



BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Business Environment Press Pack 2011

**Fresh Business Thinking LIVE!
Conference and exhibition**

Stand 15



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2. Background information

With 18 operational centres in the South of England and gross assets over £300 million, Business Environment is one of the leading owner and provider of flexible serviced offices. It owns and operates more than 1,000,000 sq. ft. of property and caters for small to large companies demanding competitive and flexible office accommodation.

In a highly competitive market, Business Environment stands out as being different. It prides quality of service and value for money above price, and is able to do this as it predominantly – and uniquely in the industry – owns its buildings and also handles the majority of primary functions in-house, from acquiring, developing and running its business centres. The company was the first to introduce the UK's first “all-inclusive serviced office package”, with no hidden extras.

Business Environment was ranked 38th in the 2011 Sunday Times ‘100 Best Small Companies to Work For’ Awards. It has also won the Business Centre Association’s Best Business Centre of the Year Award four years out of the five, and is the current title-holder. It also has Investor in People Status.

For more information on Business Environment visit: www.beoffices.com



3. Press Releases

November 2011

Business Environment champions UK enterprise at London event

Serviced office operator Business Environment will be showcasing &Meetings, its new meeting room, event space and video conferencing company, at the Fresh Business Thinking LIVE! exhibition and conference at Old Billingsgate on 15 November.

The annual event for start-ups looking to grow their businesses offers the perfect platform for the company to talk to entrepreneurs about &Meetings – an all-inclusive package that includes wifi, AV equipment and video conferencing, providing purpose-built space that is available for hire by the hour.

With London 2012 Olympics rapidly approaching, more and more businesses are considering video conferencing as a method of replacing face-to-face meetings and avoiding additional traffic and delays during the Games.

David Saul, MD of Business Environment, said: “In research we commissioned this year with London business owners, a massive 20% said they would be thinking of switching to video conferencing during the Olympics – a sign that the service is on the rise as businesses become increasingly green-minded.

“Fresh Business Thinking LIVE! will provide a forum for businesses to approach us with their queries about &Meetings, as well as other services we offer.”

Business Environment’s ‘virtual offices’ is another service that allows start-ups and sole traders to benefit from a front of house reception team and business address without the risk of buying physical space. It gives the impression of a bigger business, crucial for gaining initial contracts and confidence.

To find out more about the Fresh Business Thinking LIVE!, go to www.freshbusinessthinkinglive.com - Business Environment will be on stand 15.

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October 2011

Rubbish? Bin there, done that

Domestic waste is responsible for less than 10% of Britain's rubbish; the other 90% is generated by businesses.

It is this surprising statistic that has led serviced office provider Business Environment to completely remove waste bins from its Bow Lane head office. Recycling points now feature throughout the building to encourage employees to adopt a more holistic approach to recycling, being as diligent at work to sort and recycle their litter as they are at home.

David Saul, Manager Director of Business Environment, said: "Recent Defra research shows that businesses across the UK have the potential to save up to £18bn a year by taking steps to reduce waste. By removing bins, we are helping foster a green office culture by empowering our employees to take a more holistic view to recycling, taking responsibility for all the waste they produce in and out of the home, while benefiting our bottom line."

It is estimated that the new initiative will save the head office more than £1,000 a year and reduce waste by 87% or 1.85 tonnes. This is because recycling collection costs approximately one third of a normal trade waste collection. Business Environment has pledged to donate the savings to Trees for Cities, an independent charity which inspires people to plant and appreciate trees in urban areas across the world.

The scheme will be rolled out across the company's 21 business centres in 2012, with Business Environment providing the recycling facilities to all those clients wanting to participate.

To find out more about CSR at Business Environment go to <http://www.beoffices.com/our-news/environmental-csr>.

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August 2011

Britons sick and tired of holidays

Just back from holiday and feeling more washed out than when you went? It would seem you're not alone. Research shows that a quarter of us return to work tired and one in ten (11%) feel more stressed than before we left, indicating that holidays can be counterproductive.

One in five (21%) respondents went so far as to say that they feel so bad on their return to work that they want to change jobs.

We also admit not taking holidays that are owed to us, leaving the average worker out of pocket by £54 per year. This can cost the working nation around £1,58bn. One in eight of us (13%) cite high workload as the reason we are unable to take annual leave, and one in ten claim that conflict with other staff holidays prevents us from taking them.

The trend is upsetting the UK's work-life balance says David Saul, managing director of serviced office operator Business Environment who commissioned the research: "Coming into work should, above all, be an enjoyable experience and if people are tired and feel under intense pressure following a break, then there is little chance of that. We shouldn't need to take a holiday to get over a holiday.

"The number of days sucked into the 'holiday black hole' is also a worry, since this is time we can never claim back. Employees are not only entitled to take their full paid leave, but it's an important part of helping them to feel motivated and happy in the workplace."

Even when we're on holiday, a quarter of us (26%) continue to check work emails or take calls, largely because we can't stop worrying about work (30%) or feel guilty about pressures on fellow colleagues (24%).

Yet despite feeling 'chained to their desks', workers insist that holiday allowance is more important than salary, with one third of us (30%) saying we would prefer an increased holiday allowance to the equivalent in pay. This was most noticeable with the over 55s.

Saul added: “The ‘loadsamoney’ era that characterised the 80s is long gone, with salary no longer the be-all and end-all for the majority of employees. Our research shows that people are now keen to claw back their work-life balance.

“It’s up to business-owners to support employees when flexibility around work is required and in my experience this really does pay dividends; reducing absence, building loyalty and increasing motivation in the workplace.”

Research also revealed that a quarter of workers (24%) suffer from holiday sickness following a break.

Regionally, employees from Northern Ireland are least likely to take holidays, missing out on 1.1 days on average per year, which they put down to high workload. People from the East Midlands on the other hand are most likely to take theirs, with eight in 10 (81%) ensuring that they take every day owed to them.

A third of Londoners (30%) are unable to switch off while on holiday, resorting to checking emails or taking calls. They are also some of the most likely to want to change jobs on their return (22%) along with the Welsh (25%) and workers from the South West (23%).

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June 2011

Business Environment champions UK enterprise

Business Environment has launched a cost-effective office package to help support start up businesses based in and around London.

The serviced office operator has introduced the new deal at its Minories office in East London to enable start-ups to take office space without the need to pay a deposit or first month's rent or sign up to a fixed term contract. It equates to a saving of £7,000 for a two-person office in the City.

The package comes in response to the Government's Start Up Britain initiative, launched at the end of March, which sees a series of measures to encourage and support enterprise.

David Saul, Managing Director of Business Environment, said: "Setting up a new business is a daunting prospect for anyone and so we wanted to create a low-risk option for budding entrepreneurs, granting them more flexibility and making it easier for them to start a business.

"The Government is appealing to the private sector to back young businesses and help them to start and grow, and so we were keen to lend our support to the campaign. By taking away fixed contracts and upfront costs, we're removing barriers that might stand in the way of businesses setting up, so that they can take advantage of a new office in the City of London, at an exceptionally good rate. "

Minories is the first of Business Environment's centres to offer the special package, but the company hopes to replicate the deal across its 17 centres in London and the South of England.

Minories, only minutes from Aldgate tube and Fenchurch Street train stations, provides eight floors of office space split into individual, lockable workspaces all featuring quality office furniture, reception services, onsite gyms, IT, broadband and calls at no extra cost.

To find out more about the offer, visit www.beoffices.com/minories-offer or call 0800 917 4444.

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June 2011

Business Environment expands into meeting room industry

Serviced office operator Business Environment has launched a new meeting room, event space and video conferencing company, enhancing its offering to businesses across the UK.

&Meetings provides all-inclusive packages that include wifi broadband, the latest AV equipment and large screen TV's with PC 's at no extra cost, enabling businesses to run effective meetings, as well as keep overheads at a minimum.

The new venture for the company is in response to the growing demand for professional, purpose-built business space available for hire by the hour.

David Saul, managing director of Business Environment, said: "We really wanted to expand our portfolio and provide our clients with more choice. Although the meeting and conference room industry is a competitive market, what sets us apart from other providers is our simple online booking process, coupled with low-cost pricing.

"Businesses can expect the same high quality customer service and 'no hidden extras' approach that we apply to our serviced office space, helping them to budget better and keep track of outgoings, particularly in the current climate."

Customers can select from a range of flexible layouts and seating arrangements - from discrete interview rooms to larger conference or events rooms with the capacity to serve between two and 300 people. Business Environment will even provide tea, coffee and chilled water as part of the inclusive package.

The rooms are available across 14 centres in London and the South of England. To find out more or to book a room, go to www.andmeetings.com

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May 2011

Business Environment recognised by national accreditation scheme

Business Environment has been awarded the Investors in People (IIP) accreditation for its commitment to employees.

The serviced office operator was granted the prestigious award following an assessment of key workplace factors. 20 interviews were held over two days with a cross-section of employees and the company was particularly credited on its standards in leadership, empowerment, communication, teamwork, culture and learning and development.

HR Director at Business Environment, Nazia Ahmed, played a crucial role in planning the assessment: "This latest success reflects the investment we make as a business in developing the skills of our employees at every level and it's testament to our commitment in creating a business culture that they are proud to be part of," said Nazia.

"We continually seek to improve our people management practices – be it through employee recognition awards, training or internal communication – and we'll keep working to build on this achievement."

Business Environment is no stranger to receiving business awards having scooped 38th position in this year's Sunday Times '100 Best Small Companies to Work For' Awards, making it the only serviced office operator to appear in the rankings. It has also won the Business Centre Association's Best Business Centre of the Year Award four years out of the five, and is the current title-holder.

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April 2011

There's no place like...work

Royal wedding bank holiday branded a 'poisoned chalice'

While half the country may be glued to their TV sets on Friday to watch the wedding, spare a thought for the other half of the country who admit they face a bank 'holiday' dominated by work.

A survey by serviced office operator Business Environment has revealed that more than four in 10 (42%) of us find it impossible to switch off from work when they leave the office, leading Business Environment to brand the extra day bank holiday a 'poisoned chalice' for the UK's workforce.

Office-hours look set to become extinct in future with one in five of us (20%) now working remotely once a week and a quarter (27%) carrying out our work from the bedroom or lounge, rather than a dedicated home office.

The trend is threatening the UK with a culture of 'hyper-connectivity' says David Saul, managing director of Business Environment. "Work is now only a smart-phone away. Although this enables us to respond to client emails and calls when and where it suits us, we risk being unable to tear ourselves away from the workplace.

"This will be felt most acutely this weekend, when employees feel compelled to work because of the extra day's holiday. While it is great that the UK plc is supporting the royal wedding, the harsh reality for many is that they still have just as much work to do in the week – just less of a working week to complete it in."

The boundaries between working and personal lives are now so blurred that nearly half the respondents to the survey (46%) said they thought it was acceptable to use their business phones and emails to run their personal lives.

"The tables have really been turned – with many of us running our personal lives from work and our business lives from home," added Saul.

“While instant communication appears to have made our lives easier, we need to ensure we don’t become a slave to this technology. Rather than leading to higher productivity, employees who work around the clock may just burn-out.”

It seems that not all of us are happy about the growth in mobile-technology, with one in four of us (24%) saying we feel isolated from work colleagues as a result.

“Draw boundaries between your personal and work life – scheduling a ‘cut-off point’ when you turn off your mobile and computer to spend some time with your family, friends or alone – uninterrupted.”

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February 2011

Business Environment awarded 'Sunday Times 100 Best Small Companies to Work For'

Business Environment has scooped 38th position in the prestigious Sunday Times '100 Best Small Companies to Work For' Awards. The company is the only serviced office operator to appear in the rankings.

The awards demonstrate excellence across a number of workplace 'factors' including leadership, pay and benefits and treatment of staff. More than 37,500 employees from all areas of business were surveyed nationally. Business Environment finished eighth in the country for its commitment to employee wellbeing and its focus on providing employees with a positive work-life balance.

David Saul, managing director of Business Environment, said: "With such a strong line-up of UK businesses entering the awards, we were delighted to be ranked so highly. It is encouraging to know that employees really value the staff training and development we offer and the award is testament to our commitment to them in building a business culture that they are proud to be part of."

The Best Companies organisation also awarded Business Environment a three star rating – the highest rating possible – for demonstrating it was an 'exceptional place to work'. Only 84 companies in the UK received this rating for 2011. This followed an evaluation of the organisation's key statistics, processes and policies.

Business Environment is no stranger to receiving business awards having featured in The Sunday Times' ranking in each of the previous three years. It has also won the Business Centre Association's Best Business Centre of the Year Award four years out of the five, and is the current title holder.

So far, 2011 has been a successful year for Business Environment with the serviced office operator having opened a stunning addition to its ever-growing portfolio in London's Cheapside.

With 18 operational centres in the South of England and gross assets over £300 million, Business Environment has constantly introduced innovative products and

services which have enabled it to out-perform the industry in terms of quality, service level and value for money. The company was the first to introduce the UK's first "all-inclusive serviced office package", with no hidden extras.

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3. Biographies of key team members



David Saul, managing director

David has previously worked for commercial estate agents Michael Laurie and Partners, and chartered surveyors Norman, Hirschfield, Ryde and Brown. After five years in the industry David set up his own surveyors practice but later sold the company to his partners to focus on building his own property portfolio. By 1990 he was their biggest client with a portfolio worth £100million.

In 1993, David teamed up with Simon Rusk to set up Business Environment. Within two years they had made their first £1million, hitting £10million per annum within five years.



Simon Rusk, finance director

Born in 1966, Simon has previously worked for Arthur Anderson Australia, MGM Cinemas and Nippon Credit Bank.

In setting up Business Environment in 1993 with David, Simon has strived to create a company that has brought the serviced office sector into the twenty first century and offers great service and value for money.



Andrew Stewart, corporate director

Andrew has been with Business Environment for over 10 years and has group responsibility for all facilities management. He is also responsible for Health and

Safety, utilities purchasing, building rates, service charge management, leases and rent reviews.

In addition Andrew manages all major decisions that are made within the HR team.



Nick Gandy, director of business centres

Nick has previously worked at Posthouse hotels, where he led “Project 99” – setting up a focus group to improve service by 50% and make it worth £99.

He has also worked as guest services manager at the Cumberland Hotel in Marble Arch, responsible for a team of over 20 porters and assistants, then later at the MWB Business Exchange working in a number of locations to improve performance and customer service levels.

Nick was appointed as director of business centres in 2009 and has been with Business Environment for five years.

3. Contact information

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