

Accountancy franchise adds up to opportunity



SOLLERTIA LTD, a Newton-le-Willows based outsourced accountancy provider that began life through St Helens Chamber's Entrepreneur Kick Start programme, is expanding into the franchise sector

The company has decided to throw a lifeline to redundant accountancy and banking professionals by offering them a franchise opportunity that would put them at the helm of their own outsourced accountancy businesses.

Sollertia Ltd was founded by Chartered Management Accountant Andrew

Mault, who developed a professional outsourced and fixed price accountancy model to offer SMEs a cost effective alternative to funding in-house accounts departments.

Four years on, his business, which serves clients across the UK and mainland Europe, is

now ready to roll out nationally to offer unemployed accountancy professionals a new career.

"This is an accountancy solution that is proving particularly attractive to SMEs in the £1 million to £18 million turnover bracket," explains Andrew, who was a highly successful management accountant before setting up his own business.

"Outsourced accountancy offers significant savings when compared to the cost of funding an in-house accountancy facility," he adds.

"The recession has hit the accountancy sector and a recent survey reports that 42 per cent of firms have made accountants redundant in the last six months. Therefore it is fair to assume that there are plenty of candidates out there who may want to use a Sollertia franchise to turn their lives around."

Andrew says Sollertia franchisees will almost certainly hold a recognised

accountancy qualification or come from a management accountancy/banking background and have the skills required to oversee and manage the provision of outsourced accounting and finance services.

"Sollertia franchises operate as the finance department of their client companies. They can do this because they are supported by Sollertia's sophisticated software," he adds.

Ann Holcroft, St Helens Chamber Business Start Manager says: "This is a really exciting development for Sollertia. It is great to see a business that began through our Entrepreneur Kick Start programme expanding to the point where it can offer new business opportunities to others."

For further information on Sollertia call 0845 0946 202 or visit www.sollertia.info. For info on franchising visit www.accountingfranchise.co.uk

Those boots were made for walking

Chamber Members got their walking boots on for charity with a gruelling 40-mile trek in the Lake District.

The event was the 43rd annual Keswick to Barrow (K2B) walk which takes walkers from the southern side of Keswick through glorious countryside to the coastal town of Barrow in Furness.

St Helens was well represented on the walk by Geoff Appleton, from Appleton Painting Contractors, and Nicola Massam, Paul Rothwell and James Windle of Alexander Myerson & Co chartered accountants. Both businesses are Members of St Helens Chamber and members of the Horizon Group, a St Helens networking organisation.

Despite the typically wet Lakeland weather both Geoff and Nicola managed to complete the walk with

very respectable times of 13 hours and 11 hours 29 minutes respectively.

"The weather was absolutely shocking, the rain was bouncing down and we were soaked to the skin but it was a fantastic feeling to actually finish the walk," says Geoff.

It was a great personal achievement for Geoff who, following an accident 30 years ago, was told that he might have to have his leg amputated and that he would probably never be able to walk without crutches. He certainly defied the medical advice and his efforts in the K2B have helped him to raise £1,000 for Willowbrook Hospice.

The Alexander Myerson & Co walkers were taking part to raise money for Alder Hey Childrens Hospital and The National Kidney Association. Paul Rothwell managed

20.5 miles and James Windle 27 miles before blisters, knee and hip injuries forced them to stop, but they were both delighted with the distances they achieved.

Nicola Massam says: "I was so proud when I reached 26.4 miles, which is the same as a marathon, and was so close to giving up, however I somehow put mind over matter. The next checkpoint was 30 miles and I thought if I can just make it there then its a ten mile countdown to the finish!"

Geoff is now determined to repeat his success. "The next day I was in absolute agony but I knew I wanted to do it again next year. I was walking with a group of friends from my local pub and we were all thrilled to be able to raise money for Willowbrook."