

Knowledge 2B: Transferring Knowledge and Helping Business Grow



The University helps businesses to grow through two knowledge transfer programmes – the cross border FUSION programme and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs).

Truwood: True Excellence

Truwood is a complete interior fit-out company based in County Monaghan, which services five star hotels, restaurants, bars and commercial premises worldwide. Since its foundation 25 years ago, Truwood has built an international reputation as one of the best craftsmen-based companies in the business.

In recent years, the generation of contracts in the international market had become increasingly difficult for Truwood, due to the strength of the euro and the weak US dollar. The company approached the University for support through the FUSION programme and sought to save costs without compromising the perceived quality of company products. In addition, the company wished to reduce material waste and become

compliant with recognised environmental standards.

An Ulster graduate, John Harrison, was recruited onto the FUSION programme, and with support from the company directors – Philip and Olive McKenna – and the academic supervisors Wesley McKnight, senior lecturer, School of Engineering and Dennis McKeag, Professor of Product Development, a strategy was planned and implemented.

As a result of the programme the company has:

- installed a biomass boiler using waste material from production – thereby minimising waste disposal and concurrently eliminating fossil fuel costs.
- implemented the environmental standard BS8555, with ISO14001 accreditation to follow.
- introduced new materials and processes to give the company greater flexibility in design.
- developed a formal project management system leading to lower indirect labour costs and shorter lead times.
- introduced new production processes leading to less dependence on skilled craftsmen and lower material costs for many components.



The interior of Waxy O'Connor's bar in Miami. The first product totally designed and manufactured using the new systems



For further information on FUSION, contact Dr Janet Johnston, Innovation Services, telephone (028) 9036 8215 or email j.johnston1@ulster.ac.uk



A Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) is a UK-wide product that helps companies to improve their competitiveness and productivity by placing a University graduate (known as an associate) within a company. The associate plays a key role in managing and implementing strategic or tactical development in the company and transferring knowledge between the business and the University. The associate is mentored by one or more academics from Ulster. For further information, contact Caroline McCabe, KTP manager, telephone (028) 7137 5236 or email c.mccabe@ulster.ac.uk

Hunter Apparel Solutions Ltd



Simon Hunter, Managing Director

The two-year partnership between Ulster and Hunter Apparel Solutions Ltd began in February 2008 and is being steered by David Bell – KTP associate – with academic support from Aiden McCaughey and Dr Tom Lunney, School of Computing and Intelligent Systems.

Hunter Apparel Solutions Ltd, based in Derry, is a family-owned business which provides dress uniforms, shirts, ties, belt buckles, shoes and protective clothing for the Emergency Services.

Through the KTP, the company aims to design and implement an

enterprise resource planning system (ERP) and a customer relationship management system (CRM) to provide improved production planning capability, information management and customer service.

Simon Hunter, Managing Director,

said: "The KTP has worked for Hunter Apparel Solutions. As an SME, we would not have had the resource to employ a full time web developer. Through the KTP we have achieved a more user friendly website."



HUNTER
APPAREL SOLUTIONS