

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **SO DIRECT LAUNCHES TO MARKET MILTON KEYNES BUSINESSES**

- **SO Direct forms SO Direct MOTEC Business Venture to raise £1M over 10 years for medical and educational programmes in Ghana**
- **SO Direct inaugural Golf Tournament takes place at Silverstone Golf Club and will become a bi-annual event from 2010.**

1<sup>ST</sup> October, 2009...SO Direct PR and Marketing Services Ltd, a new company specialising in getting products to market more quickly and more efficiently for "UK PLC" has moved into prestigious serviced offices at Gloucester House, Silbury Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, the former Institute of Chartered Accountants building.

The company selected Milton Keynes for its new Headquarters because of the town's outstanding reputation for innovation.

At the launch which took place at Gloucester House on Thursday, 1<sup>ST</sup> October, 2009, the company's founder and managing director, Sarah Olney, addressed an audience of Milton Keynes business people, including representatives from Invest Milton Keynes, the Federation of Small Businesses, BNI and a host of SO Direct clients spanning telecoms, franchise and technology clients; SO Direct consultants also attended, including Dr Rod Bayliss, MA DPhil CChem FRCS, Chairman of the International Rail Safety Board.

The opening was preceded by the SO Direct inaugural Golf Tournament at Silverstone Golf Club which was won by Ali Bahadar, Purchasing Consultant, Beds, Bucks and Herts, Bartercard.com. John Jackson, co-Founder, and Technical Director, SO Direct who hosted the tournament, announced that SO Direct will be running a Spring and Autumn Golf Tournament every year, which will be a charity match with proceeds going to MOTEC (Life) UK Ltd, a charity

which specialises in providing medical and educational programmes to the poor of Western Ghana and India.

At the opening, Sarah Olney took the opportunity to announce SO Direct's intention to spearhead raising £1 Million over 10 years for MOTEC through the formation of MOTEC Business Venture a collaborative initiative of private sector companies providing systems engineering, IT, PR & Marketing and Retail support in cash or kind.

“SO Direct is pledging one third of that money over the period. At standard charge out rates of £55 per hour, each of the 35 companies who were present at the launch would only have to give up to 6 days per year in cash or kind, to raise the balance,” she said.

The idea was borne out of her experience in the 1980s when she was Assistant Director for The Leicestershire Business Venture, which worked alongside Business Link to provide private sector expertise to redundant and unemployed people and SMEs up to £3M turnover. The companies provided help in the form of real, practical expertise comprising helping to create business plans, help with engineering projects, insurances, finance, and logistics.

“I thought that we could create something similar to help MOTEC get its projects up and running out in the field more quickly and more cost effectively through tapping into the expertise of very experienced business people across sectors that MOTEC as a medical charity, would not normally have access to,” said Sarah Olney.

“Our first trip will be to Ghana next October to help plan the logistical roll-out of one particular project. The medics are doing a tremendous job, it is the logistical supply line expertise that is now required and we will be setting up a Board of Management to monitor and report on our progress,” she added.

MOTEC is chaired in the UK by Paul Orofi-Atta, orthopaedic surgeon at Hemel Hempstead Hospital who gave a presentation on the day. The Patron is one of the Kings of Ghana, Dassabere Prof. Emeritus Oti Boetang, a renowned statistician, and a graduate from the London School of Economics who has served on the United Nations.

John Jackson, said: “Orthopaedics is a classic example of the twin combination of advanced engineering and technology; where there is a need to transfer skills quickly and get the

programmes out to market as quickly as possible. We are delighted to be involved with MOTEC and look forward to a long association to help it achieve its objectives.”

Stephen Roberts, BNI Regional Assistant Director, BNI, Home Counties West, said: “The SO Direct launch illustrates perfectly the power of networking. We have a number of members in Hertfordshire so it was great to catch up with Paul Orofi Atta, one of the local surgeons, and his team.

“There’s no doubt that BNI has helped get the company get up and running more quickly in Milton Keynes, a number of whom were at the launch and who we have now met and will continue to develop relationships with,” added Sarah Olney.

Commenting on the launch, Kate Clark-Kennedy, Director, The Customer Experience, said: “It is a pleasure to welcome a new business with such a strong blend of technology and marketing expertise. Businesses are so often able to develop highly innovative products but are unable to exploit their full marketing potential as they lack the complex skills required to get them to market quickly and efficiently to maximise return on investment.

“Milton Keynes is full of people with great ideas and SO Direct is perfectly placed to help such companies capitalise on their full potential; I too personally look forward to working more closely with Sarah and John,” she added.

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### **Editor’s Notes**

SO Direct was formed in 2005 by Sarah Olney, who identified the need for a new model company for a new model economy, offering a holistic, integrated, yet flexible, approach for companies seeking to build brand value, drive sales and profitability in line with compliance



regulations, reduce cost and risk exposure, and helping management capitalise on defined projects from conception to burn down.

The company has four operating divisions: Sales Agents, SEO, PR & Marketing, Export Controls and Project & Programme Management.

[pictures attached: Sarah Olney launch speech; MOTEC presentation; SO Direct Silverstone Golf Tournament players 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2009]