

Issue 168 | September 2020

London

Business Matters

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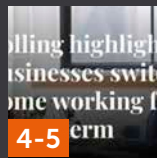
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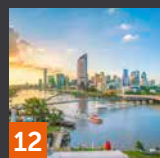
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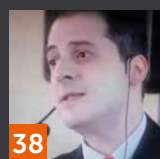
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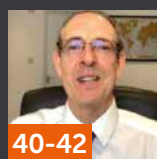
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London Chamber of Commerce
33 Queen Street, London EC4R 1AP
Tel: 020 7248 4444
Fax: 020 7489 0391
www.londonchamber.co.uk

CHAMBER CONTACTS

Events
Victoria Jayne – 020 7203 1875
Export Documents
Davor McKinley – 020 7203 1856
Enterprise Europe Network
020 7203 1929

London Business Matters is edited by Peter Bishop – pbishop@londonchamber.co.uk

Information
Alexa Michael – 020 7203 1866
International business
Vanessa Vlotides – 020 7203 1838
Membership sales
020 7203 1960
Member support
Nick Charles – 0207 203 1957
International trade events
Vanessa Vlotides – 020 7203 1838
Media relations
Steven Reilly-Hii – 020 7203 1897
Sponsorship opportunities
Dean Wade – 020 7556 2382

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Crosby Associates Media Limited
Liverpool (Head Office):
Burlington House, Crosby Road
North, Liverpool L22 0PJ
Tel: 0330 124 3780
www.crosbyassociates.co.uk

PUBLISHING CONTACTS

Advertising sales
Gina Forshaw – 020 7846 4809
gina.forshaw@crosbyassociates.co.uk

Production/design
Andy Bellis
andy.bellis@crosbyassociates.co.uk



Government support still needed for London business to recover



When, in June, Stephen Jones last reported for LBM the capital's economy was at a standstill. Here is his latest analysis

The impacts of the national – and indeed global – lockdown were seen in our Q2 results for the Quarterly Economic Survey. Two-thirds of the 500 businesses surveyed reported a decline in domestic sales in Q2. Export sales were down sharply too, while company expectations for profitability and turnover all deteriorated.

Decline

This corroborated the national picture: the UK entered into recession in Q2, with real gross domestic product (GDP) contracting 20.4 per cent compared to Q1. According to the Office for National Statistics, this was the biggest decline on record.

Over the past months, various measures of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown have been pared back in England by government – and by the devolved authorities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. As the restrictions on movement have eased, the UK economy has shown tentative signs of recovery. Monthly estimates of GDP point to increases in output in May and June.

Timelier data show that in July, retail sales as a whole climbed beyond their pre-pandemic levels.

Nevertheless, there are pockets of strength and of weakness. Sales at clothing shops remain 25 per cent lower than the pre-pandemic level. Data from Springboard suggests footfall for retailers in central London was 61 per cent lower in the week to 22 August 2020, compared to the same week in 2019.

Pressure

The NatWest PMI reported for July showed that economic output rose in London for the first time in five months. However, the employment index of this report fell steeply in July. Furthermore, the necessary – but expensive – Covid-19 secure measures that businesses have had to enact are likely to put pressure on margins for the foreseeable future. Indeed, UK GDP in June was nearly a sixth below



It is unlikely that central London's economy will recover in earnest until international tourism bounces back

the level seen in February.

It is unlikely that central London's economy will recover in earnest until international tourism bounces back as well. The government has eased its quarantine rules for travellers from several countries – but has also shown it will act quickly to remove countries from its 'safe list' should rates of infection increase rapidly.

For London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, our work on the policy side continues to focus on the support for businesses from government. Schemes such as Eat Out to Help Out appear to have been a broad success, while pressure from LCCI and London Councils saw the deadline for local authority grant applications extended.

Significant

Some sectors will not be able to recover as quickly. Government will need to maintain sector-specific support for those parts of the economy that will not return to normal for a significant period of time. Industries such as aviation, tied intrinsically to overseas tourism, and the events sector – limited in its ability to put on shows due to social distancing – these areas will

of commerce based throughout the capital. Through LCCI's own networks, and those of the local chambers, we continue to push out information and advice to thousands of London businesses.

Rebound

We stopped producing the weekly 'sitreps' at the back end of June but continue to interact with businesses on the challenges they are facing. It is vital that we at LCCI hear from firms on what more can be done to help them, and we will look to aid however we can.

In the meantime, I will be awaiting the next set of results of our Quarterly Economic Survey, which are likely to show a rebound in activity. How big that rebound is remains to be seen.

Stephen Jones is policy research manager at LCCI

require long-term support. In terms of aviation, job cuts have already been announced at one key London airport, while airlines have begun redundancy processes too.

LCCI have also been working closely with the 18 local chambers

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Negotiating the moral maze

LCCI in the news by Steve Reilly-Hii

As I write this, Central London economic recovery from Covid-19 is slow – though faster for some outer London boroughs – as is progress on trade deal negotiations between the UK and EU.

I've no doubt that LCCI will be filling column inches, screens and airwaves talking about both throughout the final quarter of the year.

The challenge of regenerating the economy of central London, whilst not overwhelming the transport system and increasing Covid-19 transmission, is a substantial one.

And as you would expect, as London's largest independent business community, we have been very active in the media over recent weeks, talking about potential solutions.

Change of tone

LCCI chief executive Richard Burge has urged a need for an overall



change of message tone – from one of discouragement to a more positive narrative about safe recovery, focussed on what can be done.

Amongst coverage on *Sky News*,

LBC, *City AM*, *BBC Radio* (including on the *Moral Maze* on *Radio 4*), Burge talked about the need for employers to risk assess workplaces, be flexible regarding staff arrival and departure times, creative with staff rotation, and mix central office return with home working in order to support London's economy but mitigate transport pressure.

LCCI hosted a webinar with TfL about the role of business in managing commuter pressure during the pandemic – which led to headlines in the *Evening Standard* about face-

mask compliance levels and a new TfL commuter reassurance campaign.

Facemask wearing is now mandatory in shops as well as on public transport. LCCI welcomed the government decision, saying it would provide both clarity and confidence to consumers. Our media appearances on the subject included a debut on recently launched *Times Radio*.

Creativity of approach

Continuing to focus on the creativity of approach of London employers, LCCI released polling (in partnership with Savanta ComRes) to the media, showing 37 per cent of 500 London firms saying they would allow more home working from now on. National media took particular interest in the statistic that 13 per cent plan to continue working from home altogether, rather than an office. *The Independent*, *Telegraph*, *Guardian*, *Sun*, *Heart FM* and regional media titles throughout the UK used that as the basis of discussion, and some London outlets pondered the boost it may bring to outer London local economies.

Recovery

London's aviation sector is of course key to the economic recovery of central London. LCCI had been highly critical of the government's blanket 'quarantine' policy for all international travellers to the UK.



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Aviation industry hails 'turning point' as quarantine scrapped for 60 countries

Edward Thicknesse





London economy damage figures ‘take your breath away’, says Chamber of Commerce chief

ITV REPORT 24 June 2020 at 9:53am

Virus crisis forcing permanent closure of London business premises, says report

One in 10 business premises in London has been permanently closed as a result of the coronavirus crisis, new research suggests.

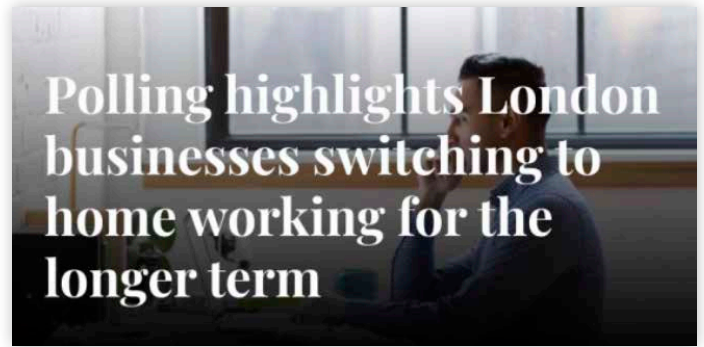
We welcomed a country by country approach being introduced, but have joined airports and other business groups in calling for an evolution of the policy to one of health screening for arrivals into the UK – which when combined with the government’s track and trace system could support further economic recovery. *The Financial Times* reported on this campaigning.

As I bring another *LCCI in the news* to a close, we are speaking with media about our call for government to extend the period of time that London’s councils have to

The Prime Minister’s plan to restart the economy will have come too late for some, with new research suggesting one in 10 businesses in London have permanently closed their premises because of coronavirus.

The London Chamber of Commerce said nine per cent of 500 business leaders polled revealed they have already permanently closed physical premises, while one in seven will keep working from home completely even after lockdown.

issue discretionary grant funding to businesses who have previously been unable to access support grants. This is another example of



Polling highlights London businesses switching to home working for the longer term

Sun | FABULOUS | MONEY | MOTORS | TRAVEL | TECH | DEAR DEIDRE

One in 10 business premises in London has been permanently closed as a result of the coronavirus crisis, new research suggests.

Many firms will also shift to working from home completely rather than have a commercial office in the capital, according to a survey.

The London Chamber of Commerce said 9% of 500 business leaders polled revealed they have already permanently closed physical premises.

Around one in seven said their business will move to working from home completely once the lockdown has ended.

Almost two out of five said holding meetings virtually will become standard practice, and more than one in four planned to reduce business travel.

how LCCI continues to work with media to speak up for the needs of businesses of all sizes and sectors during this crisis.

Steve Reilly-Hii is senior media relations manager at LCCI

His Lordship



Former LCCI chief executive David Frost CMG was elevated to the peerage last month. In the official prose used for such appointments he was “gazetted in the name, style and title of Baron Frost, of Allenton in the County of Derbyshire.”

Blessing

Lord Frost’s tenure at the Chamber was a short one. He joined LCCI in April 2019. In July

of the same year he answered the call from Downing Street to lead the UK’s trade negotiations with the EU and left with the Chamber’s blessing.

This month Lord Frost also takes on the hugely important role of the UK’s national security adviser.

Lord Frost is pictured addressing LCCI members at last year’s summer reception in The College Garden, Westminster Abbey.

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On camera under Nelson's Column

Visitors to Trafalgar Square this summer cannot have failed to notice one of the most eye-catching works on the fourth plinth of recent years. The latest commission in the Mayor of London's programme, THE END by Heather Phillipson, is a vast physical and digital sculpture.

Apocalyptic

According to the inscription under the work it has been designed as a "response to Trafalgar Square as a site of mass gathering, protest, broadcast, exuberance and unease". Further described as a monument to hubris and impending collapse, the creation is topped with a whirl of whipped cream, a cherry, a fly and a drone camera. THE END, it is claimed, "magnifies the banal and our collaboration with other life forms to apocalyptic proportions."

The camera transmits a live feed of the surrounding area and visitors are warned that if they are within a 20 metre radius of the sculpture their image will be included.

You can watch the live streaming at www.theend.today



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Excitement and controversy

THE END is the thirteenth work of art to appear on the fourth plinth in a series that has been going for 21 years and rarely fails to create excitement and often controversy. It replaces *The Invisible Enemy Should Not Exist* (pictured right) which was constructed from 10,500 Iraqi date syrup cans. Created by Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz, the piece was a reconstruction of the Lamassu, an ancient winged bull and deity that guarded the Nergal Gate of Nineveh, near modern-day Mosul in northern Iraq, from 700BC until ISIS destroyed it in 2015.

Previous installations were:

- *Really Good* by David Shrigley, 2016
- *Gift Horse* by Hans Haacke, 2015
- *Hahn/Cock* by Katharina Fritsch, 2013
- *Powerless Structures, Fig. 101* by Elmgreen & Dragset, 2012
- *Nelson's Ship in a Bottle* by Yinka Shanibare MBE, 2010
- *One & Other* by Antony Gormley, 2009
- *Model for a Hotel* by Thomas Schütte, 2007
- *Alison Lapper Pregnant* by Mark Quinn, 2005
- *Monument* by Rachel Whiteread, 2001
- *Regardless of History* by Bill Woodrow, 2000
- *Ecce Homo* by Mark Wallinger, 1999.



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Managing your business-critical IP during the COVID-19 crisis

Victor Caddy, Director
Trade mark and design attorney
Wynne-Jones IP



UK businesses are fighting for survival during the COVID-19 outbreak and trying to trade under difficult conditions.

If you're worried your business is going to the wall, intellectual property (IP) probably isn't front of your mind, right? Where is the money coming from to invest in such luxuries when staff are being furloughed and orders have been postponed?

Protecting your products, ideas and brands is not a luxury, not even in these sanity-challenging times and it's still as important in managing the strategic risk to your company.

What are the risks?

1. You risk damaging your business recovery

SMEs that have filed at least one intellectual property (IP) right are 21% more likely to experience a growth period afterwards and are 10% more likely to become a high-growth company than those without rights applications. In fact, SMEs with an IP portfolio in place actually boost their chances of high growth by a third. There is no reason to believe that this will not also apply in the current crisis.

2. You risk not being able to achieve your business goals

If you don't invest in IP when it's needed you risk others stealing it or registering IP rights in similar areas that will prevent you from using yours once the crisis has passed.

3. You risk missing out on increased company value

Having IP assets locked down can be a key requirement for investors. IP can also add to the overall value of a business should you be looking to sell or merge in future.

What do you need to do in times of business crisis?

1. Have a risk management plan

It's vitally important that you have identified, assessed and mitigated the risks across all your business functions. You cannot take steps to protect your business, including your IP assets, unless you have this in place and know what you are going to do.

2. Include IP in your risk management plan

As part of this risk management plan you need to identify your IP assets and assess whether they're business critical. Being business critical means that the IP assets are essential to the delivery of your business goals, both during and after the crisis.

3. Don't risk losing your IP

If an IP asset is regarded as business critical you need to protect it. If you already have IP rights in place you need to ensure you keep them alive. You risk the viability of your business by not protecting business-critical IP; it's that simple.

4. Identify financial support

Find out if there is funding available that may be used to pay for protection of IP rights. If you use an IP firm, see if you can negotiate a payment plan with them.

If you don't have an IP firm in place, Wynne-Jones IP would be happy to offer advice and guidance on all aspects of protecting your business-critical IP assets during this difficult time and beyond. Contact us if you want a friendly ear and practical advice.

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Common Law Right To Terminate

**Richard Silver, Senior Partner,
Silver Shemmings Ash**



In cases of breach of contract an innocent party will have a right to terminate in the following situations:

- i. Where such breach is so serious in itself that it would be unreasonable to expect the innocent party to continue with the contract;
- ii. Where such breach, whilst not so serious, is so protracted or repeated, despite the protests and/or notices of the innocent party, that it either demonstrates a subjective intention not to be bound by the contract, or an objective involuntary inability to perform the contract properly;
- iii. Where the innocent party is informed by the other that he no longer intends to perform the contract, either in the present or in the future, or where the other party's action are such as to render his future performance impossible (referred to as "anticipatory" breaches).
- iv. Where the contract expressly provides for termination upon a specified breach.

Following a repudiatory breach, the innocent party has the option to treat the contract as continuing (to 'affirm' the contract) or accept the repudiation resulting in termination.

Termination will not occur unless and until there has been a clear and unequivocal acceptance of the breach by the innocent party either by word or action.

The innocent party will not be considered to have elected to affirm the contract until after he has knowledge of:

- i. the facts giving rise to the breach; and
- ii. his legal right to choose between affirming the contract or accepting the repudiation.

It may be implied if, with knowledge of the breach and of his right to choose, the innocent party does some unequivocal act from which it may be inferred that

- he intends to go on with the contract regardless of the repudiatory breach;
- he will not exercise his right to treat the contract as repudiated.

Where the other party persists with the breach, the fact that the innocent party continues to press for performance this will not normally preclude the innocent party in the future from electing to accept the repudiation.

Where both parties have committed a repudiatory breach each of which give right to terminate, regard will be given to the order in which the breaches occurred.

Following the termination, the innocent party will be released from all further performance of his obligations and also will be entitled to damages, including loss of the contract, resulting from the termination.

But be warned, very rarely will the other party accept that it has committed a repudiatory breach. Rather, the other party will assert that it is you who has committed the repudiatory breach and it will seek damages.

Richard Silver is the Senior Partner at Silver Shemmings Ash, he is multi qualified as a Barrister, Solicitor & Chartered Quantity Surveyor with over 30 years of experience in the Construction Industry



Because I'm a Londoner



As the city continues to reopen safely, LCCI is supporting a citywide campaign, *Because I'm a Londoner*, that aims to get London's economy going and encourages people to get behind their local businesses and rediscover their neighbourhoods.

Promote your business

This campaign helps Londoners to feel confident that going out and spending locally is safe and the right thing to do. If you run a London business, you can sign up for free-to-use downloadable assets, including videos, images, and social media posts. You will also be informed about ongoing campaign activities and gain access to more tools – including a handy guide – to

promote your business.

By joining, we are all playing our part in kickstarting London's economy alongside London & Partners, the Mayor of London, Transport for London, London Councils, and hundreds of businesses across the capital.

To get involved in the collective effort to rebuild consumer confidence across our city register at

<https://business.london/joinalliance>.

Once you have signed up, post a message on your social channels, using *#BecauseImALondoner*, and share the campaign with your customers.



Is something bugging you about your company's security?

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Gerry Hall, of IPS says, "10 years ago, eavesdropping was a specialist and expensive business, however with the advent of GSM technology and miniaturization of electronics, listening devices have become small and inexpensive requiring specialised equipment and search teams to detect"

Based in Central London and established in 1989, IPS's core business is the provision of Technical Surveillance Counter Measures (TSCM) equipment to government and corporate clients together with sweep services.

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Investing in PR is for all seasons, not just a crisis



Jon Gerlis MCIPR, PR and Policy Manager, CIPR

Right from the top of government through to the local pub, the need to explain decisions, policies and procedures has and will be a crucial part of keeping people safe, rebuilding confidence and supporting the economic recovery. The need – indeed desire – for clear and consistent communications is one of the key lessons of the pandemic businesses must take from this crisis if they are to emerge stronger.

The sharp focus on forward-facing communications has been driven by the crisis but writing and editing is only one part of an ever-expanding set of skills required for today's public relations practitioner. Those who have invested in public relations as a management function, rather than fast-tracking them into board-level discussions in the event of the crisis, have found themselves better prepared. Just in case, rather than just in time.

But PR is for all seasons, not just for a crisis. It's a discipline which looks after reputation, with the aim of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behaviour.

Good communication and strong relationships – with our colleagues, external stakeholders, and customers – will be crucial in moving forward whether;

- You are looking get your staff back into the office working comfortably and trusting you to keep them safe

- You are considering going virtual or managing a situation where some want to return to an office and others don't
- You find your business inadvertently becoming a COVID hotspot and is forced to shut down again

More than media relations

Our recent *State of the Profession* report shows the diversity of skills and knowledge that exists within the profession. It shines a light on a profession that does more than just media relations - an activity that has fallen out of the top three most commonly undertaken - and instead is engaged in strategic planning and research, evaluations and measurement. The fast-emerging activity of influencer marketing – often misunderstood as simply selling products – is now practised by 34% of senior practitioners.

Crisis and issues management – a skillset that those who proactively invested in have been able to put to good use of late – is identified as a strength together with copywriting, editing, and PR programmes and campaigns.

Lessons learned

The biggest challenges identified as facing the profession prior to Covid were the under-representation of PR at board level and not being seen as a professional discipline. Going forward, these should read differently; if there were questions surrounding PR as a professional discipline, the experiences of the last four months should have provided some answers with a place at that top table warranted. Businesses, if not already, should now be investing in their public relations and positioning them at the heart of communicating and delivering their strategies.

For more information visit www.cipr.co.uk

Sochi 2014 – investigating a scandal



by Martin Dubbey

Question: why is the Oscar winning drama/documentary *Icarus* on the Russian doping scandal and the Sochi Olympics featured in this month's LBM?

Answer: the investigation and forensic work in exposing the scandal was principally undertaken in London, led by investigation company Harod Associates – an LCCI member – and coordinated with forensic service providers in the area.

The story around the scandal is straightforward. In order to win more medals at the Sochi Winter Olympics, there was a state sponsored effort to manipulate the results of the drug testing controls by Russian authorities. This ensured certain athletes could take steroids to enhance their performance and compete without being caught by doping controls.

To achieve this, selected athletes were required to provide clean samples of their urine around three months in advance of the competition. These samples were then frozen and stored. During the competition when an athlete had to give a urine sample to the doping control, they would use supposedly tamper-proof bottles. These were then sent to the Sochi laboratory in the Olympic Village for analysis. However, during the night the bottles were smuggled out of the laboratory, through a mousehole cut into a wall within the secure area. The 'dirty' sample

was then swapped with a clean one provided months earlier and passed back for later examination.

Doping control

Apologies in advance for dwelling on such a subject but readers may be aware that the colour and consistency of the urine would have changed over the months and this is something recorded at doping control. In order to counter this, those involved would use water to dilute and lighten samples. In other cases, they would add salt and coffee granules to thicken samples.

These were the incredible allegations facing Harod working with enquiry chairman Richard McLaren. They were made by Dr Grigory Rodchenkov, the former head of the Russian Doping Control Laboratory. In fear of his life in 2016, Rodchenkov managed to escape to the USA. It was vital to debrief him of all his knowledge and this took place over several months. It was also vitally important to establish if there was any forensic evidence to back up and corroborate his claims.

Tell-tale signs

This led to the most important discovery, that the lids of the tamper-proof bottles could be removed. Harod's forensic expert identified that the bottles could be opened by using very thin strips of metal to carefully manipulate the lids locking mechanism. At the same time, whilst not obvious to the naked eye, but apparent under microscope, tell-tale signs of scratches caused by this activity could be evidenced.

This was clearly a major breakthrough. More was to be found by Harod's forensic providers based at



Sochi Olympic Park

Photo by: Skas (CC BY-SA 4.0)

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Kings College London. They were able to prove that the contents of the urine samples were found to have been tampered with, as detailed by Dr Rodchenkov. In some cases, the urine samples were so diluted there was minimal salt present and in other cases so much salt added that in both instances it was impossible for a human being to have been alive and passed them. The final proof of systematic tampering came from the DNA Unit at Kings College London who were able to show instances of mixed DNA in the urine content.

Manipulated

So now it was possible to prove that the bottles had been tampered with and the samples manipulated. There remained an intriguing part of the case that involved the suggestion of a mousehole to pass the samples out of the laboratory. This time, Harod asked London based 'Evidence Talks' to examine the photographs of the mousehole, albeit partially covered. They were able to reconstruct the room and the photographs in three-dimensional imagery and prove that the hole existed

by demonstrating through the shade and strips of light involved in the photograph. It was further proved that the photographs were taken in the Sochi Laboratory by triangulating them with images from Google maps.

Compelling

The proof of these compelling facts was sufficient for the IOC to ban Russia from the subsequent Olympic Games in South Korea. Many Russian athletes appear as neutrals in competition, whilst the whole scandal has yet to be fully resolved.

London can clearly be proud of the role it played in uncovering this scandal. Without the investigative and forensic evidence, it would have been quite easy to have brushed these allegations aside. Fortunately, for the benefit of sports in general these types of forensic services enable investigators to get to the heart of the truth.

Martin Dubbey is managing director of Harod Associates who provide specialist investigation services including due diligence and asset tracing
www.harodassociates.com

More Crossrail delay

The Crossrail board's latest progress assessment of the delivery of the Elizabeth line came at the end of August and was not good news. Estimates for the opening date of the central section between Paddington and Abbey Wood have been put back to the first half of 2022. Furthermore the costs have gone up too – up to £1.1bn above the financing package agreed in December 2018 – £450m more than the upper end of the range announced in November 2019.




Constraints

Covid-19 has of course been a factor. The company reports that the "pause of physical activity on our sites and significant constraints on ongoing work has resulted in time being lost, only some of which can be recovered.

"Everyone working on the Crossrail project knows London needs the Elizabeth line more than ever and we are doing everything possible to deliver the railway as safely and as quickly as we can."

www.crossrail.co.uk



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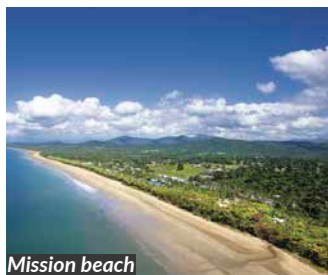
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Spotlight on Queensland, Australia

With the global economy reeling from the impacts of Covid-19, it can seem challenging to look ahead to future business ventures. But now is the time for those who can, to take advantage of new opportunities – and locations – that are best placed to thrive in the world of the ‘next normal’.

Located in Australia’s warm subtropical north, Queensland is well placed to offer new trade and investment opportunities to British business. Queensland has managed the pandemic well and is looking to the future, supported by the government’s strong economic recovery strategy. Moreover, Trade and Investment Queensland has specialist advisers based in London who can meet with UK companies to discuss potential opportunities.



Mission beach

Advantages

Australia’s third-largest state, Queensland is home to some of the world’s most beautiful beaches, rainforests and the natural wonder of the Great Barrier Reef. It is also one of the most attractive business destinations in Australia for investors, buyers, business migrants or potential partners; and its advantages include:

- a resilient and diverse economy
- a highly educated and skilled workforce
- sophisticated transport and communications infrastructure
- an enviable quality of life
- a pro-business environment, including competitive taxation rates
- vast endowments of natural resources
- a strategic location close to major Asian markets.

Entrepreneurial

The Queensland economy has remained stable and prosperous since the 1990s and was worth AUD\$362.7 billion in 2019. It is driven by an entrepreneurial mindset and a population of over five million people, who offer employers a world-class talent pool to draw on.



Queens Wharf development



Queensland’s economic strength owes much to its natural advantages. With the largest area of agricultural land in Australia, it is a gourmet food bowl for Asia, a global leader in tropical agriculture and the country’s largest producer and exporter of beef.

Queensland’s mineral resources include high-quality coal, metalliferous and industrial minerals, vast petroleum and gas resources, and an emerging opportunity for significant production and processing of rare earths and strategic metals. The state is major resources exporter and sells mining equipment, tech-

nology and services to the world.

Queensland is also succeeding in future-focused industries such as renewables (including green hydrogen), advanced manufacturing, biotech and biomedicine, aerospace, smart cities, agtech and more.

Each of these sectors offers real opportunities for UK investors, buyers and entrepreneurs.

Gateway to Asia

Queensland is also strategically located, providing a gateway to many of the world’s fastest growing Asian economies.

UK investment in Queensland sunshine

Even in these troubled times, smart money is continuing to seek out strong investments. A case in point is UK investment group United Green, which in July this year announced it would purchase a majority share in Queensland’s AUD\$350 million Rodds Bay Solar Farm, one of Australia’s largest renewables projects. With around 300 days of sunshine each year, Queensland has unique natural advantages when it comes to globally competitive solar projects. This is reinforced by the Queensland Government’s commitment to 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030.

United Green’s investment is a vote of confidence in Queensland’s renewables sector. And they aren’t alone – Spain’s ACCIONA also recently committed to Queensland’s MacIntyre Wind Farm, which is expected to be one of the world’s largest onshore wind farms.



Game on

Many of the UK businesses currently working on the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games were interested visitors to the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games 2018 in Queensland. Queensland suppliers and contractors helped to deliver a highly successful games, contributing across areas such as logistics, IT, venues, and food and beverage supply.

If you’re a UK firm supplying to the Birmingham Games, contact Trade and Invest Queensland’s London staff about possible partnerships with Queensland businesses who may be able to add value to your systems or supply chains.

Eight hours’ flight from key Asian destinations, Queensland operates in a time zone that is within two hours of many major Asian cities, making it easy to do business with its neighbours. It is an ideal and affordable base for European companies looking to establish a presence in the Asia-Pacific.

Building the future

Despite the uncertainty of recent months, Queensland is continuing to build its future, with \$49.5 billion in Queensland government funding committed to infrastructure development over the next four years.

Major private-sector projects are also underway across the state, including flagship developments in the capital city, Brisbane, such as the \$3.6 billion Queen’s Wharf integrated casino and resort development and the \$2 billion Brisbane Live entertainment precinct.

To discuss trade and investment opportunities in Queensland contact london@tiq.gov.au
www.tiq.qld.gov.au

Tony Pidgley – a life of energy and passion



Tributes from across the business spectrum have been paid to Tony Pidgley, the founder and chairman of chairman of the Berkeley Group and former LCCI president who died earlier this summer.

Property Week – the must-read magazine for the industry in which Pidgley excelled – featured an impressive Who's Who in the property world – from Sir Stuart Lipton to Liz Peace – lining up to praise and assess his huge contribution.

Brilliant

Rob Perrins, a long-standing colleague and Berkeley Group chief executive, said: "Losing Tony was a terrible shock and these are very sad days for Berkeley. His passion for placemaking, his drive for perfection, his humour and his zest for life will be greatly missed. He was a brilliant man.

"Tony's story is unique. He started by building one home and his vision grew Berkeley into a FTSE 100 company. He knew he would never retire so he ensured that his culture was embedded in the company for when this sad day came.

"Berkeley and I owe Tony a huge debt. With my team I will ensure this debt is honoured by continuing to position Berkeley as the leading place-maker and ensuring it continues to be a company of which he would be proud."

Engaging

His epic rise from rags to riches, a Barnardo boy who became such an influential figure in the property and construction industry, has been well recorded. At the LCCI where he was the longest serving president in recent history he was known as an approachable and engaging man who was keen to contribute to the business community and good causes.

On standing down from his five-

year LCCI role in 2018, his contribution was summed up by his successor Jeff Adams. "Tony has given more time to the Chamber than anyone had a right to expect given his busy schedule as one of the capital's most successful business people.

Debt of thanks

"His wise counsel on a host of issues from Brexit to business rates has been invaluable. He has hosted delegations and made introductions which resulted in new members and much prestige for the organisation. The LCCI owes Tony a huge debt of thanks."

Colin Stanbridge, Chamber chief executive for all of Pidgley's involvement with the LCCI has put on record the unstinting support he received from the property specialist and thanked him for "putting the Chamber on the map."



Empowering youth

The award to Tony Pidgley of a CBE for services to the housing sector and the community in HM The Queen's 2013 New Year's Honours was richly deserved. He could equally have been honoured for services to London as the city rated high in his affections. For many years he led the Chamber's presence at MIPIM – the annual international property fair in Cannes – and focussed on inward investment to the UK's capital.

Empowering youth though was perhaps his favourite theme and provides a fitting epitaph. Addressing school children and students at a London Real Estate Forum he advised them: "Don't let anyone put you off – talk to people, learn, read, understand. Put energy and passion into it and you will get there."

Tony Pidgley CBE 1947-2020

SPONSORED COLUMN

How to improve your cashflow with R&D tax credits



By Chris Sparkes, Partner at Lubbock Fine

Many SMEs are facing cashflow challenges during the coronavirus pandemic. However, if your business incurs expenditure on research and development (R&D), you may be able to reduce your corporate tax bill or receive a payable tax credit.

Does your R&D project qualify for tax relief?

Qualifying R&D is undertaken by many businesses in the course of resolving the scientific or technological uncertainties that their businesses face. R&D is undertaken by businesses working in a wide variety of fields from everything from digital services to traditional manufacturing. R&D can arise in the creation of new products or services as well as in the modification of existing products, processes or services. All businesses should review their scope to claim R&D tax relief.

To qualify for tax relief your R&D costs must meet certain requirements. There are two separate R&D tax relief regimes which apply to SMEs and Large Companies respectively.

We will be happy to advise you on what enhanced R&D relief may be available to your company and which R&D regime applies to you.

What relief could your business receive?

A typical SME can obtain an

"A typical SME can obtain an additional 130% deduction on its qualifying R&D expenditure"

additional 130% deduction on its qualifying R&D expenditure taking the total tax deduction received for qualifying R&D costs to 230%. If your business is making a loss, you may be able to claim a payable tax credit of up to 14.5% of the qualifying R&D costs.

If you are claiming R&D relief for the first time you may be able to go back to the two previous accounting periods to claim R&D relief in respect of these.

What should you do next?

At this difficult time, Lubbock Fine can help you to manage the whole process of claiming R&D tax to help you improve your short term cashflow.

We are a full-service firm who can help you through the process from start to finish, from determining if you qualify, through to liaising with HMRC to claim your tax relief.

Get in touch

If you would like further advice in this area, please contact Chris Sparkes chrissparkes@lubbockfine.co.uk.

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Paternoster House
65 St Paul's Churchyard
London EC4M 8AB
t +44(0)20 7490 7766
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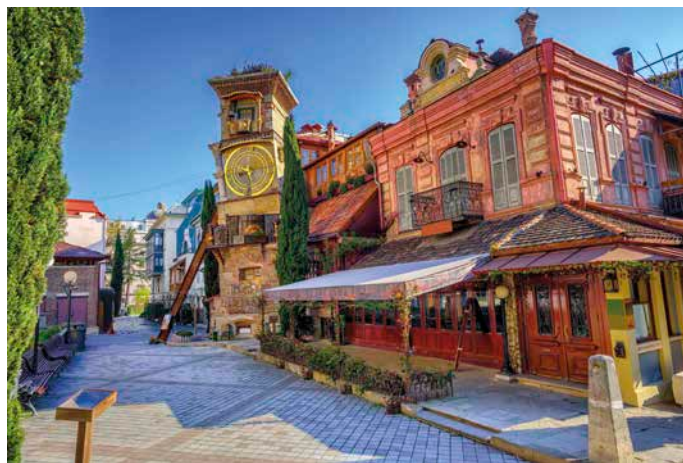
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Advice that adds up



A new era for Georgia-UK



by HE Sophie Katsarava MBE,
Ambassador of Georgia to the UK



“Georgia is a small country that perhaps attracted wider attention only during the brief war with Russia in 2008, Georgia’s territory was invaded and occupied. Twelve years later, this illegal occupation of 20 per cent of our territories remains in place.

Three pillars

This rather negative association is highly unfortunate because Georgia, like the UK, has a long and proud history, stretching back thousands of years. Indeed the earliest known evidence of winemaking is from Georgia around the sixth century BC. In modern times, specifically over the past decade, Georgia is also one of the greatest success stories of free markets and liberal economic reforms. The country has built a modern economy, a strong democracy, and a firm attachment with the West despite our challenging geographic location. The reform programme is built on three pillars: reducing poverty, delivering stable and secure economic development, and tackling corruption.

While Georgia’s recent Western-orientated economic reforms may not be common knowledge, they have been noticed by international institutions. The World Bank recently praised Georgia as a “star reformer” as a result of the *Georgian Dream* government’s “deep reforms in economic management”. The bank highlights that poverty has been cut in half from 30.5 per cent in 2006 to 15.7 per cent in 2018 as “the poor have benefitted considerably from the government’s social policies” and “new economic opportunities.”

Macroeconomic stability

The International Monetary Fund’s latest report on the Georgian economy praised the fiscal consolidation

policies introduced by the government in recent years that have led to macroeconomic stability. Georgian GDP grew by 5.2 per cent in 2019, compared to a forecast of 4.6 per cent, with the current account deficit declining to a record low of 4.4 per cent. Inflation has also declined, falling from seven per cent to 5.7 per cent in July 2020. Importantly, public investment grew to a record high (eight per cent of GDP), including funding of major infrastructure projects.

As a result, the World Bank’s annual *Doing Business* rankings places Georgia seventh best in the world as a place to do business – well above 26 of the 27 EU Member States.

The current Georgian government’s strong desire to push forward with further growth and trade has specific benefits for the UK in the post-Brexit world. In October 2019, Georgia and the UK signed a Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. This was the UK’s first such agreement with any European country after the vote to leave the European Union, further evidence of our two countries’ close and enduring partnership.

Seamless transition

The agreement comes into force on 1st January 2021 and will ensure a seamless transition for trade in goods and services, intellectual property, sanitary measures; and government procurement. It also includes important elements on deepening political dialogue and other forms of UK-Georgia cooperation, including on human rights and security.

The agreement will represent a new and exciting era for trade and investment between the UK and Georgia. The UK is currently the seventh-largest market globally for Georgian exports, and UK exports to Georgia include transport machinery, pharmaceuticals, and spirits. The really good news is that there is a lot of room for growth: trade between our nations hovers around £100m annually (in 2019 bilateral trade increased by 11 per cent and amounted to £133m), which is a fraction of the potential when you consider that the economic reforms that Georgia has undertaken have seen the economy grow at over 5.1

“The World Bank’s annual *Doing Business* rankings places Georgia seventh best in the world as a place to do business.”

per cent in 2019, with even better growth than projected before the Covid-19 pandemic hit.

Generous

Over the past decade, the broader relationship between the UK and Georgia has advanced on all fronts. Defence and security cooperation has increased, including through Georgia’s participation in core NATO Missions in Afghanistan. UK has continued to provide generous support for the Georgian government’s efforts to reduce poverty and widen access to education; and politically it has been a strong supporter of Georgia’s independence and territorial integrity in the face of Russian aggression and disinformation – a curse that has been felt on the streets of e.g. Salisbury in recent years.

However, the coming years will surely represent a turbocharging of the economic relationship, for two core reasons. First, the stated commitment of the UK government to promote free trade around the world following Brexit; and second, the ever-expanding reform programme of the Georgian government that is delivering the greatest level of prosperity and innovation that the country has experienced in modern times.

Decisive action

The necessary qualifier in any ‘good news’ article currently is of course Covid-19. The pandemic has significantly impacted global trade in addition to the vast human suffering it has caused. Georgia’s public health response has been widely praised, including by the World Health Organisation. Early and decisive action from the government has kept cases low and only 19 people have lost their lives to date.

In the light of this crisis, what we also observe now is an upsurge of interest from global big business towards Georgia, including of

trade and investment



course UK-based companies, which is a good signal of how the eventual global trade and investments rebound will look.

Georgia is seen as an attractive destination for investment not only due to its overall security and outstanding performance in international business rankings, but the exciting opportunities which Georgia can offer investors in different sectors. For example, a critical consideration for any business looking to enter a new market is the availability of skilled labour, and Georgia's talent pool in terms of language and professional competence skills, coupled with cost efficiency and time and cultural proximity to Europe, make the country an ideal nearshoring destination for service outsourcing industries.

Value proposition

The country's solid free trade network enables manufacturers to access a consumer market of 2.3 billion in an area without customs duties stretching from China to EU.



This fact, coupled with a strategic geographic location and lower operating costs, also makes Georgia a competitive location for export-oriented manufacturing. This is a very lucrative value proposition to investors, especially today, when the pandemic-related global supply chain disruption has shown the need of site relocations and geographical diversification.

Nevertheless, the economic shock caused by decreasing global trade and much-reduced tourism, will negatively affect Georgia's economic growth, as it will here in the UK. It will be open and dynamic econo-



mies though who will surely lead the world out of the crisis. When that does happen, the sky is the limit.

Committed

All of the necessary conditions exist for a new and exciting era of Georgia-UK trade and investment: my government remains fully committed to reform and further boost economic development; Georgia's Western direction will continue and accelerate; free and fair elections will be held next month; and the UK-Georgia Strategic Partnership will kick off in January. I cannot wait to get started.))

Tourism on the rise

Mountain villages, Black Sea beaches, wine growing, ancient monuments ... no wonder Georgia has become a must-visit destination.



- <https://georgia.travel>
- www.facebook.com/georgiaandtravel
- www.instagram.com/geogiatravel

For more information on business success in Georgia, visit www.investinggeorgia.org

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EU exit: LCCI hub launched

Covid-19 remains a priority concern for many businesses across the capital but the UK's exit from the EU must also be addressed as the end of the transition period will bring in new rules that could affect business, even if they do not trade with or do business in the EU. Supply chains, staff recruitment, services and contracts could be impacted.

Support

LCCI is helping the London business community to prepare and recently launched an EU Exit Hub on the Chamber website. This contains a range of information and links to official guidance on staff employment, trading in goods and services – with EU and non-EU countries, business travel, and regulation changes.

A support helpdesk has also been set up for LCCI members' queries to provide information on key areas that will be affected by EU exit, including supply chains, logistics and cross-border regulation, via *ChamberConnect: Ask the Expert* service.

Key considerations for business include supply chain management, staff recruitment, business travel, trade in goods, contracts and regulation.

Supply chains

Covid-19 highlighted the importance of supply chain resilience, and it will be equally important for ensuring as little disruption as possible once the transition period ends. If you are a buyer or seller, it will be important to review how changes for businesses across your supply chain might affect you. Tariffs and other changing costs could indirectly impact your own costs, and new border checks could cause logistical delays.

Staff recruitment and business travel

A new UK immigration system will be introduced on 1 January 2021. The end of freedom of movement will mean changes to UK citizens' travel to European countries. Factors such as passport renewal, recognition of qualifications, data roaming charges, insurance, and documentation for driving will need to be considered in advance.

It will be important for employers to review their staffing situation. If you currently employ an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen, they will need to apply



for settled status before 30 June 2021 if they have not done so already. It is also advisable to consider skills and hiring requirements and check how you might be affected by the new points-based immigration system if you need to hire from outside of the UK.

Trading in goods

As trade negotiations continue, the exact details of how goods will be moved between the UK and EU remain to be determined. Nonetheless, it is still critical that businesses consider how they might be affected by trading on WTO terms. One thing

is certain regardless of the outcome of trade talks. Customs declarations will become necessary for UK shipments to and from the EU – see box below on the Chamber's new service to help companies with these.

Trade beyond the EU could also be impacted. Leaving the Customs Union and Single Market means that we are also leaving the EU's trade agreements with other countries. The UK has therefore been negotiating continuity agreements with these countries in efforts to minimise disruption, in addition to negotiating new bilateral trade

Customs declarations

From 1 January 2021 the UK will no longer be in the EU single market or customs union. This means that goods moving between the UK and EU – both imports and exports – will be treated differently from now. Customs declarations will need to be completed for UK exports to the EU with immediate effect at the beginning of the year.

The requirement for individual customs declarations for imports from the EU has been put back for six months i.e. until 1 July 2021 though traders will need to keep specific records to then complete a summary declaration. Duty and VAT as appropriate will also need to be paid or accounted for.

LCCI has joined with ChamberCustoms to provide a Customs Declaration service to help exporters and importers comply with this new requirement for trading with the EU, and indeed with the rest of the world where such declarations will continue to be needed. The service will be available in good time for the 31 December deadline and will be publicised here and on the LCCI website.

Key considerations for business include supply chain management, staff recruitment, business travel, trade in goods, contracts and regulation

deals. As these develop, it will be important for businesses to remain updated on country-specific guidance.

The right paperwork will of course be essential, and while some clarity rests on the ongoing negotiations, it will be important to get as ready as possible for new documentation and procedures.

Contracts and regulation

It is advisable to check contracts in case any terms rely on EU regulation, refer to the EU, or need to be reviewed for any other reason in light of the end of the transition period.

It will be critical for businesses that process the personal data of stakeholders, customers, and any other contacts to be prepared for regulation changes. Rules governing data protection after the transition period have not yet been determined, but you should check the Information Commissioner's Office guidance to ensure you are as ready as possible.

E-commerce will also be affected, as the eCommerce Directive (the EU's legal framework for online services) will not apply to UK companies after the transition period ends.

Government advice

The government has launched a campaign prompting businesses to start getting ready for these changes. As part of this initiative, it set up www.gov.uk/transition where businesses are encouraged to access tailored information by responding to a set of questions and signing up for updates on forthcoming changes.

For further information on trading in services, taxation, accounting and auditing, intellectual property laws, and public procurement visit www.londonchamber.co.uk/eu-exit-hub/eu-exit-hub



Overseas business opportunities

Do you want to access a selection of business co-operation offers made by European companies wishing to work with UK firms? Every month Enterprise Europe Network publishes a Business Opportunities in Europe Bulletin, which contains the latest co-operation offers from companies across the EU and beyond. To find out more about this issue's listed overseas business opportunities or to subscribe to the bulletin contact Enterprise Europe Network London at enterprise.europe@londonchamber.co.uk or 020 7248 1992.



Spain

A leading engineering and construction firm working in power, infrastructures and water sectors is looking for partners in the UK and Germany (engineering firms, contractors, developers) to work together in power generation projects and substations. The Spanish company is seeking a commercial agency agreement, a joint venture agreement or an outsourcing agreement.

REF: BRES20200720001



France

A start-up specialising in IT for the pharmaceutical industry, offers a digital platform powered by AI, machine learning and natural language processing aiming at providing pharma with intelligence and evidence to drive their medico-marketing strategies. The digital platform can be used as a virtual companion for patients with cancer and chronic diseases. The company is looking for outsourcing or commercial agency agreements.

REF: BOFR20200605001



Germany

SME active in the field of elderly care is looking for a long-term partner, which can supply disinfectants for the use on the skin, mainly hands. It is important to use a bactericide (incl. mycobacteria), fungicide and, concerning Covid-19, virucide disinfectant in an un-reusable, disposable bottle that cannot be reused. The disinfectant should not contain any perfume, dyes and, most importantly formaldehyde.

REF: BRDE20200714001



Turkey

SME which started operating in 2019 in Kayseri has developed software for the corporate management of sports facilities. They are looking for partners to help sell the platform to sports facilities in their own countries. Commercial agency agreement preferred.

REF: BOTR20200629002



Belgium

A company makes production processes in the energy-intensive industries more efficient. To rebuild the production processes of their clients, the company is looking for providers of high-power (> 100 kW) electrical resistances to be used for converting gas-powered utilities. It is also looking for electrical process air heaters for humid air for an energy-efficient electrical coffee bean roaster under supplier or manufacturing agreement.

REF: BRBE20200701001



Poland

An e-commerce company is offering its distribution services in Poland for manufacturers of a different group of products. The platform is run by a marketing agency and provides sales, packing, and distribution services as well as all logistics aspects of cooperation. The company is looking for various products from various industries.

REF: BRPL20200723002



Romania

A company is specialised in providing marketing services, covering such areas as social media management, paid ads management, lead generation, search engine optimization and product launch consultancy. It is looking for EU partners to collaborate under an outsourcing agreement.

REF: BORO20200728001

SPONSORED COLUMN

Whistleblowing: Beware the Pitfalls

by Jonathan Mansfield



Turbulent economic times are likely to throw up more cases of employees reporting wrongdoing in all sectors of business.

The financial Sector has seen a clear increase in reports to the FCA during the last year. COVID-19 has thrown up issues of its own. Health and safety concerns related return to the workplace and indeed home working itself are widespread. Disclosure of abuse of the furlough scheme is also a hot topic.

Workers are protected from suffering detriment as a result of making a "protected disclosure" under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

There are a number of requirements for there to be effective protection.

First of all, the disclosure must include information of a specific nature. A general concern such as "this company is not following correct financial procedures" is probably not enough.

Secondly, the information disclosed must be something which "tends to show" one of the following:-

- A criminal offence
- A breach of a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- A danger to health safety of any individual
- Environmental damage

There is also protection if the information shows that the wrongdoing is being concealed.

Thirdly, the information disclosed must be in the public interest. Saying "this is a breach of my contract" is not enough. However,

"In order to protect themselves against claims business should have a whistleblowing policy in place."

saying "this breach of my contract is also a threat to health and safety at the office" is.

Finally, a disclosure must be to an appropriate person. This is most usually the employer, but it can be to others such as the FCA or other relevant regulators.

In the event of a worker suffering detriment because they have made a protected disclosure, compensation including injury to feelings may be awarded. In the case of dismissal of an employee, it will be automatically unfair and compensation has no upper limit.

A worker or employee making the claim would have to show that the reason is the disclosure itself and not associated wrongdoing; it is not an excuse for hacking the system or aggressive and abusive behaviour.

In order to protect themselves against claims business should have a whistleblowing policy in place and that it is communicated to workers on the ground. Further it is vital to ensure senior managers and directors are aware of the implications of whistleblowing claim. Thus, training is highly recommended: mistreating the whistle-blower is a trap too many employers have walked into arising from lack of awareness!

For advice on these difficult issues please contact Jonathan Mansfield at Thomas Mansfield Solicitors jonathan.mansfield@thomasmansfield.com or 07947598148.

Thomas Mansfield
The Employment Law Solicitors



Yintong talks with...

Tim Tian, managing director of Volitation Ltd

Giving Chinese business a voice



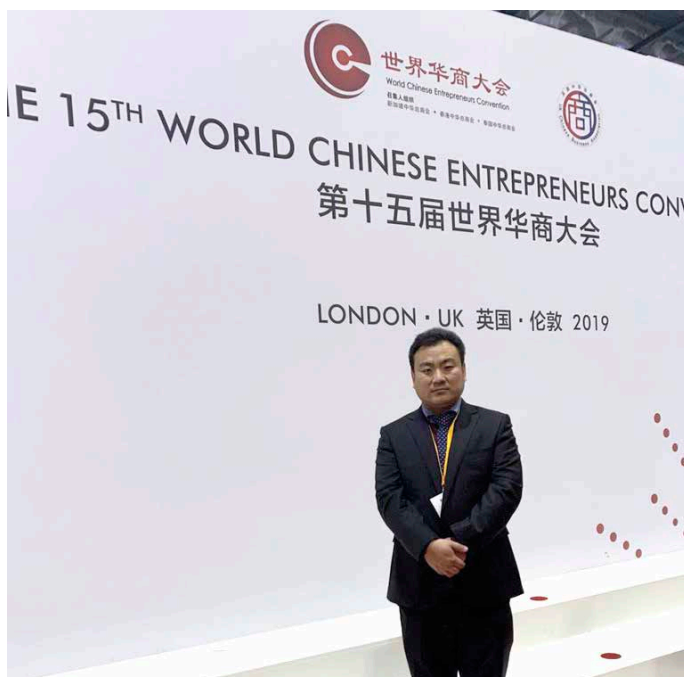
In 2006, Tim Tian founded Volitation to firstly supply the art market in the UK, then expanded into home furniture online, and other ebusinesses including warehousing. I met him recently and asked how business had fared during these challenging times.

Restructuring

“Luck has been on our side. We have been restructuring the company since late last year, starting to streamline our business, getting goods from the production line straight into customers’ hands.” This, he explained, resulted in more control to ensure customers received their goods safely and in a timely fashion – it was good for getting direct feedback from customers too. With this new strategy in place, the company had ordered in 30 containers of goods in January, so that it would have sufficient stock to see it through the Chinese New Year pause in production. Ordering such a large quantity could be seen as a risky business practice, especially as after the peak Christmas sale time, demand in January and February is usually flat. However, when Covid-19 struck, and production and deliveries from China came to a temporary halt, Volitation was in a good position.

Relaxed

Yet its core products are art equipment and furniture, not essential items such as food and other necessities. So, I wanted to know why the business did well? “With the government furlough scheme in place, people had to stay at home and were generally relaxed during



the months of March, April and May, so they had plenty of time to shop online. Therefore, instead of selling 20 containers worth of products in the same month last year, we sold 35, an average of 900 orders per week during those three months, instead of the usual 450.”

That could be seen as a piece of good fortune but Tian is realistic and knows that what we are facing is unprecedented. He is keen to consolidate his business strategy with a wide range of offerings: warehousing, cross-border e-commerce, the company’s own brand Bizili flagship store, and a consulting service.

Choice

Although still in his thirties, Tian has been running Volitation for 14 years. He arrived in the UK in 2000 and studied at the prestigious King’s College London. On completion of his degree he was faced with a choice between returning to China and working in trade there like his highly-successful father or setting up in the UK.

“I felt that my father had made a name for himself in our hometown, so I wanted to discover a new route for myself. By happy coincidence,

my wife – then girlfriend – was in the same position, and she shared and supported my ambition and ideas.” In June 2006, they registered a company, first in Birmingham, then moved down to London.

Shake-up

The first few years were tough. While Tian managed to find reliable and quality products to supply the art industry, the UK retail market was saturated and large retail outlets preferred to work with their regular suppliers. It was impossible to break into the mainstream market. However, the financial crisis in 2008 forced a market shake-up. Large companies were forced to look further afield for good quality and more competitively priced products and more flexible services. Having been around for a few years, Volitation was experienced and ready to seize the opportunity with industry giants like Argos, TK Maxx and Boots becoming clients. Now it supplies 400 retail shops. “No doubt, 2008 was our turning point,” Tim reflects.

Meanwhile, Tian was increasingly asked by his friends in China to help with product storage and logistics. This led to his interest in

“However, when Covid-19 struck, and production and deliveries from China came to a temporary halt, Volitation was in a good position.”

warehousing which has now become a key part of his business. “We now have about 20 containers of goods delivered to the UK monthly, selling through half a dozen online platforms. Volitation also operates seven warehouses with storage area of 100,000m² in the UK and China.”

What other ambitions are left for Tim Tian to achieve? Ultimately he hopes to get his company listed but is content also to continue to promote business exchange between the UK and Tianjin, thus helping his hometown to develop business internationally.

Connect

During our talk, Tim Tian’s father was frequently mentioned. He introduced him to his first supplier, for example, and he showed unwavering belief during the challenging early years of the business. There is no doubt his father has been a significant figure in his life and career. Now that Tian has a 10-year-old son of his own, what is his hope for him? “The overseas Chinese people generally keep a low profile. I hope my son will give us a voice by becoming involved in politics here or be a diplomat and a conduit to connect countries,” he enthuses.

www.volitation.co

Yintong Betsler is managing director of ACTIVE Anglo Chinese Communications connecting business cross culture with PR and marketing. She has published a series of books on doing business in China.

www.activeukchina.com

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The logo for ACA International consists of a blue square containing a white stylized 'A' shape formed by two triangles meeting at the top. Below the square, the text 'ACA' is written in a large, bold, blue serif font, followed by 'INTERNATIONAL' in a smaller, blue, all-caps sans-serif font. At the bottom, the full name 'The Association of Credit and Collection Professionals' is written in a small, black, all-caps sans-serif font.

Why now is the time to declare a climate emergency



Ben Tolhurst of JLL and Business Declares on how companies can adapt in a post-Covid world to be more resilient to climate change

Covid-19 has turned the world upside down. I have felt this first-hand at JLL in my role as head of UK property asset management. The past few months have been spent safeguarding our people, our clients and customers and the buildings we are responsible for. So many people have faced health and financial crises, and significant personal disruption in this turbulent time.

Yet I believe we must not lose sight of the bigger crisis on the horizon: climate change.

While it's true that the economic shutdown during Covid-19 has led to a temporary reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, it's been with a terrible human cost. Global heating has not halted despite recent disruption; the earth continues to warm at an alarming rate as we hurtle towards three to four degrees of global temperature increase. Aggressive absolute greenhouse gas emission reductions of around seven per cent a year are required to keep global warming within 1.5 degrees as mandated by the Paris Climate agreement.

Extreme

Avoiding the worst impacts of climate change will require massive systemic, economic, technological and structural changes. As Mark Carney, the former governor of the Bank of England recently stated, "we have a situation with climate change which will involve every country in the world and from which we can't self-isolate". Climate change is already affecting people and businesses around the world with extreme weather events causing at least \$100 billion in damages in 2019. This could reach \$8 trillion by 2050.

Coronavirus has significantly disrupted businesses and economies; the choice now is around how to rebuild for a more resilient future, that mitigates the worst impacts of a heating planet. There are growing calls from many parts of civil



society, industry and government to 'build back better' and design economic recovery packages that incentivise climate action.

Decarbonisation

At Business Declares we see significant opportunities for leading businesses to change how they operate, innovate, find new customer and markets, while reducing emissions and contributing to the long-term decarbonisation of our economy. Recent disruption has given us a glimpse of how quickly the impossible can become possible. From entire workforces working remotely, to almost zero international travel and pollution-free skies – none of these things seemed likely or possible mere months ago.

Action

Taking urgent and decisive action to tackle the climate crisis as

we rebuild from the ongoing effects of Covid-19 offers opportunities for business to:

- **Increase resilience:** the Financial Times and BlackRock have reported that investment funds tracking companies with "strong performance on material sustainability issues" outperformed less sustainable companies during Covid in over 90 per cent of cases
- **Access financial stimulus packages:** governments in Europe have begun to tie financial investment to the low carbon economy. The EU's €750 billion Covid recovery package of grants and loans is partially tied to climate action and low carbon infrastructure
- **Deliver low carbon infrastructure:** concerns about air pollution, climate change and social distancing on public transport led the Mayor of London to introduce a car-free zone in central

London as Coronavirus restrictions were lifted. Coupled with congestion charges, the ultra low emission zone and installation of electric vehicle charging points, London's transport infrastructure is rapidly decarbonising

- **Access new markets:** Sky news reported that nine in 10 people in Britain don't want life to go back to the way it was before Covid-19. Businesses will need to adapt to customers' changing consumption, shopping and travel habits, and support adoption of more local and low carbon options
- **Save costs:** increasing energy efficiency, investing in renewable energy and diversifying energy supplies will increase business resilience as energy costs rise
- **Secure future talent:** studies have shown that three quarters of Millennials consider a company's social and environmental credentials when deciding where to work.

We are at a critical moment where leading businesses can set out a positive vision of a post-pandemic world – one in which the economy recovers, green jobs are created, and the immediate response to the Covid-19 health crisis aids our transition to a more resilient and low carbon future.

Business Declares is a campaign to accelerate and inspire urgent business action on the climate and ecological emergency.
businessdeclares.com

Your business

Kotecha on board

LCCI deputy chairman Nish Kotecha has been appointed to the advisory board of the Blockchain and Climate Institute (BCI).

A progressive think tank providing leading expertise in emerging technologies deployment for climate and sustainability actions, BCI will benefit from expertise and insight from Kotecha who is co-founder and chairman of Finboot Tech and has worked with global financial and investment firms through his career.

This experience and expertise will provide BCI with a unique perspective in effecting positive change in raising awareness among the international climate change policy community of the tremendous potential of blockchain technology to enhance state and non-state climate actions through targeted technological interventions.

www.blockchainclimate.org



Resolving disputes in times of uncertainty



by Claire Broadbelt

There has never been a more important time for businesses to be able to access an effective and innovative forum for resolving disputes. Be it the Covid-19 pandemic or uncertainty arising out of Brexit, businesses are facing unprecedented challenges across the board.

The government has specifically urged businesses to avoid 'destructive' disputes over issues caused by Covid-19 and encouraged them to use alternative methods to resolve disputes, instead of immediately pursuing issues through the courts. But what are the realistic options for businesses? Clearly, the preference is often to resolve any dispute amicably through discussion and negotiation, but if that is not successful then it would be sensible for the parties to explore the options of mediation and arbitration (if there is an arbitration clause in the contract), before turning to Court-based litigation.

Arbitration and mediation

I have become involved with the

London Chamber of Arbitration and Mediation (LCAM) as it genuinely aims to give businesses the tools they need to better handle disputes. From assisting with contract drafting and dispute resolution clauses, to providing speedy, technologically advanced, and cost-effective methods of dispute resolution, LCAM seeks to facilitate better outcomes. The business-focused fee structure, which includes fixed fees, has been specifically developed to give companies greater control and manage disputes according to their value to them. Speedy resolutions are obviously vital in many ways.

We should not lose sight of the possibility that the time-consuming nature of Court-based litigation may ultimately result in there being no-one, or no assets, to enforce a judgment against. For those facing supply chain issues, which have

been particularly exacerbated by the pandemic, accessing a quicker and more cost-certain means of resolving disputes will be a lifeline to their business.

Technology

A further reason I find LCAM a compelling proposition is its use of technology, which has become even more important during the pandemic with face to face meetings increasingly impossible. The whole process is conducted securely online and the service uses blockchain to improve case management – from secure document management to case management communication and administration.

Being a partner at Mishcon de Reya, I have seen first-hand the improvements that can be affected through the innovative and thoughtful use of technology - our MDR LAB programme is an incubator for

legal technology with the stated aim of improving and streamlining systems and processes. LCAM's use of blockchain and online technology is a logical next step in the utilisation of technology to disrupt a traditionally slow-to-evolve industry.

Reflecting business

Not only does LCAM provide a quicker and more cost-effective forum for alternative dispute resolution, but it has actively sought to have diversity at its core. The arbitrators and mediators on the panel were appointed with a strong focus on appropriately reflecting the businesses it seeks to serve. For me personally this, as much as its use of technology and cost effective pricing, is what makes LCAM a service that has been built for 21st century London businesses at a time when they have never been more in need of fit-for-purpose support.

Claire Broadbelt is a partner and head of fraud defence and business disputes at Mishcon de Reya. She is also a non-executive director of the LCCI and LCAM www.lcam.org.uk

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What's been on ...

Capital 500

Vicky Pryce, Chief Economic Advisor and Board Member, Cebr, Oliver Wright, EVP Public at Savanta ComRes

Revenue Recovery Series: Selling in a crisis

Justin Stephenson, Partner, Sandler Training

EEN Webinar: Essentials of Developing Competitive Bid Strategies

Mike Raynor, Bid Consultant, Raynor BID Consultancy

Capital Conversation

Catherine McGuinness, Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee, City of London Corporation

Revenue Recovery Series: Leading a team to revenue growth

Justin Stephenson, Partner, Sandler Training

EEN Webinar: Essentials of Writing Excellent Bids

Mike Raynor, Bid Consultant, Raynor BID Consultancy

US Growth Opportunities for UK SMEs – Update on the UK's Top Trade Partner

Dr. Frank Levene, Independent Director, EMEA, Avitus Group Companies, Morgan Pierstorff, Business Development & Sales Director, Newable Limited, Rosemary Gallant, Minister Counselor for Commercial Affairs, US Embassy London and Gus Franklyn-Bute, Senior Regional Investment Advisor, UK & Ireland, SelectUSA, US Commercial Service, US Embassy London

Revenue Recovery Series: Managing your team remotely in recovery

Justin Stephenson, Partner, Sandler Training

What the Coronavirus pandemic is teaching us about Marketing & Mindset

Parag Prasad, Managing Director, ActionCOACH

LCCI Update - Maximise your Membership: new products and services in a changing world

Liz Henderson, Director of Membership and Events and Nick Charles, Head of Member Relationship Team, LCCI

Go Connect! Online Networking

LCCI members in plenary and break-out rooms

Capital Conversation

Mark Vale, President - UK, Ireland and the Nordics, UPS

Capital Conversation

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive, Environment Agency

Data governance and Secure Tech in the 'new normal'

Dr Emmanouil Ioannidis, Head of Governance, Risk and Compliance, FIN1 The Consultancy of Corporate Governance and Compliance

Financing Growth with Equity and Debt; how they differ and when to access them

Jonathan Monnickendam, Managing Director, Development Debt Consultancy Ltd

EU Exit - Are your suppliers and customers ready for the new border arrangements?

Charles Hogg, Commercial Director and Antons Gordejevs, Commercial Manager, Unsworth

Recordings of the webinars can be accessed at: www.londonchamber.co.uk/events/covid-19-webinar-series

Is arbitration an efficient and cost-effective proposition for resolving business disputes?

Jonathan Wood, LCAM Board Director and Rebecca Warder, Lawyer at Herbert Smith Freehills

Dealing with Uncertainty

Alison Charles, Managing Director, Alison Charles Ltd: Wellbeing in the Workplace

Trading with India through a pandemic and beyond

Siddharth Mukne, Associate Director – UK India Business Council (UKIBC)

Keep the flame burning without burning out: the importance of workplace wellbeing during the pandemic and how a wellbeing framework can support you

Sarah Gashier, Wellbeing Consultant and Dorothy Martin, Psychologist, Westminster City Council

... Coming up

Tuesday 8 September, 1.45pm – 2.30pm

Capital Conversation with Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, Chair, China-Britain Business Council (CBBC)

Wednesday 9 September, 8.30am – 10.00am

Go Connect! At Breakfast Online Networking

Thursday 10 September, 10.45am – 11.45am

Embracing sustainability: innovation and technology to address the climate challenge with Sarah Banham, Head of Communities & Sustainability, Battersea Power Station Development Company, Mark Jenkinson, Founder and Director, Crystal Associates and Peter Harris, Sustainability Director, UPS

Wednesday 16 September, 10.30am – 11.15am

Cyber Resilience: Defining your cyber security strategy with Stewart Hogg, Head of Information Security, Waterstons; Kieran Fowler, Senior Information Security Consultant, Waterstons

Thursday 17 September, 10.45am – 11.30am

Resolving business partnerships and joint venture dispute with Eve Pienaar, LCAM Mediator and Duncan Gorst, Solicitor, Hogan Lovells

Thursday 17 September, 12.15pm – 2.45pm

Transport & Infrastructure Briefing with Robin Mortimer, CE, Port of London Authority

Tuesday 22 September, 10.30am – 11.30am

The Business of Sport: Hospitality and Tourism Covid-recovery special with LCCI and Fife Chamber of Commerce and Max Fenton, Key Account Manager, Ascot Racecourse, Brett Tonkyn, Head of Hospitality and Malcolm Booth, Sales and Marketing Director, The R&A

Tuesday 22 September, 1.00pm – 1.45pm

Business Owners Club: helping business owners navigate the current climate with Robert Palmer and Neil Rowland who are both representatives with St. James's Place Wealth Management and Martin Brown CEO of Elephants Child Advisory Ltd

Wednesday 23 September, 10.45am – 11.30am

Export documents: the situation now with Peter Bishop, Deputy CEO, Davor Mckinley, Head of Export Documentation, LCCI

Thursday 24 September, 10.45am – 11.45am

Let Greece inspire you! Investment Opportunities in Tourism & Real Estate

Wednesday 30 September, 10.30am – 11.15am

Learn how to use Data and Intuition to meet your business objectives with Tim Shaw, Managing Director of Modus Analytics Limited

Wednesday 30 September, 12.30pm – 2.00pm

Go Connect! At Lunchtime Online Networking

Wednesday 1 October, 10.45am – 11.45am

Capital 500

Wednesday 7 October, 8.30am – 10.00am

Go Connect! At Breakfast Online Networking

Wednesday 7 October at 10.45am – 11.45am

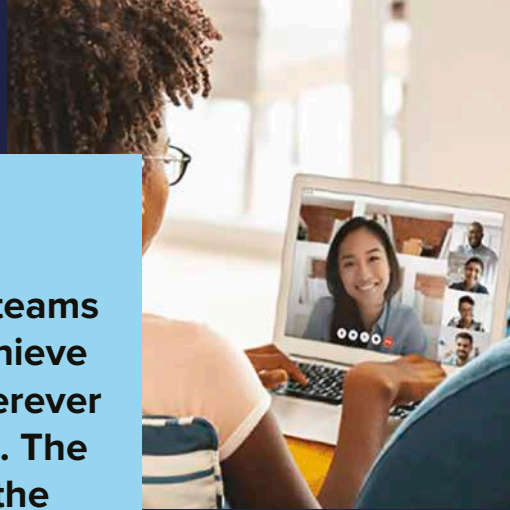
Business Opportunities in Germany and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) with Dagmar Wülknitz and Andrew Harfoot, NRW. INVEST



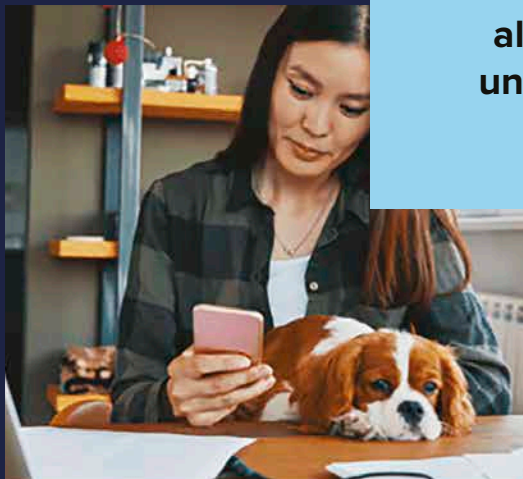
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I'm not sure I'll go back to working the way I did before this crisis, but that's partly due to the service excellence capabilities we've discovered in RingCentral highlighting quite how inefficient my meetings and communication were before!

Darren Preston, Chief Operating Officer
Fulham FC

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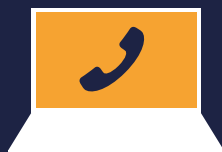


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How businesses can make a difference



City workers are being asked to celebrate their firms' community and volunteering initiatives later this month by taking part in online and offline activities as part of The Lord Mayor's Appeal's City Giving Day 2020.

The annual event, this year on Tuesday 22 September 2020, celebrates the value of the City to society and shows how businesses can make a difference. It champions activities – whether corporate social responsibility, philanthropy, or volunteering initiatives – that companies undertake as part of their commitment to supporting charity, society, the community and the environment in which they work.

Activities online

In light of Covid-19 and social distancing rules, businesses and employees are being encouraged



to think about how they can run activities online and using digital platforms. From online talent shows to digital escape rooms, collective cook-a-longs to mass Zoom raves, there are lots of options for firms to engage colleagues in exciting events that can help raise money for charities and causes.

As well as the online activities,

there will be the annual treasure hunt and City Walk which will give opportunities to explore the City in a safe way.

Organisations who are back in the office are also encouraged to organise activities safely and can take inspiration from previous years. At the 2019 Thank You Reception Credit Suisse won the Most Innova-

tive Event Award for their rickshaw rally around Canary Wharf, and Skanska won the Best Community Engagement Award for organising a whole week of activity ranging from beach cleans to taking over charity shops and garden tidying to painting rooms.

Inspired

In 2019, 424 organisations came together to recognise this work. By joining in they inspired up to 5,000 new volunteers to offer their time, raised more than £500,000 for good causes and highlighted some of the exceptional charitable activity that takes place throughout the year.

The campaign is a chance for employers to talk to staff, recognise achievements and plan even better community engagement in the future, whether in the form of mentoring, fundraising or volunteering

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Alderman William Russell The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of the City of London (above, right) said: "2019 was hugely successful, and this year we hope to see even more organisations and businesses getting involved in City Giving Day, holding events, volunteering, fundraising and sharing their stories to demonstrate the transformational impact of bringing together businesses, employees, communities and charities."

City Giving Day is designed to show a side to the businesses and firms that is community focused and concentrates on bringing about real impact. It's part of the multi-year strategy *A Better City for All*. Focused on four key pillars, the strategy aims to create a City that is inclusive, healthy, skilled and fair, with the objective of helping one million people thrive.

www.thelordmayorsappeal.org

Empowering women in the UAE



As Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ) has upgraded the features of its Business Women Package, the 'first-of-its-kind' women-focused product in the United Arab Emirates, which was introduced on Emirati Women's Day last year to empower more women to achieve their entrepreneurial dreams.

Among the next level benefits added by the economic zone to both 1-Year and 3-Year BusinessWomen Packages are: two free additional activities and 25 per cent reduction on employee and dependent visas, along with a range of value added services designed specifically for women in business.

Positive

"Over the course of a year, and since the initial launch of the RAKEZ BusinessWomen Package, we were honoured to take part in supporting more than 760 visionary women achieving their business aspirations. The RAKEZ BusinessWomen Package offered women the ideal opportunity to kick off their business with minimal burden," said Ramy Jallad, Group chief executive of RAKEZ. "The positive increase in female participation in the business landscape, has inspired us to further enhance the product and give even more to women leaders."

With this package, the economic zone is continuously welcoming women entrepreneurs from UAE and

all other countries, mostly coming from India, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, Philippines and France in different niche industries, such as cybersecurity and IT, e-commerce, lifestyle and development consultancy, interior design engineering, project management, and marketing management.



Ramy Jallad

Big decision

Currently flourishing in RAKEZ's ecosystem is Toshie Koyabashi, founder of Bella Tokyo, a fast-rising Japanese health and beauty products distributor in the UAE, who was previously registered in another jurisdiction. "RAKEZ's special product for women entrepreneurs really spoke to me as it better caters to my long-term goals. Making the move was a big decision but it was worth it. Getting my e-commerce licence at RAKEZ was quick and easy, and it was very good that I could arrange everything online with RAKEZ Portal 360," she said.

L de Lemos, owner of the clothing retail company Olika Trading, is another newcomer to RAKEZ who is impressed with her overall experience in the economic zone. She shared: "RAKEZ, as a whole, has exceeded my expectations in terms of customer service. Above all, its fees are reasonable and the incentives are very beneficial especially to women who are just starting their business."

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Two minute interview

Susanna Tóth - founder of the UK-Central Europe Business Summit™



Who are you?

I am a proud mother of a smart and beautiful girl who has grown up to be a risk and project management analyst. I am a health-conscious person and the founder of the UK-Central Europe Business Summit™ (UKCEBS) which promotes the UK as the best destination for Central European companies to invest, set up and establish their businesses. We facilitate B2B connections to help companies raise their profiles. With my business partner, Judit Molnár – who lives in Budapest – I provide direct connections for export-import partners for both sides and also valuable contacts.

What is your connection with the London Chamber of Commerce?

It was one of my best decisions four years ago when I relocated to London and become a proud member of LCCI. Since the beginning, my business has been supported by the management and who are absolutely committed to support members' businesses in many ways such as networking events, policy breakfasts and many other types of programmes that enabled me to meet many business professionals that I respect and with whom I have been able to develop valuable relationships.

What was your first job in London?

Am I allowed to mention the Hungarian adage: "Good girls go to heaven and bad girls go to London"? In 2000 my previous company, H-Net Language Center, won and managed a ten-year contract with the British and Hungarian Minis-



tries of Defence to provide complex language learning courses and test regimes aimed at ensuring Hungary did not default with its NATO obligations.

Which one business achievement over the last 12 months are you most proud of, and why?

Since 1998 when I established my first company, I have been attracted by challenges and making things grow around me. Brexit and then Covid-19 though have been exceptionally challenging and impacted my business. Nevertheless the UK-Central Europe Business Summit™ has been growing as more and more UK businesses and investors have registered their interest in Technology – Innovation – Investment.

During this time I have also had the opportunity to be a visiting lecturer at some London universities and help post-graduate students in business development and international market entry.

"If there is one thing I hate about my job it's ..."

... there isn't anything. I have always loved what I have done. Most importantly I have followed what Steve Jobs said: "I believe life is an intelligent thing: that things aren't random."

If you were advising a young entrepreneur which business person would you suggest as a model?

My suggestion is Warren Buffett. Not only because he is the fourth-wealthiest person in the world and the most successful investor but also because of the fact that he reads 500 pages every day. That is how knowledge works and it builds up like compound interest.

"I simply love London and how it is multicultural, open minded and liberal. We have access to a variety of famous and diverse cultural and sporting activities."

How is the current pandemic affecting your business?

Although we have not been able to meet and keep connections in person, UKCEBS event manager Judit Molnár and I have been devoting extra time to making online presentations to our guests and would-be clients about the benefits of the summit. We also carried out a marketing campaign in May and June so we could not have exploited the lockdown more effectively.

What measures have you taken?

As a consultancy we are about intellectual processes rather than 'goods' and products so we have not taken any special measures.

How is your business reacting to Brexit?

Brexit has not made our Central European startups and SME clients withdraw either from the UK market entry consulting area or the UKCEBS event. However, owing to uncertainty about future regulations they have been more prudent. The fact that since last October my UK strategic partner John McKeown (also an LCCI member) and I have been invited to share information and make presentations in Budapest and online about what the UK government financial support exists for

Central European (CE) companies coming to the UK.

How do you think the transport system in London can be improved?

I would massively increase pedestrianisation, reduce traffic and allow a street café culture to grow. This would help to deal with any future pandemics and recognise the massive beneficial increase we have seen in being able to walk without pollution. It even makes for a more polite society. But I also think that air conditioning on every tube would be appreciated.

Which piece of red tape causes most problems for your company and why?

We are naturally fully focused on keeping up-to-date for our CE clients about regulations and changes that can impact on their businesses. Our team and UK strategic partners are well qualified, successful professionals so there is no doubt that we are able to prepare our CE clients for the most cost effective UK market entry. Furthermore, I don't know if 'lockdown' itself can be called red tape or sheer common sense, but meeting and interacting with people is a crucial part of building relationships.

What is your favourite and least favourite thing about London?

I simply love London and how it is multicultural, open minded and liberal.

We have access to a variety of famous and diverse cultural and sporting activities. Least favourite for me is to see homeless people; and the cost of living is very high.

If you were Mayor of London for the day which one thing would you change?

Only electric vehicles would be allowed, no petrol and diesel ones. I would launch a massive publicity campaign to explain to people why and how they should start a health conscious life style in the hope of educating London society to be able to experience a quality life for as long as possible.



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New business formations on the rise



New data from the Centre for Entrepreneurs has revealed a record-breaking number of business formations in June - a 47 per cent increase on the same period last year. The increase has offset a significant drop in March, April and May of 19 per cent, 29 per cent and three per cent and suggests the beginning of an entrepreneurial recovery.

Covid economy

Every region and devolved nation across the UK saw an increase in formations in June with London and the Midlands leading the way with an increase of 60 per cent. There is also evidence of an emerging 'Covid economy' as sectors related to the pandemic saw a huge increase in the number of formations.

There were major increases in businesses formed related to disinfecting services (+400 per cent), wholesale of pharmaceuticals (+196 per cent), and research on biotechnology (+69 per cent).

As an example of this, IW Capital have recently invested in GPDQ, an innovative solution working closely with the NHS to help cope with the strain on doctors during the Coronavirus crisis. The raise - completed in April 2020 - was massively oversubscribed by their investor base as they looked to back the firm, even in spite of widespread reluctance in the wider investment market.

Sustainable

IW Capital have also complet-

ed a £10million investment round for Transcend Packaging, a leader in sustainable packaging which is targeting the replacement of single-use plastics by making in demand paper and fibre-based alternatives. They already work with leading consumer brands such as McDonald's, KFC and Starbucks and are looking to grow considerably post-Covid.

Luke Davis, chief executive and founder of SME investment firm IW Capital, said: "This has been a turbulent period for many businesses across the country, one not experienced for generations, but this has not deterred the UK's ecosystem of founders and entrepreneurs and the ambition and innovation that they have.

Talent and passion

"We have seen a huge amount of drive from SMEs to grow and scale, through investment from the private sector - which has been incredibly supportive considering the circumstances.

"The future of the UK economy relies on the talent and passion of business leaders and founders, they are the people who want to grow their business and employ more people, not as a part of subsidised programme but for the good of their business. When government support begins to come to an end, supporting this community will be of the utmost importance."

iwcapital.co.uk

Now could be the best time for your building project



by Mike Vasiliou

Construction and architecture are some of the few industries that have kept going during the lockdown. One of the reasons for this is that many people are seizing the opportunity to continue or start the planning phase of a home project – with flexibility to choose when the work starts.

Four key aspects

1. Using your free time at home

During the time that many of us are at home and likely spending much of our day online – there’s plenty of time to design ideas for your new home project that you would like to renovate or build.

2. Avoid the post-pandemic rush

Once many of the restrictions are lifted, we are predicting a rush for building and construction. That’s why it is important to keep your plans moving forward now.

The waiting time for council approval will also increase significantly once this situation returns to the

new normal, so I recommend submitting your plans early and avoiding this possible scenario where everyone will want their plans to be approved at the same time.

3. Many contractors and architects are working from home

Despite any lockdown, contractors

and architects continue to work and provide services to their clients from home digitally. It is an excellent opportunity to work closely with you and communicate regularly and remotely.

4. Low interest rates

The Bank of England has cut interest rates to an all-time low to limit the economic effect from Covid-19. Borrowing money to do your project has never been cheaper.

Instead of delaying your plans to build a new home or renovate later, now is prime time to take advantage of low borrowing costs by starting the design and planning part of the project.



Mike Vasiliou MEng is founder and director of DoBuild Construction Company
www.dobuild.co.uk



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The changing face of



by **Roland Norman**

Seismic changes are occurring in the workplace catering sector due to Covid-19. Caterers and their clients are striving to evolve and adapt how they operate in this new uncharted landscape, to reflect the new demands of physical distancing and safe practice.

The challenge is to maintain exceptional food service, not only keeping the office bubble but also, vitally, bringing staff together, increasing engagement, maintaining long held loyalty and encouraging a vibrant and morale boosting environment.

So how do we all rise to this challenge?

The challenge

In this new age of Covid -19 and social distancing life at work has

changed.

- Only 20-30 per cent of office workers are returning to the workplace
- Teams are being encouraged to stay in the office during the working day
- Staff canteens are being made safe to allow physical distancing
- Self-service meals and buffets are not possible
- When in the workplace, workers are being encouraged to stay at their desk
- Catering teams are being restricted on site
- In many instances catering is being significantly downsized.

Despite this, companies are starkly aware that the experience of workplace dining is an integral part to ensuring an environment of productivity, inclusiveness and belonging. For these companies it is imperative to ensure that their valued team members retain the many positive benefits of staff catering.

Response and solutions

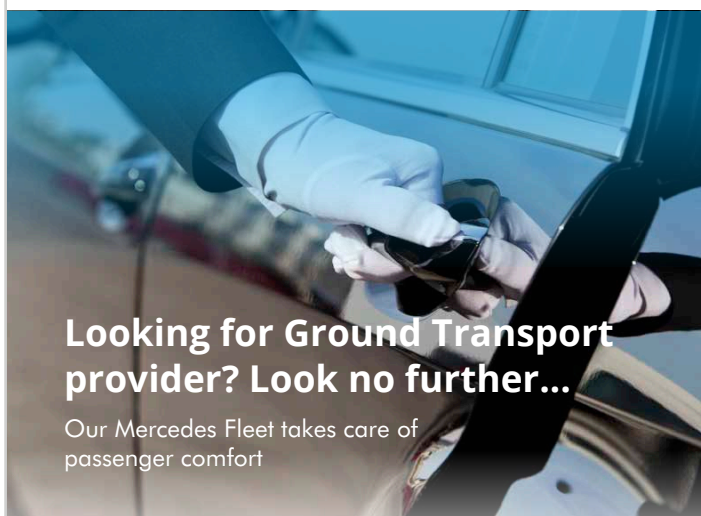
This is a time for thinking outside the box. Caterers producing food off-site of course have greater flexibility to produce quality food in a safe and controlled environment. This allows the best approach to producing food and maintaining the freshness and quality still demanded in this ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic. Creative solutions being implemented are:

- Pre-portioning and sealing of food in a safe environment to limit handling
- Allowing final preparation by the client on site to preserve the office bubble
- Protected serving areas with use



of screens and other distancing measures

- Returning temporarily to the use of disposables only, though with an emphasis on environmental sustainability
- Staggered lunch times, with reduced numbers of people at larger tables
- In larger offices, creating multiple small satellite finishing kitchens, so encouraging smaller numbers to eat in other areas of the workplace
- Exploring opportunities for 'on-desk dining', by providing micro-waves for staff
- The use of well-ventilated meeting rooms to have vital team



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workplace catering

lunches and set areas for specific teams, so minimising potential cross infection

- Restricting visits from people outside the workplace 'bubble'
- And all with the most stringent safety measures, including increased cleanliness, usage of PPE and carefully designed Covid-safe procedures.

Those now working from home

Consideration needs to be given to the large number of people who are now working from home. In the vast majority of cases, companies are considering adopting radically new working practices, including reducing their workplaces to just 50 per cent occupancy.

So how will the experience of working from home differ to that in the workplace?

For many this will be a huge cultural change; long term working from home could never have been anticipated. It is important for



workplace caterers to assist their clients to smooth the long-term transition. One way is providing options to incentivise and boost the morale of those newly working from home, away from their colleagues and teams.

Solutions for home workers

- Home menu plans for home workers, delivered to their door
- Healthy snacks and hot drink provisions delivered to their door
- Having a weekly package of nutritious frozen food delivered to each of your team
- Holding distanced group meet-

ings while all enjoying a meal together- delivered.

The benefits of providing food to your home-working teams

- Demonstrating they are valued and still rewarded, increasing productivity, engagement and loyalty
- Significant time saving during the working day, while providing a similar level of service that they would experience in the office
- Incentivise and motivate your workforce through the power of good food
- Remote team meetings can be enhanced by sharing a meal together, from afar, with individually delivered meal packages.

Time of change

Employers will need to consider all these challenges and work with caterers who are flexible and able to evolve, navigating and supporting their clients in this crucial time

of change. These select caterers will thrive in this environment of rapid innovation, accommodating all of the above and more. They will come up with the solutions, and even without an onsite kitchen, will still be able to provide a full catering service to their clients.

To find the right balance between teams both in the office and working from home, employers will need to work with the right supplier to find a solution that fits their expectations in this 'new normal', incentivising their teams, promoting happiness, loyalty, wellbeing, trust and above all productivity, within a safe environment.

Roland Norman is a sales consultant at Noble House Kitchen who specialise in both dynamic corporate catering, as well as fresh and frozen meal packages, specially designed for those working from home.

www.thenoblehousekitchen.com

Flies damn flies...

"If you followed a fly for a day you wouldn't eat for a week" is favourite saying of pest controllers.

There are more than 110,000 species of flies with the largest being around 6cm long and the smallest only around 0.15mm long. Some are more bothersome than others and carry more germs.

Cluster flies such as Common cluster fly *Pollenia rudis* are 'field' flies – they lay eggs in the soil and the larvae burrow into earthworms where they pupate.



Paul Bates Cleankill Managing Director

"There are more than 110,000 species of flies."

As the weather becomes cooler, they seek out shelter in nooks and crannies in buildings to hibernate in large numbers. Their favourite places are roof spaces and lofts.

Cleankill Pest Control's Managing Director Paul Bates explains: "As cluster flies don't breed indoors, controlling them outside is impractical. It's often impossible to keep flies from entering premises, no matter how well sealed or modern the property is." Insecticidal spraying around window and door frames and other entry points can help. Once flies are inside, control can be achieved with a range of insecticides and electronic ultra-violet fly machines available from Cleankill.

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Covid-19 and intellectual property law



by Edward Rainsford
and Joshua Davies

Covid-19 has affected almost everyone in the world in one way or another and, for most of us, life has been unrecognisable from what it was six months ago

It would seem however that while all of these events have been unfolding, Intellectual Property (IP) law has been playing its part in global events from the important issues surrounding the current healthcare crisis.

A Reuters article showed that the sharing of IP rights may be crucial to creating new antivirals and vaccines to fight COVID-19:

COVID-19 & Patent Rights

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-patents/u-n-agency-says-coronavirus-emergency-could-trump-some-patent-rights-idUKKBN21P1PZ>

The information currently circulating ranges to the absurd, such as the phenomenon that “multiple posts on Facebook claim that a research institute funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation owns the patent on the coronavirus causing the current pandemic” (spoiler alert - they don't):

USA Today - Gates Foundation v Coronavirus

<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2020/03/27/covid-19-fact-check-bill-melinda-gates-foundation-did-not-patent-coronavirus/2919503001/>

Coronaviruses are however not new, either to infecting humans or to being the subject matter of patent applications. The vast majority of coronavirus strains infecting humans cause nothing more than the ‘common cold’, which is really a catch-all term for many different types of virus that cause similar upper respiratory tract infections. There have however been a few exceptions which have caused far more severe symptoms and, in some cases, death.

In 2003, a new type of coronavirus infected the human population causing an outbreak termed ‘severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)’.



The SARS coronavirus had a mortality rate of about ten per cent. In 2012, a related but different strain of coronavirus caused an outbreak first recorded in Saudi Arabia leading to it being named ‘Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)’. The MERS coronavirus had a mortality rate of about 30 per cent.

While the current COVID-19 pandemic has spread further than these previous coronavirus outbreaks, the fatality rate has currently been estimated at about 4.5 per cent, which is significantly less than SARS and MERS.

Significant

What can these outbreaks tell us about intellectual property trends resulting from the current pandemic?

As shown in the table below, the previous outbreaks led to significant numbers of patent filings relating to coronavirus:

It seems logical to assume that there will be another substantial increase in filings relating to coronavirus in the near future. The UK gov-

ernment alone is promising £544 million to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. The coalition is supporting the development of vaccines that will be available throughout the world. It is likely that there will be a large number of patents filed based on this research.

Patent applications

Previous patent applications may provide an indication of the types of vaccines and antivirals that may be effective against Covid-19.

One of the first mentions of antivirals to coronavirus is in FR2263769, which was filed in July 1973 by Du Pont and, over the years, numerous patent applications relating to coronavirus antivirals and vaccines have also been filed.

EP1508615A1 of Amsterdam Institute of Viral Genomics BV was filed in 2003. The application related to vaccines and treatments for a previously unknown member of the coronavirus family, contracted by a seven-month-old child presenting coryza, conjunctivitis and fever.

Patent EP3172319B1, which was

filed by the Pirbright Institute in 2015, relates to an attenuated coronavirus which may be used as a vaccine for the avian infectious bronchitis virus.

Tests

It is not just intellectual property directly related to coronavirus that is going to play a critical part in how the pandemic is controlled. Due to the urgent need for Covid-19 antivirals, a large number of tests are being conducted for drugs that already have marketing approval and, therefore, have been shown to be safe for use in humans. One example is Remdesivir, made by Gilead Sciences.

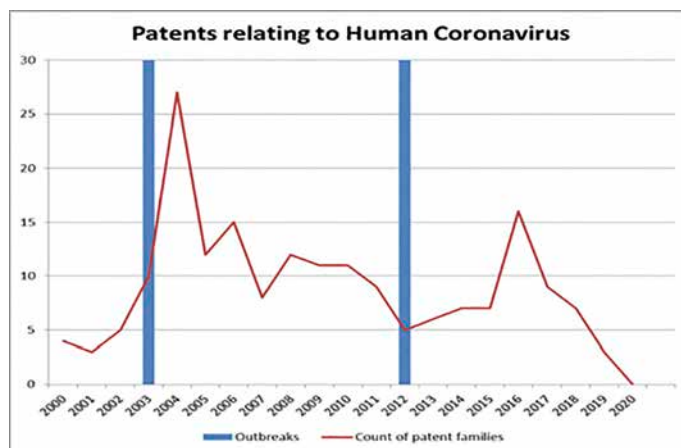
Remdesivir was originally tested as an antiviral for the treatment of Ebola. However, it has generally been concluded that this drug was not as useful as other treatments for this disease. However, phase three clinical trials have recently begun in the UK and are on-going in several other countries, to test the effectiveness of this drug in patients with moderate to severe Covid-19 infections.

It is worth noting that Gilead Sciences contemplated the use of Remdesivir and compounds related to Remdesivir long before the current Covid-19 pandemic, as evidenced by Gilead Sciences’s patent application WO2017/049060A1 filed in 2016 and its national phase filings.

Urgent needs

The granted patents and pending patent applications for Remdesivir may prove vital to protecting Gilead Sciences’s investment in research and development of this potential Covid-19 treatment. However, important discussions need to be had between private companies like Gilead Sciences and public healthcare bodies around the issues of remuneration on investment verses the expenditure required to treat the urgent needs of thousands of patients.

As the current pandemic unfolds and new and innovative treatments and vaccines are developed, intellectual property rights will continue to be discussed and play an important role.



Dr Edward Rainsford is senior associate - patents and Joshua Davies is a trainee patent attorney at Maucher Jenkins
www.maucherjenkins.com

University of
Hertfordshire **UH**

Connecting University of Hertfordshire students with employers during COVID-19

By the weekend of March 22nd, 2020, when the lockdown in the UK was announced, staff at the University of Hertfordshire (UH) had already started to work online from home to connect our students with employers. Immediately, the Careers and Employment team set about reimagining a resilient way forward to support our students with careers skills development and employment opportunities by moving our services online.

To help our students and graduates, who are based largely in Hertfordshire and Greater London, to navigate their career planning during and after COVID-19, we have hosted a comprehensive series of interactive online activities. We delivered a rich mix of skills development, one-to-one advice and employer engagement events. Our innovative approach to employer engagement has included Instagram takeovers, Instagram Q&As and employer webinars via MS Teams, using platforms that are popular and accessible for both students and employers.

To support our entrepreneurial students, the Enterprise team continue to provide access to a wide range of virtual webinars, one-to-one advice and intensive bootcamps to support them at the beginning of their start-up journey.

As a result of our efforts, students' interactions with virtual careers events have increased on last year by an incredible 551%.

Staff continue to work with employers to help them identify how we can work together to support their recruitment priorities during this difficult time. We

have been successful in targeting and promoting a huge variety of employment and placement opportunities to UH students and graduates using our online jobs portal, which is free for employers wishing to advertise their vacancies.

We forge ahead and are planning for large-scale UH virtual careers fairs in the Autumn.

We are also collaborating with London universities to deliver an inclusivity fair, Inclusive Futures, to highlight the need for employers to engage with students from BAME and Widening Participation backgrounds.

We work closely with employers and professional bodies to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on the

“We have been successful in targeting and promoting a huge variety of employment and placement opportunities to UH students and graduates.”

labour market, ensuring that the support we give to employers and students is relevant and responsive. Take a look at our website for details of our offer to employers and dates of our forthcoming fairs or contact us at recruit@herts.ac.uk to find out how UH can help with your talent pipeline.

Careers and Employment Service at the University of Hertfordshire



Ten iconic buildings for London tech companies

In the wake of London being named one of the best technology ecosystems in the world, according to Startup Genome's Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2020, First Office Hub, the global workspace broker, has picked its top ten iconic buildings for tech companies looking to make London their home.

Even in the face of disruption, London's tech scene continues to demonstrate its resilience. London is ranked equal second with New York this year, with Silicon Valley clinching the top spot. But it's not just "access to capital, investment and global talent" that positions London so highly. The report shows that London benefits from unparalleled connectivity to other global cities through its tech meetups, accelerators and incubators, research grants and R&D anchors.

Here are First Office Hub's top ten iconic tech buildings in the capital.

Old Street and Shoreditch

Corsham Street

Old Street is the UK's tech epicentre and WeWork's location on Corsham Street is home to some of the most innovative companies on the scene. As well as offices to accommodate different sized teams, the building contains a wellness room, event space, espresso bar and bike storage. Dogs are also allowed, so it's a win all round (unless you're allergic to dogs).

Central Street

Situated on the border of Clerkenwell and Old Street, this new workspace, FORA, is perfectly placed for tech companies. The building's state-of-the-art technology includes superfast fibre internet and a FORA app for members, as well as bespoke tech for offices. Companies can also engage with presentations and panel discussions in The Forum - an event space kitted out with the latest audiovisual technology.

Luke Street

With locations across East London including Luke Street, Techspace

is committed to supporting high growth tech businesses. This building comprises 20,000+ sq ft over four floors (that's room for over 300 members). According to Techspace, "many of our best leaps forward have been steps into the unknown..."

Rise is Barclays' global fintech platform/accelerator. Also located in Luke Street, between Shoreditch and Old Street Station, it's a place where "cutting-edge start-ups and scale-ups can connect, create and scale their businesses, backed by our Barclays' global network of industry experts, mentors, investors and partners."

If you're looking for a room with a view

The Shard



When it comes to business, is there a more iconic building in London than The Shard?

When it comes to business, is there a more iconic building in London than The Shard? We don't think so. What many people don't realise is that tech solopreneurs and SMEs can rent an office in The Shard on flexible terms thanks to The Office Group. The Shard's shared workspace is situated on floor 24/25 and its offices, unsurprisingly, boast incredible views.



© Antony Wood, CTBUH

One Canada Square

One Canada Square is a skyscraper in Canary Wharf, is the third tallest building in the UK and hosts a handful of dynamic companies, including Level39, a workspace accelerator for scaling tech companies. Members can expect access to world-class facilities, events, customers, freelance talent and infrastructure.

Worth researching

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park



Plexal is located in Here East, a hub for technology-led businesses, universities and creatives. It's part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and is on a mission to tackle some of society's biggest challenges - including cybersecurity, mobility and inclusion. Check out their Start-up tracker to find out how Covid-19 is affecting start-ups.

Camden Market

Tech companies cannot help but be inspired by this impressive building in the heart of Camden Market. LABS is a co-working and



One Canada Square is a skyscraper in Canary Wharf, and the third tallest building in the UK

office space and members become part of an interconnected community and can work in any of the operator's nine locations. A calendar of regular events (including TED Talks) enable tech start-ups to mingle with investors and advisors.

In the heart of London's West End

Henry Wood House

As a former BBC building, Henry Wood House is an architectural institution. It's situated around the corner from Oxford Street (on Riding House Street) and The Office Group offers flexible coworking and private office memberships. Tech companies can network with like-minded firms or professionals from other sectors in the space's meeting rooms, library, bar and roof garden.

Soho

Runway East (RE) was built by self-proclaimed 'tech nerds' in 2014 for start-ups looking to scale. As well as desks, this coworking operator matches its members with valuable connections through investment workshops and social events. Other RE locations can be found in London Bridge, Moorgate, Bristol and Temple Meads.

You can book a physical or virtual tour at any one of the locations above with First Office Hub. www.firstofficehub.com



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How to achieve a better data regime



By Dr Emmanouil Ioannidis

Whilst it is impossible to analyse all lessons learned from the way we have been working from home during the lockdown, it can be deduced that Covid-19 has taught us the lesson of lessons: we need to change our computing attitude in a way that will shape the future of computing and data governance for the better.

What have we learned so far from the way we have been working during the lockdown? Simply put, the fundamentals of responsible and safe computing and online presence, which I can summarise as follows:

- Anti-virus compatible with the operating system of our desktop and mobile devices and, through which: (a) we perform daily and weekly quick scanning, system scanning, disk junk cleaning, and software updating; (b) monitor regularly our quarantine space of Applications that may be harmful; (c) maintain activated real-time protection against malware, and (d) monitor regularly the 'trusted' Applications in our anti-virus whitelist.
- In terms of web security, use a VPN (choosing a secure location to connect with) for safe browsing. Our computer's firewall must be activated constantly and use advertisement blocking filters to safeguard against disruption and penetration. Depending on the type of laptops, mobile phones, desktops, and servers we use, full disk encryption is required, and our devices must have come with anti-interdiction firmware. We should be able to deactivate when required microphone/camera and wireless/bluetooth (Purism's Librem 13 laptop is a good example <https://fin1-compliance.com/secure-tech>). Additionally,



our passwords must be changed frequently, and we should have an encrypted password vault for generating and storing our passwords.

- For safe working from home/remotely, we must activate the wireless network watcher in our devices and check regularly our IP address and the frequency of our connectivity. We must review thoroughly the list of devices connected through our router and reset often our router password. Protection filters must be activated by 'enabling' only 'our own' devices and by clicking on 'prevent' any other unauthorised devices to thus prevent cybercriminals from hacking our network and stealing our personal and workplace data. The WPAS-PSK technology uses temporal key integrity protocol and ensures that that every device is handed its very own, pre-encrypted key that cannot be hijacked or stolen by any man-in-the-middle attacks attempting to impersonate a new user on our network.

Consent

What steps do we need to take to ensure the most secure way of work-

ing in the future? We need to appreciate the importance of protecting digital rights and personal data whilst connected to the internet. The illegal processing of personal data and metadata can be prevented if users review diligently the terms and conditions before granting their consent for the processing of their personal data in exchange for downloading and accessing applications on their devices. Users should keep in mind at all times that it is crucial to enjoy the benefits of full disk encryption and to hold exclusively the master keys of their cryptographic signatures by making good use of USB security tokens.

The prevention of the use of AI algorithms to exploit and shape consumer patterns, online and social behaviours must become our top priority. In the same way we are determined to protect human rights, we should be protecting our digital rights too. We should raise awareness of the hidden threats to our digital rights when we as users give up control in the name of convenience (downloading Applications and first agree to their terms and conditions - otherwise access is denied - without even reading them).

For safe working from home/remotely, we must activate the wireless network watcher in our devices.

Work collectively

Is it all about 'convenience and control' or 'inconvenience and freedom'? No. We can have the former by embracing secure technology that benefits society on the basis of ethical principles. We should avoid using Applications that prevent users from controlling their personal data. The proceeds of enrichment from illegal processing of personal data constitutes illicit enrichment under the law. What needs to be done to change this situation? To work collectively with all stakeholders to promote, enhance, advocate, regulate and build products that protect our digital rights:

- The right to change service providers (not being locked in contracts)
- The right to own and control our own master keys to encrypt all our data and communications - nobody else
- The right to have the freedom to inspect the source of software used and to be able to run it as we wish for any lawful purpose
- Service providers must be obliged to store the minimum of personal data that is necessary to provide the service. Once the data is no longer needed, the data must be deleted permanently
- Nobody should be discriminated against or be forced (cohesion contracts) to agree to any terms and conditions before accessing a service.

Dr Emmanouil Ioannidis is head of governance, risk, compliance and secure tech at FIN1 CCGC LTD www.fin1-compliance.com

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In praise of red tape: getting regulation right



by Sir James Bevan

“Imagine a city where hundreds of thousands of people live. In the centre is a huge industrial plant which produces chemicals. One night there is an explosion in the plant. A deadly gas settles over much of the city and the sleeping people. By morning thousands are dead.

The agony doesn't stop there: in the decades that follow, many thousands more die from the effects of the gas, or from birth deformities; hundreds of thousands more have their lives ruined; and the land and water around the plant are poisoned.

This is not fiction. It happened, in 1984 in Bhopal, India. I have visited the site where the chemical plant remains, derelict and rusting away. People still live all around it, many of them the victims of the explosion. The land is still poisoned and the water is undrinkable. Nearly forty years on, no one has been held accountable. The sense of loss and injustice is visceral.

Failed regulation

Bhopal is a textbook example of failed regulation. A hazardous industrial plant was allowed to operate in the middle of one of the most densely populated cities in the world without proper checks and precautions until one day disaster struck. Bhopal is why I believe in regulation.

Regulation – good regulation – is essential. It protects people and the environment from harm and it creates a level playing field for business, allowing well-run companies to thrive and stopping those who don't want to play by the rules from undercutting them. Good regulation drives growth and innovation. It doesn't just protect the environment but enhances it.

Good regulation is also a moral duty: responsible industries welcome it as a way to help reduce the risk their operations could otherwise pose to people or the environment. These industries also accept that they, not the government or the

taxpayer or the local community, should pay the cost of being regulated: the cardinal principle for protecting the environment is that the polluter pays.

Healthier



Since 2008, the sites the Environment Agency (EA) regulates have cut emissions of sulphur oxides by 81 per cent

I believe that regulation works. Take air quality. Since 2008, the sites the Environment Agency (EA) regulates have cut emissions of sulphur oxides by 81 per cent, nitrous oxide by 65 per cent, greenhouse gases by 47 per cent, and PM 10 – one of the most damaging particulates – by 37 per cent. Good law, good practice and good regulation has made our air healthier.

Not all regulation works and not all regulation is good. Bad regulation can be too prescriptive, bureaucratic, expensive, out of date for the industry it regulates, and, worst of all, ineffective at doing what it is supposed to do – protect people and the environment. I am happy to praise good red tape but am against it if it is regulation for its own sake, or bad regulation.

Less is more

What does good regulation look like? It regulates the right things in the right way to produce the right outcomes. Even though I head up one of the biggest regulatory authorities in the country, I don't think all human activity should be regulated.

In fact, I would rather have fewer activities being regulated, better. As they teach you at Harvard Business

School, the main thing is to make sure that the main thing really is the main thing. The more regulators have to focus on things which are not the main thing, the bigger the risk that the real main thing gets neglected, until something bad happens. In regulation, as in so much else, less is more.

Managing risk

At its heart regulation is about managing risk. Nothing in life is risk-free. But you only need regulation where there is a material risk to life, livelihoods or the environment which needs to be carefully managed. That is why the Environment Agency regulates nuclear power stations, chemical plants and the waste industry but ice-cream sellers or kite-flyers.

As well as regulating the right things, we also need to regulate in the right way. That means regulation which is risk-based, proportionate, and business friendly. The amount and nature of regulation needs to be keyed to the amount of risk in the activity being regulated; and it needs to be proportionate to the risk – too much regulation of too little risk is a cost on business and a dangerous distraction for the regulator from other activities on which we should be focused.

Good regulation also looks actively to support legitimate businesses. Those businesses are providing the jobs, growth, and goods and services we need. It is our duty as regulators to help them do that while protecting people and the environment.

Philosophy

That is why the EA's philosophy is “Yes, If”: yes to a business operating as it needs to operate, if the necessary protections can be put in place.

That is why, as businesses struggle with the impact of Covid-19, the EA has supported them, including by adopting Regulatory Position Statements that allow them not to give effect to all their normal obligations if they cannot do so in the current circumstances. And that is why our default regulatory approach is to provide advice and guidance to businesses to allow them to operate

successfully, and to use our powers of enforcement only when necessary.

But good regulation also needs teeth, because not everyone plays by the rules. The EA will not hesitate to go after waste criminals who damage communities and legitimate businesses or water companies who cause serious pollution of our rivers.

We welcome the fact that the courts are now imposing much stronger sentences for environmental crime – including during my time as Chief Executive a seven and a half year jail sentence for a waste fraudster in Leeds, and a £20m fine against Thames Water for dumping over a billion litres of raw sewage in the Thames.

And just as good regulators should go after bad performers and support the good ones, so good businesses should support good regulators. All businesses have an interest in their reputation, and there is nothing so damaging to your reputation as causing a major pollution incident: working with regulators rather than against them helps businesses ensure that.

Moreover, the right kind of regulation helps business. Farmers, for example, have an interest in following the regulations on soil use. That's because their soil is their biggest asset, and degrading it or allowing it to wash away into the rivers – which is the effect of failing to follow the right practices – is the fastest way to undermine their own business.

Mutual advantage

An example of how regulators and business can work together to mutual advantage is the Thames Tideway Tunnel. This is a new 25km sewer running from west to east London mostly under the River Thames. It will address the problem of overflow from Bazalgette's Victorian sewers, ensuring that after high rainfall sewage discharges don't empty straight into the Thames as now but are collected, moved east, and treated.

The EA is closely involved with this project because of the major impacts on the environment and flood risk from the Thames. Rather than the traditional arms' length

relationship between the regulator and the regulated, EA staff are actually embedded in and funded by the Thames Tideway team itself.

This is a win for the project, because it means they can get the best advice and quickest possible decisions from the EA team, essential for them to complete the project fast and on budget.

It's a win for the EA, because it gives us the best possible understanding of the issues and the biggest possible influence on the outcomes to ensure maximum environmental benefit.

Most of all it's a win for the environment and for London, because the project will bring the biggest single change to the quality of the water in the Thames in generations, and increase London's resilience to the higher rainfall that the climate emergency is bringing.

Outcome not the process

Good regulation is focused on the outcome not the process. Old-style regulators would tell a company precisely how it had to operate. But the how is not really the point.

What matters is the what – the outcome you are seeking to achieve. It is much better for regulators to tell companies the effect they need to achieve and let the business identify the most cost-effective way to achieve that effect: the business is much more likely to know the right answer than the regulator.

Example: the EA has worked with Wessex Water to reduce pollution in Poole harbour. Most of the pollution was coming from nearby farms, where the run-off of chemicals applied to land was entering the watercourses and ending up in the harbour. In the old days the EA would have told Wessex Water how to solve this: by requiring them to build a costly water treatment plant somewhere at the bottom of the catchment to strip the chemicals out of the water before it reached the harbour.

But the point is what you achieve not how you do it. The what here was preventing pollution of the harbour, and together Wessex Water and the EA came up with a better answer for the how: paying farmers to reduce the chemicals they apply to land in the first place, through a reverse auction initiative called EnTrade, so solving the problem at source, and saving Wessex Water (and their customers) the cost of a water treatment plant.

Remember the ultimate outcome we are seeking. The goal of good



Sir James Bevan interviewed by LCCI chief executive Richard Burge in a recent webinar

There is no point leaving the EU to keep everything the same. The old model has not stopped the decline in our natural world – George Eustice

environmental regulation should not be merely to reduce the damage that human activities do to nature, nor should it even be to prevent that damage. The goal should be to enhance the environment and do what the EA exists to do: create a better place.

Build back greener

For too long we have been insufficiently ambitious as regulators. As the Secretary of State for the Environment George Eustice has said: “in recent decades, our approach to environmental regulation, particularly in regards to nature and biodiversity, has been to protect what is left and to stem the tide of decline. However, if we really want to realise the aspirations that the public have for nature then we need policies that will not only protect but that will build back greener.”

The OxCam arc is a good example of where we could achieve that ambition. This development between Oxford and Cambridge may see up to one million new homes by 2050, more infrastructure, and more businesses based on the knowledge economy.

The EA is working to turn the environmental risks into opportunities: to secure the homes and jobs that people need, but also to deliver environmental net gain, climate resilient infrastructure, and better places to live for people and wildlife. With the right regulatory approach we can build energy and water effi-

cient homes; clean businesses supported by low carbon energy and transport; and green and blue spaces that are beautiful life-enhancing places to be.

Humility

Regulators need a generous dash of humility. Sometimes we make mistakes, stick with an approach which has been overtaken by events, or adopt a position which isn't as proportionate, risk based or business friendly as it should be.

So just as we challenge others to do the best they can, it is right that we are challenged to do likewise. And right that when we get things wrong, which we will from time to time, we have the character to acknowledge it and change our approach.

Today the nation faces a series of challenges: rebooting the economy after Covid, making a success of the UK's new position outside the EU, and tackling the biggest of all threats, the climate emergency. The right regulation can help with all three. The immediate challenge is to secure a green recovery.

Faster and greener

The Prime Minister set out the government's approach in a speech earlier this summer. I agree that we need to move with energy and speed that we have not needed for generations; that we need to build better, faster and greener; and that we must ensure that red tape doesn't stop green growth.

Much of the regulation we currently enforce derives from EU law. Leaving the EU offers us opportunities, if we want to take them, to change that law.

In a recent speech George Eustice said that “When it comes to our new approach to the environment, we must have an appreciation of what worked in the EU in the past, and also what didn't work.

Where there were approaches inside the EU that helped our environment, we should recognise these and be willing to borrow features from them.”

He went on to say that “there is no point leaving the EU to keep everything the same. The old model has not stopped the decline in our natural world. We must therefore challenge ourselves to think creatively, to innovate and to consciously avoid clinging to processes and procedures just because they are familiar”.

Innovative

I am all for doing that innovative thinking, including about which bits of inherited EU law we should keep and which we should change. If changing the law will allow us to regulate better and achieve higher environmental standards we should always be open to that. For example I would repeal the EU Floods Directive which requires member states to carry out flood risk assessments, create maps of flood risk and develop flood risk management plans. All very sensible, except the UK was already doing most of those things before the directive arrived and will carry on doing them. The directive was not really about those things: its purpose was to drive cooperation between continental EU member states like France and Germany who share large river basins.

We are not in that category and don't need the directive, but it still drives some regulatory work. On the basis that less is more, I would get rid of it. The government's recent flood policy statement, and the EA's new flood strategy, set out a much more modern and comprehensive approach to reducing flood risk and enhancing resilience in the face of climate change.

Protect

There is a lot of EU-derived law that I would keep as is. Much of it was written by UK experts, and much of it does well what we all want: protect or enhance nature.

Example: the Bathing Waters Directive, which protects public health and the environment by keeping coastal waters free from pollution. It has done exactly that, driving the water companies, the regulators, the local authorities and local communities to hugely improve the water quality on most of our beaches.

Result: last year, out of the 420 bathing waters in England, all but seven met at least the minimum standard, and 300 were rated Excellent – a great example of good law and good regulation producing better environmental outcomes.

Save the planet

The final thing that good regulation can do for us is to save the planet. The biggest of all threats we face – to our environment, our economy, our future – is the climate emergency. And the climate emergency is a great example of where regulation works and can stimulate not choke business.



Christine Lagarde

Photo: European Parliament from EU / CC BY 2.0



Hilary Clinton

Photo: Gage Skidmore / CC BY-SA 2.0



Margaret Thatcher

Photo: Rob Rogers / Aneto / CCO

Successive UK governments have led the way.

The 2008 Climate Change Act required the progressive reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Since 1990 the UK has reduced emissions by 42 per cent and grown our economy by 72 per cent - which shows we can both tackle climate change and have the sustainable growth we all want. And the 2019 legislation committing the UK to get to net zero by 2050 was groundbreaking: it made the UK the first major economy in the world to pass laws to end its contribution to global warming by 2050.

The EA's regulatory work is helping us get there. We play a central role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by regulating many of the sectors involved (e.g. power stations), implementing the current EU Emissions Trading Scheme and

the arrangements that will follow that at the end of the transition period, and giving permits to renewable and low carbon technology such as hydropower – all of which is driving innovation and growth.

Lagarde, Clinton and Thatcher

I will end with three quotes about regulation from three very different people. I suspect that none of them would be likely to agree very much with each other, but each of them has expressed a view on regulation which I endorse.

The first is Christine Lagarde: "Regulation is necessary, particularly in a sector which exposes countries and people to risk".

The second is Hilary Clinton: "There's nothing magic about regulation: too much is bad, too little is bad".

And the third is Margaret Thatcher: "Every regulation represents a restriction of liberty. Every regulation has a cost. That is why, like marriage in the Book of Common Prayer, regulation should not be enterprised unadvisedly, lightly or wantonly.

Let us resolve to avoid wanton regulation. But let us also recognise that good regulation is not red tape: it is what gets you green growth and a blue planet.))

Sir James Bevan KCMG is chief executive of the Environment Agency. He was a recent guest speaker in the LCCI's series of Capital Conversation webinars. This is an edited and abridged version of his speech in August. www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency



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Data protection and the hospitality sector



by Penny Bygrave and Sarah Thorley

Restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaways have been opening up steadily since the government eased certain restrictions earlier this summer. Businesses in this sector should though be aware that there are important data protection requirements they should observe.

Privacy notices

One key change in the government guidance, alongside social distancing measures, is that hospitality businesses are asked to keep a temporary record of customers and visitors for 21 days in order to support the NHS test and trace service. It is not yet clear whether this is a mandatory requirement or advised best practice.



As the guidance rightly notes, many businesses that take bookings already have systems for recording their customers and visitors. The government has said the new system will be designed in line with data protection legislation. Whatever system businesses decide to use, as a minimum, hospitality businesses will have to update their privacy notices to advise customers that their personal data will be shared with the government through the NHS test and trace.

“Collecting contact details from customers may be a really useful marketing tool, but you need to make sure you comply with GDPR.”

Apps

The guidance suggests using apps to allow customers to order and pay, any such app will likely have features to store customers’ data and could be a practical tool to allow the business to meet the guidance in both keeping a record and also social distancing. Collect-

ing information through an app introduces a number of privacy issues, and the app provider will usually seek to pass any privacy risk to the hospitality business. We recommend checking the terms of use carefully before agreeing to share any customers’ data via an App.

Collecting contact details from customers may be a really useful marketing tool, but you need to make sure you comply with GDPR. In particular, if you are going to use the contact details for electronic marketing, you need to ensure that you are legally permitted to do so.

Penny Bygrave is a senior associate and Sarah Thorley a solicitor in Veale Wasbrough Vizard LLP’s data protection team www.vvw.co.uk



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Business telecoms trends that will revolutionise the mobile workforce



by **Natasha Bougourd**

Technology has come a long way in the past decade, and the telecoms industry is no exception. Since 2010, this sector has seen major advancements and the worldwide revenue of telecoms services is estimated to be £1,026 billion. This year, we have seen an overwhelming move towards mobile and flexible working — a trend that was already gaining momentum before the Covid-19 lockdown made it a necessity for many businesses.

The advancements of telecoms

It was during the 2010s that VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) really began to build traction and offer a high-tech solution for the telecoms industry around the world. Along with the growing availability of VoIP, the past decade has seen an incredible improvement in internet services. High-quality internet has become available to the masses, with many users benefitting from 100Mbps and upwards connections — at reasonable prices. As more businesses move their processes towards cloud services, reliable internet has become a necessity for any organisation.

Since then, cloud services have made flexible and remote working possible — something that has come in extremely useful in the recent months. Remote working has also benefitted from fibre broadband, which has become far more accessible for everyone in recent years — an estimated 96 per cent of the UK now have access to internet speeds of at least 24Mbps.

The telecoms industry has undoubtedly been an area of great innovation in recent years, but what does the future hold? The 2020s are set to bring some extraordinary telecoms advances and trends — here are the top four to look out for.



Customers and businesses are set to benefit from the mass-introduction of 5G.

Hosted telephony

Businesses everywhere will continue to switch to using cloud-based technology, at an ever-accelerating rate, and largely switch to a cloud-first approach and business plan. Hosted voice services will also become the norm — necessitating an improved telecommunications infrastructure.

Most businesses are set to move away from the need for physical equipment wherever possible, switching from traditional PBX systems and towards a softphone-only environment. As well as offering a smarter way to operate, this switch will also bring many other benefits, including:

- Disaster recovery capabilities — traditionally, this was only afforded to organisations with a lot of money to spend
- Flexibility — giving staff the ability to work from any location while still being part of the corporate system
- Preparing for the ISDN switch-off
- Cost-savings — which can easily be achieved through consolidation, reduced call spend, and

typically, a low capital expenditure when implementing a new system.

The ISDN switch-off

Openreach has already announced that analogue and ISDN services will be coming to an end in 2025, which means all businesses will have to move away from these traditional systems and embrace the future of telecoms technology. It is essential that these upgrades are made before it is too late, and that businesses are not left without their voice services because of reacting too slowly. From now on, any new buildings or upgrades are set to be developed around super-fast fibre FTTP instead of the FTTC (fibre to the cabinet) technology that we have seen previously. This mass upgrade is set to provide speeds of up to 1Gbps.

Providers are upping their game

Many providers are taking communications to the next level and utilising mobile convergence options that will allow your phone system the functionality of a softphone without the need for one. Mobile convergence technology will be yet another factor that facilitates remote, flexible working. We are already well on our way to full convergence (smart phones, for example, already combine the functionality of e.g. a telephone, a camera, or a music player) but we are likely to see this tech become more

integrated within our business practices over the coming years.

5G will give us endless mobile possibilities

Customers and businesses are set to benefit from the mass-introduction of 5G. Mobile voice services will be greatly improved by the installation of 5G, meaning that a mobile workforce will be able to use voice services even when they are away from a WiFi connection. These exciting possibilities will also be furthered by innovations such as AI and the Internet of Things— both of which will contribute to the easy formation of an interconnected mobile workforce. Recent news however, suggests that the UK's decision on using Huawei equipment might limit our access to 5G until 2025.

The future is more inter-connected than ever, while also looking to be extremely mobile. Make sure your business stays up to date with the trends and try to remain one step ahead so you can always ensure you are benefitting from an efficient and well-connected workforce. If you feel it's time to make some upgrades or improvements in your telecoms systems right now, utilise external IT support and some expert advice to really up your game.

Natasha Bougourd is a lead applications writer at TSG www.tsg.com/managed-it-services

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News from the EU



Compiled and edited
by Emma Blanchet

WTO appeal arrangement gets operational

■ EU Commissioner for Trade Phil Hogan has announced that, with the agreed pool of arbitrators, the interim appeal arrangement for the WTO disputes is now up and running. “I am grateful to the arbitrators for participating in this important mechanism, and to the other participants for engaging in a very constructive way in selecting the arbitrators. It shows that participating WTO members are willing to take concrete action to preserve an independent dispute settlement system with an appeal function. We can now turn our attention to finding a solution to the underlying problems through reform of the WTO Appellate Body and other aspects of the WTO system that need improvement.”

The EU’s priority remains resolving the current WTO Appellate Body impasse as part of a wider reform of the WTO. This is even more important now that the public health situation has re-emphasised the need for a properly functioning, multilateral, rules-based global trading system.

Cambodia loses duty-free access to EU market

■ A statement from Trade Commissioner Hogan outlines the EU stance: “We have provided Cambodia with trade opportunities that let the country develop an export-oriented industry and gave jobs to thousands of Cambodians. We stand by their side also now in the difficult circumstances caused by the pandemic. Nonetheless, our continued support does not diminish the urgent need for Cambodia

to respect human rights and labour rights. I stand ready to continue our engagement and to restore fully free access to the EU market for products from Cambodia provided we see substantial improvement in that respect.”

The withdrawal of preferential access to the EU market concerns approximately 20% of Cambodia’s exports to the EU. Cambodia may still export those products to the EU but they will be subject to general tariffs applicable to any other member of the World Trade Organization. The remaining 80% of Cambodia’s exports continue to enjoy preferential (duty-free, quota-free) access to the EU market.

The Commission, together with the European External Action Service will continue its enhanced engagement with Cambodia. The EU will continuously monitor the situation in the country, with a particular focus on current restrictions in the areas of freedom of expression and civil and political rights, as well as land disputes and labour rights in the context of the ongoing reforms.

The EU is aware of the significant impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Cambodia’s economy and employment and stands ready to support the country in its fight against the coronavirus crisis and towards economic recovery. This, however, does not waive the urgent need to ensure respect for human rights and labour rights in Cambodia.

Since February 2020, when the EU’s decision on partial withdrawal was taken, the Cambodian Government could at any time have taken the necessary steps to fulfil the conditions allowing the European Union to fully restore EBA preferential access to the EU market. This remains the case.

The Cambodian authorities should take action to restore political freedoms in the country, to re-establish the

“We have provided Cambodia with trade opportunities that let the country develop an export-oriented industry and gave jobs to thousands of Cambodians.”

necessary conditions for a credible, democratic opposition and to initiate a process of national reconciliation through genuine and inclusive dialogue. The Commission and the EEAS have outlined the necessary actions to the Cambodian authorities on numerous occasions, as well as in the Commission’s Delegated Regulation. Actions include the reinstatement of the political rights of opposition members and the repeal or revision of laws, such as the Law on Political Parties and the Law on Non-Governmental Organisations. If the government of Cambodia shows significant progress, particularly on civil and political rights, the Commission may review its decision and reinstate tariff preferences under the “Everything But Arms” arrangement, in line with the provisions of the EU Generalised System of Preferences.

EU-Vietnam trade agreement enters into force

■ European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen commented “The European economy needs now every opportunity to restore its strength after the crisis triggered by the coronavirus. Trade agreements, such as the one becoming effective with Vietnam today, offer our companies a chance to access new emerging markets and create jobs for Europeans. I strongly believe this agreement will also become an opportunity for people of Vietnam to enjoy

a more prosperous economy and witness a positive change and stronger rights as workers and citizens in their home country.”

The EU-Vietnam agreement is the most comprehensive trade agreement the EU has concluded with a developing country. It takes fully into account Vietnam’s development needs by giving Vietnam a longer, 10-year period to eliminate its duties on EU imports.

However, many important EU export products, such as pharmaceuticals, chemicals or machinery will already enjoy duty-free import conditions as of entry into force. Agri-food products like beef or olive oil will face no tariffs in three years, while dairy, fruit and vegetables in maximum five years. Comprehensive provisions on sanitary and phytosanitary cooperation will allow for improving market access for EU firms via more transparent and quick procedures.

It also contains specific provisions to address regulatory barriers for EU car exports and grants protection from imitation for 169 traditional European food and drink products (like Roquefort cheese, Porto and Jerez wines, Irish Cream spirit or Prosciutto di Parma ham) recognised as Geographical Indications.

At the same time, the trade agreement expresses a strong commitment of both sides to the environment and social rights. It sets high standards of labour, environmental and consumer protection and ensures that there is no ‘race to the bottom’ to promote trade or attract investment.

Under the agreement, the two parties have committed to ratify and implement the eight fundamental Conventions of International Labour Organization (ILO), and respect, promote and effectively implement the principles of the ILO concerning fundamental rights



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at work; implement the Paris Agreement, as well as other international environmental agreements, and act in favour of the conservation and sustainable management of wildlife, biodiversity, forestry and fisheries; and involve independent civil society in monitoring the implementation of these commitments by both sides.

EU and China discuss trade and economic relations

■ After a recent meeting between officials, it was pointed out that the current crisis gave the EU no other option but to work hand in hand with our global partners, including China. "By pulling together we can recover more quickly economically, and make progress on areas of mutual interest such as trade and investment relations. However, we also need to address sticking points such as reciprocity in the way our

companies are treated. We will need to make further progress on these and other issues ahead of the next leaders' summit in the autumn."

The meeting allowed the two sides to exchange views on the ongoing negotiations on a Comprehensive Agreement on Investment following the last negotiating round which took place on 20-24 July. The EU registered the significant progress made on level playing field related issues, while highlighting that equally significant work that still remains to be done on key issues such as market access and sustainable development. On market access, the EU reiterated its request for improvements of China's offer in the telecommunication and computer sectors, health, biotechnology and new energy vehicles. On sustainable development, the EU insisted upon the political importance of meaningful commitments in this area and the need for China to increase its ambition and engagement.

"The EU and China agreed on the need to ensure the continued relevance of the World Trade Organization in addressing global trade challenges"

With regards to market access, the EU recalled its request to China to authorise Member States' exports of agricultural products currently awaiting export authorisation, as it is the case in the beef and poultry sector. The EU also outlined its concerns about new restrictions introduced on food exports, on the ground of controlling the coronavirus pandemic, leading to an increased number of unjustified inspections, controls and requests for certificates on EU exports of agricultural products.

Both sides also discussed market access in the financial services sector, with the EU side

encouraging China to continue opening China's financial services market to foreign investment.

A range of regulatory issues in the financial services area were also discussed, including cooperation on green finance, equivalence assessments, and the international role of the Euro and of the RMB. The two sides exchanged views on the current coronavirus pandemic and the need to work closely in the international arena to ensure a coordinated response to both the health and economic emergencies.

The EU and China agreed on the need to ensure the continued relevance of the World Trade Organization in addressing global trade challenges. In line with the 2019 EU-China Summit Joint Statement, the EU reiterated the urgent need for China to engage in future negotiations on industrial subsidies.

The EU also called upon China to start exploratory talks for an agreement with the EU covering administrative cooperation to fight VAT fraud.

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Registration Deadline: Monday 21 September 2020

Location: Copenhagen, Denmark

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Registration Deadline: Wednesday 30 September 2020

Location: Zurich, Switzerland

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Registration Deadline: Tuesday 3 November 2020

Location: Online, B2Match

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Capital matters

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» TISE GREEN	» Growing product range	» Premier location	follow us on LinkedIn

2020 marks 20 years for Labyrinth Technology

September 2020 marks the start of Labyrinth's 20th year providing proactive and efficient IT Support & Solutions to businesses in the London area. Our business has changed significantly and continuously over the last two decades - as has the technology that we supply and support. Voice over IP (VoIP) telephony, online storage services and cloud-based software were simply not available only ten years ago in the way that they are now - and how different the current year would have been without them!

The diversity of solutions available now have, however, made IT for businesses of all sizes far more complex, and even the smallest business

should have expert advice on IT strategy and security. Twenty years ago, IT support was very reactive: when a problem was reported to us, we fixed it. Now, when a single, successful cyber-attack could put an unprepared company out of business it is imperative that a proactive approach is taken to planning IT strategy.

Labyrinth Technology focuses heavily on a Partnership Based approach to IT outsourcing. We recognised very early on that to build a relationship of trust where our advice had weight, we had to be completely ethical in our approach to sales and only work on the principle of "Best Advice". To be clear: I can honestly say that I am not aware of one case in the last twenty years

where we have sold a product that a customer did not need.

That dogmatic position might impact short term profitability but our professional, considered advice helps our clients get the most from their IT - saving them money and most importantly time - and we benefit long-term from a rewarding, ongoing business relationship.

Some of our clients have been with us for our entire journey. We look forward to working with many more up to and beyond our milestone anniversary next year.



Mature Graduates - Do They Make The Best Employees

You're the hiring manager for your department, and you're in desperate need of some new blood in your team. You call your friends in HR, explain your criteria and wait. Soon the CVs start flying in, but what should you look for in the growing pile? Alongside the requisite higher education qualification, you might decide those employability skills gained through work experience must also be present on the right candidate's CV. You need a confident communicator that is capable of self-managing and has great initiative.

Unfortunately, the CVs of these fresh-faced grads show little evidence of the long-term professional work experience you're looking for. There is, however, an often-overlooked group that has the knowledge, attitude and acumen to deliver for your team from day one: mature graduates.



The Top 3 Reasons to Employ Mature Grads

1) Experience

Thanks to their experience, these guys understand the ins and outs of working life, and they know how they fit into the office equilibrium. These self-assured staffers will recognise the importance of your company culture, and they'll be the ones you look to when you need someone

to stand up and be counted. They've proved their worth; now it's up to you to recognise it.

2) Ambition

Mature students often have to juggle outside commitments, such as study and work. They're practically superheroes. Perhaps most importantly, they've shown a level of responsibility in their life that will transfer into professional success; research from the What

Do Graduates Do? study found that mature students were more likely to find themselves in managerial roles than their younger, first-degree counterparts.

3) Dedication

Research from recruitment specialist Seek found job security to be the most critical driver for mature graduates. If you employ mature graduates, you can expect a working environment full of settled and loyal employees.

At UKCBC, we have higher-than-average numbers of mature graduates. They choose UKCBC because we offer career-focused education that delivers work-ready employees. Get the inside track on our graduates by contacting careers@ukcbc.ac.uk and posting your positions in our student portal, or find out why mature students love our courses at ukcbc.ac.uk/vision.

Capital
matters

For any queries on features or advertising in *Capital Matters*, contact:

Gina Forshaw
020 7846 4809

E: gina.forshaw@crosbyassociates.co.uk

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Liverpool (Head Office):
Burlington House, Crosby Road North
Liverpool L22 0PJ
Tel: 0330 124 3780
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Royal Air Maroc bringing Africa closer

Royal Air Maroc: a key player in the history of aviation, throughout Africa and beyond. Over 60 years ago, two airlines – Air Atlas and Air Maroc – merged to form Royal Air Maroc. Today, with a modern fleet of 56 aircraft, Royal Air Maroc continues to grow from strength to strength, with a network of 97 destinations across 4 continents.

Bringing Africa closer

From the very outset, the airline has sought to bring Africa closer to the rest of the world. With a strategic hub in Casablanca, Royal Air Maroc continues to strengthen its ties with the African continent, connecting travellers from all corners of the globe.



Six decades on, Royal Air Maroc is the leading carrier to Africa, with over 30 direct destinations from Casablanca. The company's

extensive network to Africa offers same day through connections from London to Lagos, Accra, Freetown,

Monrovia, Dakar, Banjul and Monrovia and many more.

As the national airline of Morocco, Royal Air Maroc continues to develop its presence in the UK.

Flights are available from London to Rabat and two weekly direct services from Manchester to Casablanca and a daily flights departing from Heathrow and Gatwick.



BUSINESS ATTIRE

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Connectivity :

Modern fleet of 56 aircraft with an average age of 8 years that cover 97 destinations in 4 continents.

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- a daily direct flight from both Heathrow and Gatwick to Casablanca
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- twice weekly direct flights from Heathrow to Rabat



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Renown Expertise :

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الخطوط الملكية المغربية
royal air maroc

Let's make Heathrow a test bed for testing

Like every home, shop and office, Heathrow has had to change how it works.

When I walk through the terminals, I now see UV handrail technology being fitted to escalators to ensure continuous disinfection. When I walk through departures, I see self-cleaning anti-viral wraps being fitted to security trays, lift buttons and door handles. When I use the bathroom, I am met by cleaning robots which use UV rays to kill bacteria.

As the UK's only hub airport, I am proud to see the array of technologies we have adopted to protect our passengers and colleagues.

But I also see some things that aren't working.

Just last week thousands of British holidaymakers were left facing an unexpected two-week quarantine because of sudden changes to government rules.

This doesn't just affect every British tourist in Spain, Belgium or Luxembourg. It affects every business they work for and every British person who no longer has the confidence to travel. It affects every single person who works in

the travel and tourism sector. And looking ahead to September, when the airport is usually bustling with international students coming to study and business travellers looking to restart work after the summer, it will affect them as well.

COVID-19 has shown us that there are no easy answers. But it has also shown us if we work together, we can find better solutions. We need to look at the other tools we can use.

Testing at airports is one of those potential tools.

Like the researchers working tirelessly to develop a vaccine, we can't just introduce new tools without knowing what works. As the Government says – we need to be guided by the science. But we can't be guided by the science without running trials that will gather the scientific data.

That is why at Heathrow we want to become a test bed for testing.

Finding new and better solutions has always been part of Heathrow's DNA. Heathrow was, and still is, the UK's only hub airport. Heathrow was the take off point for the first ever non-stop UK to California flight. Heathrow was where the Airbus

A380 made its first UK landing and the home to Concorde.

Now colleagues across the airport want to help the Government work on future solutions that will repair the damage done by this crisis and get Britain trading and travelling again, in a safe and sustainable way. We know that these solutions must be guided by the science so that we can all have confidence in them. They also need to be convenient for passengers and an airport setting.

We have already started to explore what testing solutions could look like.

Already we are trialling thermal imaging cameras in departures that detect those with elevated temperatures. We know that this technology is working, but without a change to GDPR legislation, approaching these passengers and asking for them to complete a COVID test is not possible. Other countries are able to do this and so we need to better understand why the UK can't.

Additionally, when travellers return to the UK, we could test them for the disease and follow up with a second test some days later to ensure that even passengers

recently infected with the virus are detected. If both tests were negative, the traveller could leave quarantine early, allowing them to return to normality quicker. Again, other countries are trialling this, so why can't the UK?

But this isn't about what testing solution we want. It is about finding one that works and can be part of a common international standard (CIS) to be used by countries around the world.

To do that, we need to work with Government who can agree to quarantine exemptions for those who test negatively, twice. Otherwise, why else would people participate? Equally, we need to know if legislation could change providing airports with powers to approach symptomatic passengers and ask for testing to be carried out.

The Government has shown its willingness to find better solutions when it opened airbridges. We welcomed them at the time but were clear this was only part of the solution that we need. We must evolve what our new normal looks like where mechanisms for shorter quarantine periods are in place for those that have no reason to be confined by them.

Our continental competitors know this and have started testing trials in airports. They know this could be the best way of safely opening up international markets, whilst avoiding the constant threat of sudden closures. Their focus has been on kick starting their economies and are making progress where we are not.

The UK's recovery will be a marathon and not a sprint. But in Britain, we aren't just falling behind. We aren't even at the starting line. We are only just lacing up our trainers as others disappear off into the distance.

Our economic future and millions of livelihoods depend on us catching up. And for this to happen Heathrow is ready and open for the Government to use it as a test bed for tomorrow's travel reality.





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Gatwick sees multi-million pound upgrade

As an industry, few have been hit harder by the COVID-19 crisis than the aviation industry. That includes Gatwick - the UK's second-largest airport, which plays a hugely important role in the local and regional economy.

Prior to the pandemic, the airport supported one in 12 jobs across the region and contributed £2.7bn to regional gross domestic product.

In what is an incredibly tough time for all involved and connected to aviation, Gatwick already starting on its recovery plan for the future, as it works to continue acting as the single biggest driver for the local economy.

This recovery plan includes a multi-million-pound upgrade of Gatwick Airport railway station. Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) and Network Rail have been working throughout the Covid-19 pandemic – taking advantage of the significant downturn in rail and air passenger footfall – to get the two-year project ahead of schedule.

Following the closure of platform 7 on 18 May, Stage 1 demolition works continued at pace through June. Platform 7 and track 6 have

been removed and work is currently on schedule to allow for platform 7 to re-open on 1 November 2020.

Developing a rail network fit for a major international airport

In 2019, Gatwick experienced a record year of public transport access to the airport, with 47.4% of passengers travelling by rail, bus or coach. To meet increasing demand and to develop a rail network fit for 21st century use, a partnership including the Department of Transport, Network Rail, Gatwick and the regions development agency, Coast to Capital, is now investing £150 million into upgrading Gatwick Airport railway station.

The vital upgrades will relieve crowding, improve accessibility and reduce delays for international passengers, commuters and leisure travellers across the south east, not only improving speed

In 2019, Gatwick experienced a record year of public transport access to the airport

and connectivity, but also making Gatwick a more accessible and attractive airport to welcome visitors from across the globe.

As part of the upgrade, the station concourse will double in size, increasing capacity and, importantly, creating more space for passengers to enjoy a more pleasant experience.

Customer access will also be improved through five new lifts, eight new escalators, new stairways and improved wayfinding

throughout, assisting wheelchair users and passengers with bulky luggage.

Alongside improved access, by widening platforms 5 and 6, passengers will be able to board and alight trains faster and more safely, reducing delays on the network.

And these station upgrades come after the rail network in the south east has already undergone a huge overhaul and a doubling of capacity in recent years, culminating in the Thameslink Programme. Alongside new fleets of spacious rolling stock on Gatwick Express and Thameslink services, the Brighton Main Line Improvement Programme made a series of line upgrades to improve resilience and reliability. Thameslink also launched cross-London services, linking Brighton, Gatwick and London to Peterborough and Cambridge direct for the first time.

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The impact of COVID-19 and looking ahead

Much of the work on the railway station has been able to get ahead of schedule due to the significant decrease in passenger volumes throughout the COVID-19 crisis, which has had a major impact on the airport, its staff, partners and the local community.

After an initial closure in April, the North Terminal reopened on 15 June and operating hours were increased as easyJet and other airlines restarted flights, albeit in small numbers.

Since the mid-June restart, and in response to the initial easing of quarantine restrictions, Gatwick has seen numerous airlines resume operations, to the point

where they can now fly to over 70% of the destinations Gatwick served before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Airlines including Norwegian, Ryanair, TUI and Turkish Airlines are flying from Gatwick to popular short-haul summer holiday destinations, although the popularity of these destinations will continue to be influenced heavily by the infection rate and Government quarantine rules.

British Airways and Air Transat have also resumed long-haul routes to the Caribbean and Canada respectively, while Qatar Airways and Westjet also restarted in August.

At the airport itself, a wide range of new health measures

have been introduced and Gatwick was the first airport in England to help establish a COVID-19 testing centre in its long-term car park.

While the COVID-19 impacts have been significant, Gatwick remains positive that it is strong position to ramp up operations quickly to meet future demand. Encouraging conversations are ongoing regarding new opportunities with both existing and new airlines to Gatwick to help ensure that the airport has a strong, positive future.

In time, Gatwick also hopes to resume many of its key infrastructure projects, including sustainable plans to bring the existing Northern Runway into routine use.

Much of the work on the railway station has been able to get ahead of schedule due to the significant decrease in passenger volumes throughout the COVID-19 crisis





The value of flexibility

Coronavirus has presented businesses with the challenge of a lifetime: throwing operating models into doubt and forcing a rethink of almost every aspect of how a company is run.

Businesses across the country have also had to consider how they can better support their communities in the face of the pandemic. Whether this was offering use of workforce or facilities, it has been truly heartening to see how companies have changed and stepped up to help the local and national fight against coronavirus. As an airport, we remained open as an essential service and remain flexible to work directly with local organisations and with our supply chain partners to make sure we supported the community in every way we could. Firstly, we were able to use

our infrastructure to support the response to coronavirus. As well as scheduled passenger services providing a lifeline for those desperate to reach their home country and UK nationals stuck overseas, we also supported a number of dedicated repatriation flights organised through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Our cargo centre dealt with additional flights carrying vital PPE and other equipment used by the NHS. The RAF made use of our quieter runway for training and the reduction in passenger numbers meant we were able to offer one of our car parks for a mobile COVID testing site.

We also wanted the community to feel the benefit of our best asset: our people. While the reality of a significant reduction to our operations meant that we did have to furlough staff, we wanted to give

them the opportunity to contribute to their local community. So we created "LLA Heroes" - a dedicated volunteering scheme, connecting furloughed workers with more than a dozen charities and organisations, with more than 70 staff signing up. Medically trained members of our fire crews who were not needed on active duty at the airport also volunteered to assist the East of England Ambulance Service.

Another important part of our response was to share our knowledge and relationships with our supply chain partners, to help them make the most of what they wanted to offer to the community. Because of the work we already do donating food items confiscated at security, we were able to work with our restaurant partners to donate additional food to local homeless charities before they closed during the strictest period of lockdown.

Now that travel restrictions are being lifted, we are looking to support the community in a more traditional way by welcoming passengers returning to the airport and resuming our role as an important economic driver for the region. To do so, we have had to adapt once again, putting in a number of safety measures to keep staff and passengers safe.

And while we have seen encouraging growth in the number of passengers using the airport, with some of the strongest demand of any major airport in the UK, it's clear we're a long way from normal. In 2020 alone, we expect to handle 10 million fewer passengers, which is why we'll need to find new ways to work with, and gain the support of, Government. From providing passengers the reassurance they need to be able to take a long-awaited holiday to helping the sector and those who work in it continue to play an essential role supporting the UK's economic recovery.

One thing this pandemic has taught us at the airport is the value of flexibility and adaptation. We have been able to flex to adapt to changing circumstances, making use of the airport for the wider community, and then making more changes as passengers returned. With a long and difficult road to recovery instead, it's clear that flexibility will be key for navigating the coming years.

Alberto Martin, CEO, London Luton Airport



British Business Bank – supporting your business

For the UK's nearly six million small and medium sized businesses, including around one million based in London, 2020 has been a year of uncertainty and worry. These businesses are a fundamental part of the UK economy in creating jobs and driving growth.



Angelene Woodland
Chief Marketing Officer
British Business Bank

When the country was first put under lockdown, most saw demand fall and revenue stall and, while some were able to move their operations online, for some businesses that was not an option. This meant

that many sought additional finance to help them through the period - something that will likely continue as the lockdown eases and they look to re-open for business.

Support is available from the British Business Bank, the Government's economic development bank. We exist to make finance markets work better for smaller businesses, so they can overcome barriers to accessing the financial information and support they need to help them succeed.

The Bank uses funding and guarantees backed by the Government to increase the volume and diversity of finance available to smaller businesses. We do not directly lend to or invest in businesses, but rather do so through nearly 200 accredited partners – from big retail banks to a

vast array of alternative lenders.

The British Business Bank is here to support your business and to help you access the right finance and relevant information through this difficult period and beyond.

Throughout the pandemic, the Bank has acted as a vehicle for a range of loan schemes for

CBILS is designed for businesses with a turnover of up to £45 million who would like to borrow from £50,000 to £5 million

businesses. Two are especially relevant for small and medium sized businesses: the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme.

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) provides financial support to smaller businesses across the UK that are losing revenue, and seeing their cashflow disrupted, as a result of the pandemic.

CBILS is designed for businesses with a turnover of up to £45 million who would like to borrow from £50,000 to £5 million in the form of term loans, overdrafts, invoice or asset finance. Invoice finance and asset finance facilities are available from £1k to £5m, while term loan and revolving credit facilities are available from £50k to £5m. The Government covers the interest and lender-levied fees under CBILS for the first 12 months.

The scheme has been significantly expanded since its first launch in March and changes have been made to the scheme's features and eligibility criteria. The loans are now available through over 90 accredited lenders and insufficient security is no longer a condition to access the scheme. These changes mean even more smaller businesses across the UK impacted by the coronavirus crisis can access the funding they need. So far, facilities worth over £11bn have been provided through this scheme.

More information and how to apply can be found at www.british-business-bank.co.uk/cbils



CBILS boost from Allied Irish Bank (GB)



At Allied Irish Bank (GB) we are committed to supporting our customers and have undertaken several measures to help businesses during this unprecedented time. The resilience of business owners is coming to the fore as we all adapt to new ways of working. Our relationships managers have been able to draw on their experiences of previous tough times from the financial crisis and previous recession to help customers continue trading and strive to emerge stronger.



Mark Medd (above), Regional Director London, South and West at Allied Irish Bank (GB) talks about some of the ways we have been showing our support.

“The last few months have been extremely challenging for everyone as we all feel the effects of COVID-19. At the start of the pandemic we received a significant surge in customer calls and queries, responding to over 16,000 calls in the first four weeks and received requests from over 600 business customers for extra support with 99.5% of all applications receiving approval. This activity was all before the

bank’s Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) accreditation and included payment holidays on loans, overdraft extensions, working capital facilities, relaxed covenant terms, loans, and overdrafts.

AIB Group extended its support further by providing over £2 million funding to establish a research hub at Trinity College to assist the development of a vaccine for COVID-19 and urgently accelerate its immunology project. The ‘AIB Together’ initiative is another way we have been able to support local communities by raising much

“We were delighted to be approved for accreditation by the British Business Bank as a new lender for the government backed CBILS.”

needed funds for charities who are central to the management of the pandemic. Staff have set a target of raising £1m with the Group agreeing to match all funds raised to support local charities, which in our region includes Whitehawk Foodbank, The Clocktower Sanctuary and Ringwood Foodbank.

We were delighted to be approved for accreditation by the British Business Bank as a new lender for the government backed CBILS to provide term loans, which has helped several businesses to continue trading during this difficult period. We have also recently been approved



for the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS).

One customer who we have supported with the CBILS is Starbucks franchisee Bhopinder Singh Gill, owner of GK Coffee Group. GK Coffee Group, trading as Starbucks has eight franchises across Essex, Kent, and Lewisham with locations in Hornchurch, Epping, Ilford, Harlow, Sittingbourne, Chatham, Deal and Lewisham. When the UK was put into lockdown on 23 March in an unprecedented step to attempt to limit the spread of coronavirus all GK Coffee Group’s Starbucks venues were closed, putting an immediate hold on income.”

Bhopinder Singh Gill, Owner GK Coffee Group, trading as Starbucks explained: “The last few months have affected all business owners and been extremely worrying. We were delighted to reopen recently but we didn’t know what level of trade we would have so I applied for the CBILS to provide a safety net for my business. We had been closed for three months and had

no idea what demand there would be. We are fortunate to have experienced a good level of trade since we reopened all our sites.

Our customers seem to have been craving some kind of normality in their lives and a good cup of coffee!

Irv Lyon at Allied Irish Bank (GB) helped us with the CBILS application process and thanks to him we have the funding in place should we need it. There is still a lot of uncertainty around the economy and having the CBILS gives us reassurance in case there is a second spike or lockdown restrictions are enforced again. We have the finance in place to ensure our business is ready and able to survive.”

Irv Lyon, Senior Franchise Manager in the Franchise team at Allied Irish Bank (GB) added: “The last few months have been extremely hard for everyone and has impacted businesses across every sector. The retail and food industry has been particularly hit hard but it has been fantastic to see GK Coffee Group opening the doors of their Starbucks restaurants across the region and showing real resilience. It is a pleasure to see the return of their loyal customers. The CBILS is designed to provide financial support to SMES across the UK that have been losing revenue, and seeing their cashflow disrupted, because of the COVID-19 outbreak. I am delighted to help Bhopinder Singh Gill and his team, giving them the confidence to continue to trade and support the future success of the business.”

Mark Medd, Regional Director London, South and West at Allied Irish Bank (GB)
Tel: +44 (0)7901 102781
Email: mark.m.medd@aib.ie
www.aibgb.co.uk

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Allied Irish Bank (GB) is a niche, sector focused business bank which specialises in delivering relationship driven service to medium to large sized businesses. It operates from 14 locations in major business centres across Great Britain, employing over 600 staff.

Allied Irish Bank (GB) has been supporting businesses in Britain with true relationship driven service for over 40 years. During this time, the Bank has grown organically with more than half of new business coming from existing customer recommendations.



Bounce Back Loans Scheme

Those seeking a smaller loan can apply for the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLS), which is geared towards small and micro businesses. BBLS provides loans from £2,000 up to 25% of the business' turnover, with a maximum loan of £50,000. The Bounce Back Loans Scheme gives businesses a six-year term loan at a government set interest rate of 2.5% a year. There are no repayments during the first 12 months and the Government will also cover interest payable in the first year.

Providing lenders with a 100% government-backed guarantee and standardising the application form has helped streamline the application process with many loans becoming available within days. So far, loans worth £30.9 billion has been provided to SMEs and microbusinesses through the scheme since it launched on 4th May.

It is important to note that following the launch of the Bounce Back Loans Scheme, CBILS is no longer available for new loans and revolving credit facilities (overdrafts) of £50,001 or less but remains

The British Business Bank is here to support your business, whether based in London or beyond, throughout these unprecedented times

available for Asset and Invoice Finance facilities below £50,001.

Full details on the scheme are available at www.british-business-bank.co.uk/bbbs

Improving access to impartial information

There are vast amounts of information out there for small and medium sized businesses seeking finance. The internet can be a valuable resource but some of the information out there can be of poor quality. The key is sifting through the noise to identify

reliable sources.

As the Government's economic development bank, we want to help smaller businesses at every stage of their business journey to understand the financial landscape, make better choices about finance and, ultimately, access the right funding for them.

We have developed products aimed at raising small businesses' awareness of, and confidence in, the wide range of funding options in the market. This includes the Business Finance Guide, developed and co-published with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales, and with the support of over 21 leading business and finance organisations. The guide sets out the range of finance options available to businesses at all stages – from start-ups to SMEs and growing mid-sized companies.

We have also created the Finance Hub – an interactive website, developed with a range of industry partners and business groups, dedicated to providing independent information on finance options for scale-up, high growth and potential high growth businesses to help you see what's really possible. The Hub

provides independent and impartial information on finance options and includes a simple six-step 'Finance Finder' that helps smaller businesses explore the finance options that could work best for them. The site also features case studies and learnings from real businesses to guide businesses through the process of applying for growth finance.

Taking the leap to support

The British Business Bank is here to support your business, whether based in London or beyond, throughout these unprecedented times. As the economy gradually emerges from lockdown, we understand the need for continued support for small and medium sized businesses.

Although we appreciate that access to finance can often feel daunting, we also know that many businesses, like yours, have taken the first step, whether through one of the loan schemes or accessing better information, to a healthier future for their business. We encourage you to explore your options and to consider doing the same.



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Get a CBILS loan from Britain's Best Bank 2020

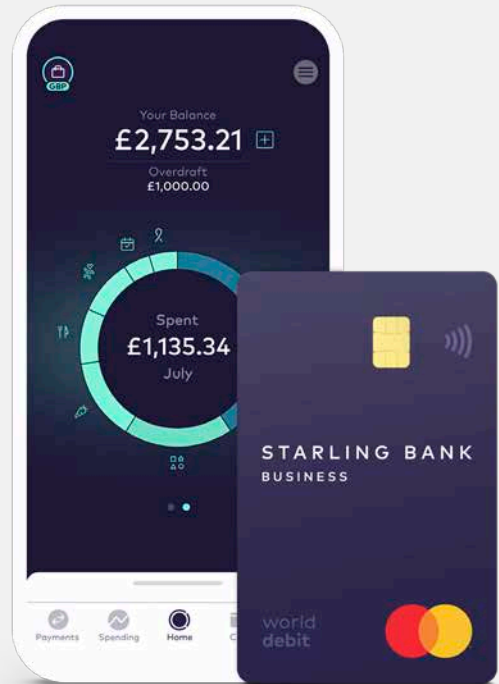
Business is far from usual right now, so get the support you need from Starling Bank, through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

Over the past few months, we've been busy helping thousands of small businesses, lending up to £250,000 per business in CBILS loans. Grow your business or just keep the cogs turning; whatever you need the money for, we're here to help.

Our CBILS offer ends in late September, so be sure to get your application in soon. It only takes a few minutes.

**Apply for a CBILS loan with
Britain's Best Bank 2020, Starling Bank**

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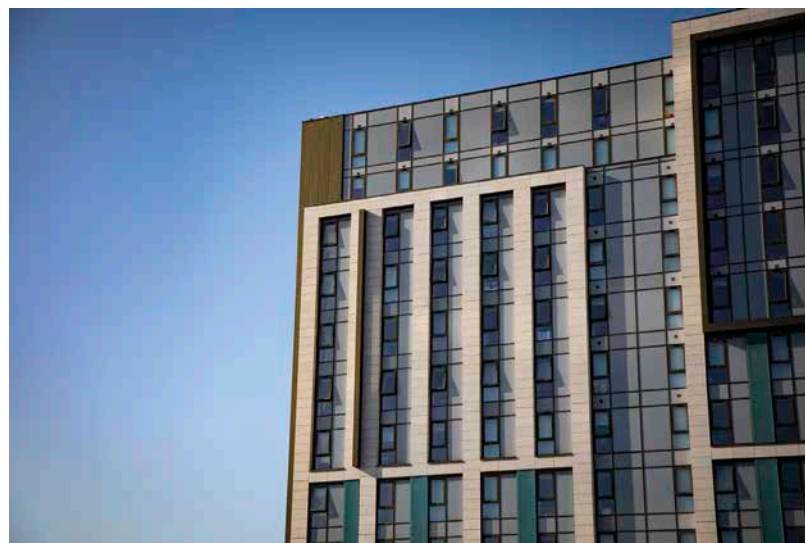
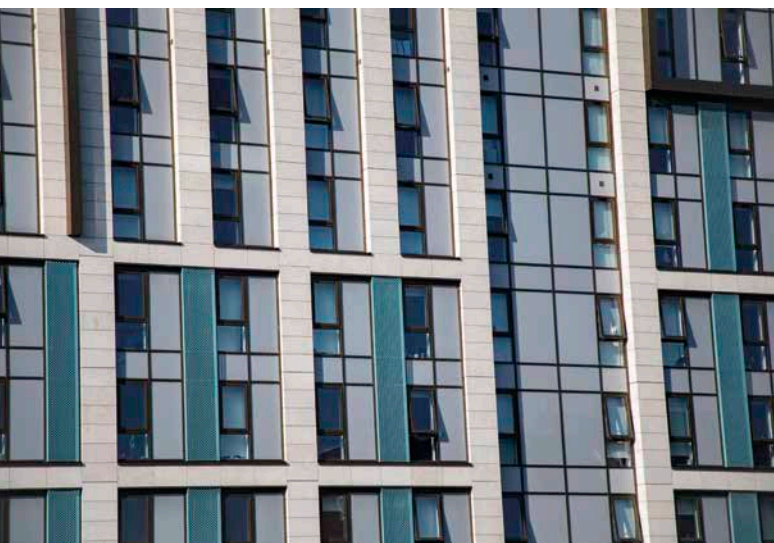
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System - Generix Lite
Stone - JURA LIMESTONE
Architect - Falconer Chester Hall
Main Contractor - Watkin Jones

A prominent focus in the skyline surrounding Liverpool's iconic dock area, Byrom Point student accommodation is a shining example of Generix Lite.

Designed by Falconer Chester Hall Architects Byrom point uses Generix Lite stone rainscreen system to seamlessly blend with the surrounding world heritage architecture.

"The building occupies a prominent position to the North of the City centre, and acts as a high-quality 'gateway' landmark into Liverpool. Given the prominence of the site, it was key for us that we used a really good product that would make a positive impact and tie in with the other buildings in close proximity." Mike Gore, FCH Architects

The team at Generix worked closely with FCH, the main contractor Watkin Jones and the planning

department to ensure quality finish and minimal wastage whilst maintaining a cost-effective solution.

"We've created an iconic piece of architecture that's on a key route into the city." Gareth Roberts, Watkin Jones

Generix systems always pay special attention to detail guaranteeing quality of cut and cornering with all stone rainscreen systems. "We are happy with the end product, we pushed for high

quality materials with some effective detailing from the outset and are pleased it's worked out with this system." Mike Gore, FCH Architects

For more information on Generix Lite and the other innovative rainscreen solutions available from Generix visit our website -

www.generixfacades.com

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Mont Rose College of Management and Sciences has achieved the TEF Silver Award. This award will be valid for 2 years until June 2021

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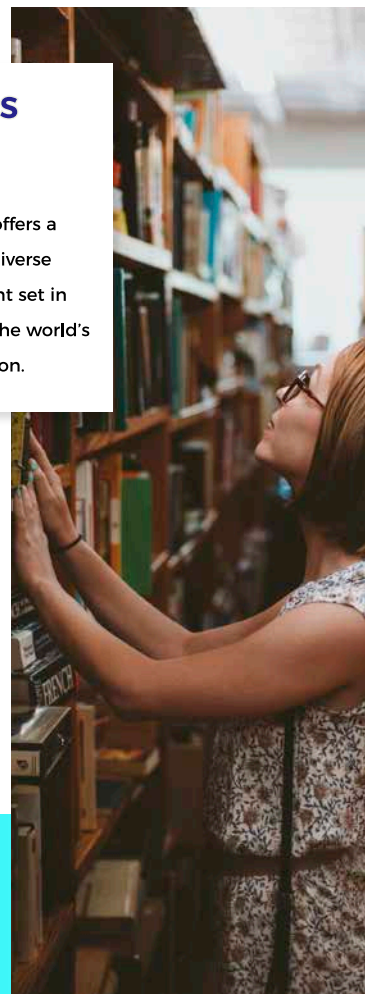
- to maintain excellence in teaching & learning
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Members' noticeboard

■ **Chairman of LCCI member company Finboot – and LCCI's Deputy Chairman – Nish Kotecha**



appointed to advisory panel of Blockchain and Climate Institute

Blockchain and Climate Institute (BCI) has appointed Nish Kotecha to its Advisory Board. A progressive think tank providing leading expertise in emerging technologies deployment for climate and sustainability actions, BCI will benefit from expertise and insight from Nish who is currently Co-Founder and Chairman of Finboot Tech. Nish has worked with global financial and investment firms throughout his career. This invaluable experience and expertise will provide BCI with a unique perspective in effecting positive change and raising awareness among the international climate change policy community of the tremendous potential of blockchain technology.

For further information regarding Finboot Tech, please visit www.finboot.com or visit blockchainclimate.org if you wish to know more about the Blockchain and Climate Institute.



■ **Vistaara Financial Solutions**

Vistaara Financial Solutions (www.vistaarafs.co.uk) is a business built on trust, honesty and integrity. Chetan Jethwa started the business around six years ago with one goal in mind: to provide clients with honest advice. Vistaara has subsequently grown and the team collectively possess 40 years' experience, covering property purchase, mortgages, protection and holistic estate planning.

Vistaara specialise in residential mortgages, encompassing expat, self-employed and complex income scenarios, in addition to Buy to Let, Special Purchase Vehicle (SPV) and holistic protection.

We would like to offer LCCI Members a 50% discount on our standard mortgage administration fees. Please contact Chetan Jethwa, quoting reference VISLCC0820, for further information at chet@vistaarafs.co.uk

It all adds up to

Livability

■ **Great Greenwich Virtual Quiz**

Livability is inviting you to take part in the Great Greenwich Virtual Quiz on Monday 28 September, 7.30 - 9.00pm. For less than the cost of an average commute we will entertain you with a quiz, games with brilliant prizes, as well as a raffle and an auction.

We're delighted to be partnering with Barclays North Greenwich who have generously pledged to match all donations and funds raised up to £1,000, meaning every £ you give to Livability as part of the virtual quiz will be doubled!

The quiz will be supporting Ability September, celebrating the gifts of disabled people and promoting inclusion and participation of everyone.

Entry is just £8. To book tickets, please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/great-greenwich-virtual-quiz-games-raffle-auction-and-stellar-prizes-tickets-116605120053>



■ **Business Continuity Essentials**

IMSM has launched a new product. It is a Business Continuity Essentials service, which is a series of processes, documents and systems to better prepare your business against a range of potential issues, events and disruptions. IMSM IRQA qualified assessors take the heavy lifting out of the process by crafting the required documentation and preparing you for success. Be it a pandemic, supply disruption or adverse climate, you will have the tools and a plan in place to continue to meet your customers' demand. Like the ISO 22301, this service covers your entire business, regardless of size, sector or perceived risk.

Please visit <https://www.imsm.com/gb/business-continuity-essentials/> for further information. For a free consultation, please contact us at marketing@imsm.com or on 01793 688990.



■ **Engage – Workplace Management & Communication Software**

Forte Consult has launched its Workplace Management & Communication Tool: ENGAGE.

It is built on the Microsoft PowerApps Platform and integrates seamlessly with Microsoft365.

ENGAGE is the perfect tool for companies to manage their Return-to-Work process. It ensures that employee safety is guaranteed and gives HR and the company the tools they need to successfully keep the office functioning efficiently.

The backend reporting provides the company with vital data and information they need to make decisions with confidence. ENGAGE is a crucial tool, helping businesses to safely and efficiently manage their workforce, whilst ensuring that the company is covered from a liability perspective.

Please call 020 8933 7187 or email Info@forteconsult.co.uk to request a free demonstration.



■ **Managed IT Service Provider**

We specialise in providing up-to-date Microsoft technology-based customer solutions all over the UK. We can assess your business goals, identify a solution that meets your business needs and help your business become more agile and efficient. We can help you take full advantage of the cloud, opening a wide array of new opportunities for you to grow your business and your revenue. Services include:

- On-premises and cloud infrastructure
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■ **Harod Global Investigative Solutions**

Harod is a well-established investigation company based in the heart of London. We combine traditional and legal investigation techniques with proprietary cutting-edge cyber technology. Together with our worldwide networks and extensive background in UK law enforcement, we are well positioned to identify, investigate and resolve your most complex issues.

With longstanding careers in UK law enforcement, our investigators have led on state-level investigations, supported world sporting bodies, and provided trusted counsel to corporations and private clients around the world.

Please contact Ian Weatherhead on 07850 366086 for further information.

Website: harodassociates.com



■ **Essex-based Propelair has raised £1.23 million through crowdfunding**

The campaign was part of a larger raise and aimed at the global sustainability-conscious community. Propelair's toilet requires over 80% less water and energy, and eliminates up to 95% of airborne contaminants, including Covid-19. Corporates and public sector organisations use Propelair to meet their sustainability goals and improve washroom hygiene.

The campaign launched on the Seedrs platform in June – at the height of the pandemic – and reached its £900,000 target within five days. Six weeks later, Propelair made it into the Top 6% of Seedrs' most successful campaigns ever.

CEO David Hollander says: "The pandemic raised the focus on hygiene and sustainability – two major factors that justify the existence of Propelair."

To find out more, please email Duygu.tavan@propelair.com or visit www.propelair.com



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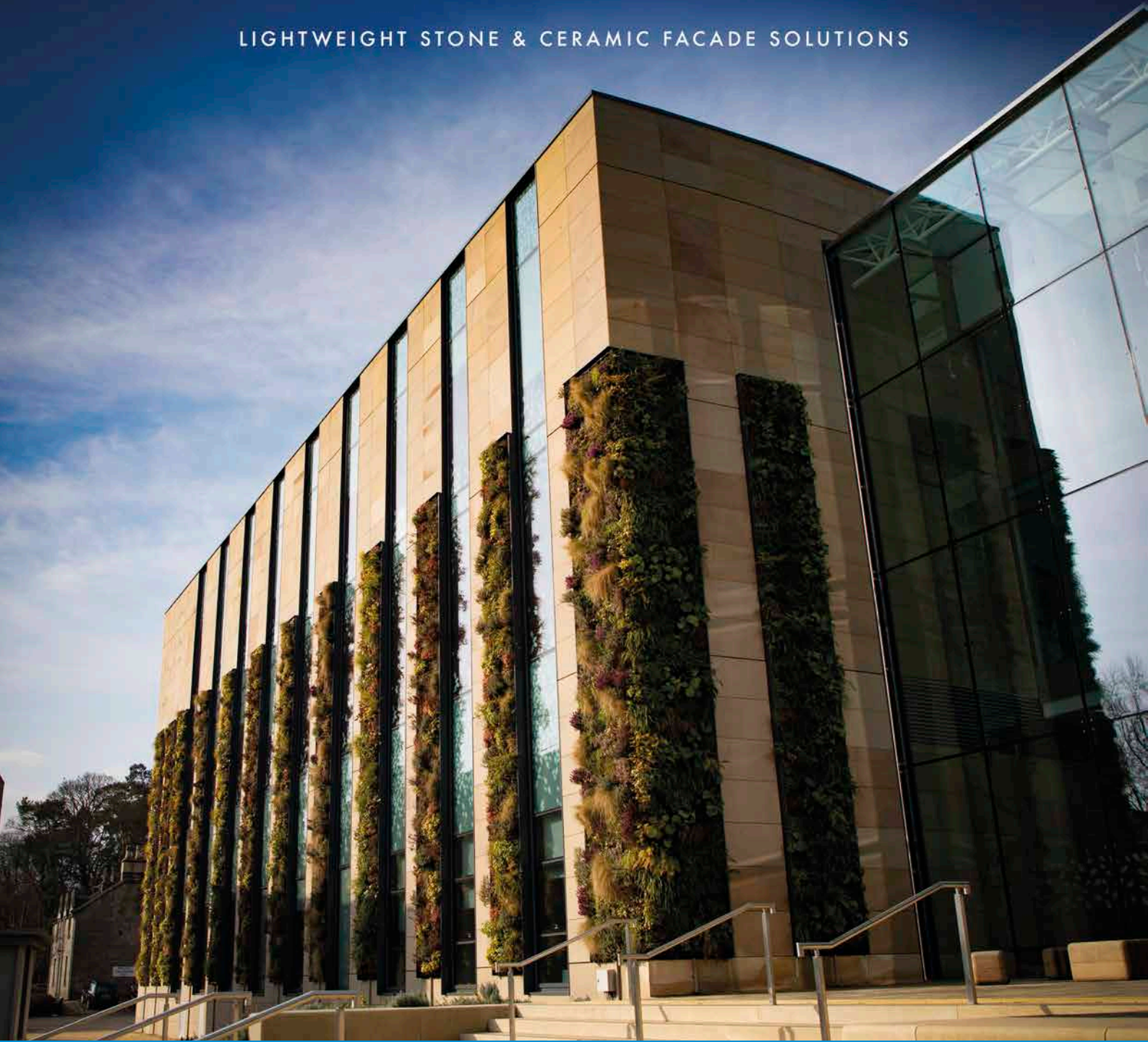
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