) are having a tougher time than ever. However, there are a number of useful business support organisations that have been setup to give the small business owner the best chance at success. Most recently the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) has developed '[Business Growth Clubs](#)' with the aim of providing guidance and support to small and medium sized companies.

The aim of these clubs is to bring together like-minded individuals from all areas of business and give them the support to maintain and grow their companies.

Through the use of Business Growth Clubs, well-known organisations such as Dell, BT, RBS and PTI Worldwide will be giving smaller businesses the opportunity to learn through a series of informal, hands-on workshops to be run from October 2009.

These workshops will cover a range of topics, from motivating small business teams and successfully selling their products to banking and utilising I.T effectively. However, there are other organisations in the UK that offer related services to the Business Growth Club.

The Internet has opened up an extensive range of free useful and related information on business development and freely available business resources to guide and enhance business. There are a number of regional and national organisations that have been set-up to offer guidance and resources to small businesses. The most notable examples being [Business Support Wales](#), [Business Enterprise Scotland](#), [Enterprise Northern Ireland](#) and the [National Federation of Enterprise Association in England](#).

Other Government websites such as the Department for [Business Innovation and Skills](#) offers up-to-date government policy information, news articles and links to other relevant websites such as the [Business Link](#). The Business Link contains guidance for small businesses – whether you're looking to start your own company through to advice on sales & marketing as well as I.T and E-Commerce.

It can be easy for small businesses to become disillusioned by the day-to-day pressures brought about by a highly competitive market in a country feeling the effects of an economic recession. John Dunsmore, the Managing Director of the BCC, stated that it is vital for businesses to remain focused and continue to innovate and develop new skills to ensure that they are at the forefront of our ever evolving business culture. Business Growth Clubs will give those crucial insights into taking their company to the next level.

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### Business Support Agencies

- [Business Growth Clubs](#) - They're a series of informal, hands-on business workshops that introduce business executives to a group of likeminded people and where they can learn from experts in the field to help develop a winning growth strategy for their business.
- [www.bis.gov.uk](http://www.bis.gov.uk) - Business Innovation & Skills. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) helps the UK build on its strengths and develop new capabilities that will enable everyone to exploit these changes fully.
- [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) - Business Link aims to give instant access to clear, simple, and trustworthy information.
- [www.britishchambers.org.uk](http://www.britishchambers.org.uk) - British Chambers Of Commerce. The BCC work directly with the British government to help shape business affecting policies and provides representation, services, information and guidance to its members.

### Regional Business Support Agencies

- [www.business-support-wales.gov.uk](http://www.business-support-wales.gov.uk) - Business Support for Wales - Thousands of businesses start up in Wales each year. This site has been set-up to offer guidance and advice when starting and running a business.
- [www.bes.org.uk](http://www.bes.org.uk) - Business Support for Scotland. Its core activity is in encouraging & supporting entrepreneurial activity, creating a steady stream of successful new businesses and supporting the development of established Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) with up to 25 employees.
- [www.enteriseni.com](http://www.enteriseni.com) - Business Support for Northern Ireland. Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) is an organisation that represents the Local Enterprise Agencies (LEAs), which are independent, locally based not-for-profit companies set up to support small business development and to undertake economic development activity.
- [www.nfea.com](http://www.nfea.com) - National Business Support is an organisation that represents the English Local Enterprise Agencies (LEAs), which are independent, locally based not-for-profit companies set up to support small business development and to undertake economic development activity.
- [www.nicci.co.uk](http://www.nicci.co.uk) - Northern Ireland Chambers of Commerce. The NICC provides representation, services, information and guidance to its Northern Irish business members.
- [www.scottishchambers.org.uk](http://www.scottishchambers.org.uk) - Scottish Chambers of Commerce. The SCC provides representation, services, information and guidance to its Scottish business members.
- [www.ngb2b.org.uk](http://www.ngb2b.org.uk) - South Wales Chambers of Commerce. The SWCC provides representation, services, information and guidance to its South Welsh business members.



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There are other chambers of commerce around the UK which can offer businesses local guidance and resources.

This is just a selection of business support resources available. There may be further support initiatives available within your area which should help emerging businesses to expand and develop more effectively. This is why it is always worth investigating the business services in your area.

Once you've established your business it will be your responsibility to nurture and mentor the next generation of businesses.



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