

Dinamic Enterprises

Creating ceramic souvenirs and promotional items while providing work based training for young people with learning disabilities

Dinamic Enterprises is a successful Ashington based organisation that produces quality ceramic goods and promotional items and is one of the region's few social enterprises operating within the manufacturing sector and delivering work based training in a modern factory environment for individuals who face barriers to employment. Formerly known as Dinamic Ceramics Northumbria, Dinamic Enterprises is expanding to a second South Tyneside based site in early 2010 which it expects will double its £60,000 annual sales turnover.



China mug featuring Hadrian's Wall from the Shetland Islands to the south coast of England. Secondly, Dinamic Enterprises produces marketing and promotional items such as fridge magnets, key rings and t-shirts for public, private and third sector organisations.

Dinamic Enterprises began trading in 2006 with the aim of providing work based training and individual mentoring to young people with learning disabilities and special education needs to increase both their self-confidence and motivation so that they are better able to access training and education programmes that can lead them into the world of work. These young people produce items for Dinamic Enterprises' two product ranges. Firstly, the company produces ceramic goods such as china mugs, coasters and collectible thimbles featuring iconic regionally based imagery and designs from local artists. These items are sold through tourism-related outlets such as National Trust sites and tourist information centres and attract a client base ranging

The company, limited by guarantee, ploughs its profits back into the running of the business and production costs and currently employs three full time staff who oversee the running of the business and support those on work based learning programmes which normally comprise of 2 young people with special education needs. Day to day decisions being made by the managing director and employees, while strategic decisions are made by an active board comprised of experienced entrepreneurs and marketers and individuals whose strong financial backgrounds have contributed to the commercial success of Dinamic Enterprises.

Like many social enterprises, Dinamic Enterprises faced challenges during its start-up phase though found the help provided by regional support agencies and business advisers invaluable. Key to the initial success of Dinamic Enterprises was the partnerships created between its original board and Business Link, Social Enterprise Northumberland and the Northumberland Care Trust. The company also received £50,000 in start-up and development finance from the Social Enterprise Loan Fund sourced by CapitaliSE North East who proved to be outstanding in acting as mentors and providing guidance when needed. In addition, Dinamic Enterprises has received support from the Community Foundation Tyne and Wear which has helped to shape the company's ideas around measuring and recording outputs in terms of the confidence, motivation and aspirations of the young people it provides with work based training. Currently, the company receives Workstep contributions that provide supported employment for a member of staff and, through its expansion, will provide Foundation Learning as a training provider in both Northumberland and South Tyneside in 2010.

As with the majority of businesses, Dinamic Enterprises has felt the effects of the current economic downturn. After the credit crunch and following recession in late 2008, Dinamic Enterprises found itself with no option but to make staff cuts and reschedule loan repayments to weather the financial storm. While these were very difficult decisions to make, this experience proved to strengthen the base of the organisation with remaining staff pulling together to keep the business going and coming up with new ideas to cut costs without compromising outputs or production. Furthermore, the recession showed that having a sustainable business model is critical to the success of any social enterprise and developing business relationships with the public sector is key to this success. As managing director Garry Dawson asserts, “When considering market sectors try to focus on the public sectors procurement arena. Cash is king for any social enterprise and the public sector are the quickest payers we have in our customer base!”

Indeed, the strength of Dinamic Enterprises’ business plan is clear in its success thus far. In 2007, the company created a graphics design centre for digitally produced ceramic transfers using cutting-edge technology which enabled it to offer high quality products in small production batches to clients. 2008 saw the beginning of its on-going work with the National Trust to supply products for their nation-wide ‘regional’ ranges. In 2009, Dinamic Enterprises received its first major public sector orders from the NHS supplying promotional items for its ‘5 a Day’ and Diabetes Awareness campaigns.



Promotional items produced for Welbeck First School

committed members of the North East Social Enterprise Partnership, Dinamic Enterprises plan to progress further whilst benefiting other social enterprises by offering fellow members a discount on promotional products in the spring of 2010.

With Dinamic Enterprises set to expand into South Tyneside in 2010, the coming years will be an exciting time for the organisation as it continues to advance its aims as a social enterprise, “This is probably the most exciting business I have been actively involved in and the fact it helps shape young people’s aspirations for the future is tangible evidence of the ‘double bottom line’ at work”, says Garry. From its first replication unit in South Tyneside, Dinamic Enterprises intends to develop a ‘business in a box’ model for other social enterprises across the country to access, and is currently in talks with two organisations regarding involvement with the company in the future. As

Contact

Garry Dawson on 01670 528 430 or Garry@dcnorthumbria.com

www.dcnorthumbria.com (current website)

www.dinamicenterprises.com (from March 2010)