

WHY NETWORK?

Businesses are built on two fundamental elements: Creating a positive reputation, and maintaining a level of visibility.

Please remember also that your customers are far more likely to ask for recommendations from friends, neighbours and Business Colleagues than to be influenced by 'standard' advertising.

So consequently by meeting and talking to others at networking meetings could help support and develop your business.

Choosing PBN as a networking opportunity does not exclude using other organisations:

for example:

South Wales Chamber of Commerce - SWCC www.southwaleschamber.co.uk/

Largely based on Newport, Cardiff and Swansea, but with aims to develop in West Wales, this organisation has subscription categories starting at £190 plus VAT for 1-2 employees, £285 plus VAT for 3 -5 and so on.

A "Pembrokeshire meet and greet" event for new members is planned for 14th April 2011.

If your business will get value from the services and support then it is useful, and covers:

deals on a range of business products including: international trade services, healthcare schemes, legal support, health and safety advice, training programs, credit checking services and conference facilities.

Members receive direct access to a Member Directory of over 1000 local businesses, along with access to the British Chamber of Commerce's membership which exceeds 50,000 UK businesses. As the BCC is also a part of the global network of Chambers of Commerce, for members who are existing or potential exporters there is simply no better route to the global marketplace.

A part of the SWCC is an online network, it is possible to join "The Business Network Online" without being a Chamber member, there appear to be 4 members of this network in Pembrokeshire at 17-03-11.

Federation of small businesses - FSB www.fsb.org.uk/southwales/

This national organisation is well established throughout the UK, principally in the retail sector, and is active in Pembrokeshire. Subscription categories start at £170 pa for 1-4 employees, £220 pa for 5 - 10 employees.

A similar spectrum of benefits to that shown above for the SWCC is available to members of FSB, with particular emphasis on legal advice and information on employment law, health & safety, tax and commercial law, together with insurance cover for legal defence and an employment disputes service.

FSB has an online business directory.

The list of events from March to July for FSB South Wales does not include any events held in Pembrokeshire.

This local organisation is an association of businesses, Business Groups and Chambers within Pembrokeshire.

Its key objective is to support local business by providing a programme of meetings and workshops to encourage the sharing of best practice and to facilitate improving personal and business effectiveness.

PBN holds a minimum of 8 meetings a year on a variety of topics, and provides a web portal with links to business advice, meeting plans, news updates etc..

Working in liaison with PLANED, with support from their project officers, PBN utilises funding sources from WAG and the EU to deliver a minimal cost membership package at £15 pa per business, or £25 pa per Business Group or Chamber.

Meeting costs are typically £10 for non-members and £5 for members.

Key Officers of PBN are elected each year, and provide overview of the meeting and information programmes, and representation of the interests of the network where this is relevant in liaisons with “ Government “ bodies.

PBN provides an alphabetical membership listing, but eschews any business directory, suggesting instead the use of Google™ Places listings, and providing guidance on how to get a free listing with live links and photographs.