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The South Cheshire Chamber Business Awards 2008 are being held in association with the Chronicle, culminating in a gala awards evening at Crewe Hall on November 28.

We are inviting businesses and business people to enter or register an interest and it couldn't be easier to nominate yourself, your business, or the business you work for. There are a total of nine awards and, in all but one of them, entries are invited. Success in the awards brings valuable publicity and attention for entrants with many going on to further success.

Each business or business person entering will be judged on simple criteria by a panel of experts from the chamber and the various award sponsors.

- Award categories**
- Start-up Business of the Year, sponsored by Cheshire County Council.
 - Young Business Person of the Year, sponsored by Crewe Development Agency.
 - Small Business of the Year, sponsored by Return on Investment, Nantwich.
 - Medium Business of the Year, sponsored by Hammond McNulty, Crewe.
 - Large Business of the Year, sponsored by NatWest Bank.
 - Business Person of the Year, sponsored by MMU Cheshire.
 - Innovation of the Year, sponsored by Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council.
 - Visitors Choice Award, sponsored by Visit Chester & Cheshire.
 - International Trade Award (South Cheshire exporter of product or service), sponsor awaited.
 - South Cheshire Chamber is now accepting entries for this year's awards. To find out more simply call the chamber on 01270 504700 and you can register your interest, or visit www.southcheshirechamber.co.uk.
 - For further information about the sponsorship opportunities please contact Madeleine Abbey on 01270 504700 or email madeleine.abbey@scci.co.uk.

This could be start of something good



ON THE MAP: Celebrating last year as the winner of the Small Business category in the South Cheshire Business Awards 2007 were staff from Crewe-based Cube Surveys – front row, left to right, Richard Lee, Helen Roberts of then sponsor Butters John Bee, owner and director Paul Fagan, back row, Neil Brooker, Dan Thorley and Michael Sykes.

By Dave Fox

SMALL is where it all starts for any successful business and that's why one category is so vital in the hunt for the winners of the South Cheshire Chamber Business Awards 2008.

Sponsor of the Small Business of the Year award is Nantwich-based ROI which has established itself as the country's leading B2B (business to business) sales development agency.

Managing director Nigel Sandford says: "Sales is the lifeblood of every business, and our proven approach to winning and retaining new customers helps businesses both large and small achieve predictable and consistent growth, even in a tough economy."

Having started out in Nantwich four years ago, ROI (Return of Investment) now employs 75 staff at its Pepper House head office and helps and advises some well-known global brands including Honda, Toyota, Skoda, Unilever and Innocent Drinks.

Adds Mr Sandford: "Sponsoring the Small Business Award is our way of saying thank-you to the South Cheshire community that has supported us and to celebrate fellow businesses forging their future in the area."

Qualification for the Small Business category is to have 15 or less full-time employees, or the part-time equivalent, and to have traded for more than two years.



Mystery shopper ticks boxes for winning garage

A MYSTERY shopper has put the seal of approval on a Crewe garage awarding it the highest marks in Cheshire for customer service and quality workmanship.

ABP on Newcastle Road, Shavington was visited by a Cheshire Trading Standards official posing as a customer with a Ford Puma in need of service and repair.

It was assessed on its service from the initial phone call made to book the car in to the greeting in reception, standard of workmanship, site image and overall customer satisfaction.

The garage, which holds the Golden Spanner award for high standards, scored more than 97% putting it ahead of all motor traders and service and repair centres subscribing to the scheme across Cheshire.

John Parton, of ABP said: "The mystery shopping scheme tests garages out by introducing some minor faults into the car. You have no idea when the shopper will arrive and are judged on the moment they walk through the door to when they drive off the forecourt."



ON TOP FORM: Alfred Parton and son John.

He added: "We have achieved a score of 90-plus over the last five years but this result is our highest yet. We are delighted because we place great pride in the quality of our workmanship and standard of customer care."

And ABP has been caring for cars for 44 years after being founded by John's dad Alfred Baldwin Parton on Goodalls Corner in 1964. It moved a short distance up Newcastle Road to its site near the Esso petrol station 18 years ago. A presentation was made to Mr Parton at Backford.

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