

# Reading Enterprise Hub helps young companies to flourish

## What needed doing

Enterprise Hubs are part of an ongoing government initiative to support early stage technology and knowledge based companies. Reading Enterprise Hub is one of the newer Hubs to open its doors to start-up companies. It offers office space plus a range of business support features specifically aimed at helping young companies get established and profitable as quickly as possible.

The problem for the Reading Hub was unless people knew that they were there then no one would benefit from their excellent services. They had a number of technology specialisations and a great location on the University of Reading campus. However how should they communicate what they offered and who would be interested?

Three Steps Forward works with a number of Enterprise Hubs and was doing some work with to one of the Reading Hub's tenants. It was a natural step for the Hub Director, Dr. Ceril Jones, to ask for some advice. This we offered freely, but it soon became apparent that Dr. Jones needed more than a friendly chat. She needed real help in putting together a marketing plan and backing it up with material that conveyed the message of the Hub to its target audience.

## The process we used

We did an initial study for the Hub to reveal what was special about Enterprise Hubs and the Reading one in particular. In discussions with the Director we decided on the likely target audience and looked at the way they might be reached.

At the same time the image that the Hub conveyed is very important. It needed a professional business image that also matched its technology focus areas and its close links with academia. This needed to be coordinated so that the Hub's identity was clearly and consistently portrayed.

Finally the Hub needed flexibility. It in itself was a new venture and it needed literature and a web site that could grow with it.

We applied our Product to Market (PTM) process (see insert for more details) to these problems as it covers all of these issues and is aimed at early stage companies. We then quoted for the design and production of the material and won the job in a competitive tender.

*"I am really pleased with how you took my documents and crafted them into something pleasing to read and designed to look good.*

*I am now proud handing out our material. It looks great and presents a good image of the hub."*

Dr. Ceril Jones · Hub Director · Reading Enterprise Hub

## The output from our work

The output from this project were many. We started by unpacking the specifics of the Hub and defining the right audience for the Hub's message. This involved a number of discussions with the Hub staff and some thoughts on how this might change and grow over time.

Having defined the likely audience we could then look at what they need to know and how they might be reached. From here we drew up a list of literature and other material that would attract likely tenants and encourage the business support services.

### Collateral Produced

1. Clear branded image.
2. Strap line: *Helping young companies to flourish.*
3. A4 brochure with inserts
4. Insert pages
  - a. Printed headed notepaper.
  - b. Design of insert style sheet.
  - c. Production of four inserts.
5. Production of printed flyer.
6. Web Site:  
[www.readinghub.co.uk](http://www.readinghub.co.uk)
  - a. Overall design.
  - b. Text for initial pages.

The final part was the actual production of the material. Here we designed a range of printed material and a web site with a common message and branding (see insert for produced material). We ensured flexibility of the material in two ways.

Firstly the printed brochure held the primary information and images, but was supplemented

by inserts held in a pocket. These inserts were designed with a printed header/footer, but allowed the main information to be added by the Hub staff on their own inkjet printers. This provides a quality image with high flexibility.

Secondly the web site uses content management features which allowed the Hub staff to add new information when they want to. This was provided by Intelligum ([www.intelligum.co.uk](http://www.intelligum.co.uk)), who is also at the Reading Hub. The flexibility of the web site is key as some items, such as business events put on to help local technology companies, need to be added and changed often.

For other useful information on Technology Marketing see our 8-page **Selling Technology** booklet available on our web site.

## The benefits to the client

It is still early days for the Reading Enterprise Hub, but the signs are good. The material now means that they can get the message out in a way that supports their overall aims and conveys a clear and professional image.

Of all the Hubs in the area they are uniquely placed on a university campus. This provides an excellent opportunity for supporting academic spinouts and also connecting technology companies into the University of Reading's research base. The fact that the University's Technology Transfer Manager has moved into the Hub signals that this fusion is likely to succeed.

### Can we help you too?

If you have a similar need to this client then maybe we can help you too. Our web site has more details on our range of services for early stage technology companies. Please do contact us for a no obligation meeting to discuss your specific needs.