

# Objective One case study knowledge economy

**Beach Beat Surfboards** tel 01872 552574  
Wheal Kitty Workshops fax  
St Agnes email orders@beachbeatsurf.co.uk  
Cornwall web www.beachbeatsurfboards.co.uk

The projects in the Knowledge Economy investment cluster include those developing the Combined Universities and activities that support the development of much stronger links between Higher Education and business.

Developing the Combined Universities in Cornwall is considered so important to the development of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly it was the only project specifically outlined in the Single Programming Document contract. Prior to commencing the Objective One Programme in 2000, there was no such university opportunity in Cornwall.

University level provision in Cornwall and its links with business encourages graduates to start their own businesses, attracts new business and encourages innovation and knowledge transfer, thereby increasing the overall wealth of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

## Beach Beat Surfboards

**A champion surfer is taking advantage of groundbreaking technology and graduate knowledge to stay ahead of the competition.**

Peter 'Chops' Lascelles owns and runs Beach Beat, a surfboard design company based at Wheal Kitty Workshops, St Agnes. He is using the revolutionary computer technology to help build the surfboards and to involve his customers in the process. He has already designed several for world famous artist Damien Hirst.

"I have embraced the new computer technology for designing/shaping surfboards by introducing it into a retail store on a 42" plasma screen which allows the public to actually participate in their own design. I believe this is a European first.

"I have also worked in conjunction with a Newquay firm Ocean Magic where the machine is based, in introducing this revolutionary shaping technology which allows me to be in constant touch with the production. I can do designs from wherever I am in the world as long as I can plug my laptop into the Internet and send the design directly to the machine. From there they finish it at our Wheal Kitty factory. It is very versatile and can do all sorts of weird designs if required."

Mr Lascelles has been involved in surfboard design since the 1960s when he worked with the family business in Australia. He moved to Cornwall about 30 years ago. His business recently expanded



'Chops' making one of his surfboards

into e-shopping and is offering another first via the Internet. The website allows customers to design their own board online. This will be the first time this service has been available anywhere.

The web design and consequent business expansion plans came about with support from Unlocking Cornish Potential, a scheme that has received Objective One investment and places graduates with businesses. Toby White-Chambers is a surf science graduate who is responsible for setting up the e-shop.

Ben Leonard, UCP spokesman, said: "The project that Toby is undertaking is going to be invaluable to their future success. His drive and abilities will enable them to capitalise on the company's already excellent

# Objective One case study knowledge economy

reputation and the high regard which Beach Beat is held in the market. The online shop that Toby is creating and will manage will be far more targeted and considered than many of the other 'online superstores' that are in existence and should reflect the quality driven approach of the organisation as a whole. UCP is tremendously excited to be supporting Toby and we wish him every success with the project."

Mr Lascelles has also been supported by actnow- a partnership involving British Telecom and Objective One that has meant the roll out of high speed Broadband Internet access across this region.

From a one man band Mr Lascelles now has seven employees, rising to nine in the summer season. He sells from 800 to 1,000 surfboards a year and is hoping to expand even further.

His most famous client is Damien Hirst who initially met Mr Lascelles during a fund raising project for Surfers Against Sewage. Mr Lascelles made two surfboards with Mr Hirst's designs on them that were auctioned to raise funds for the environmental charity. The whole auction raised tens of thousands of pounds.

"He recently asked me to make a couple more that he wanted to give as presents so I showed him how to work with the foam and what we can do and sent him six different designs," said Mr Lascelles. "I shape and he paints."

**The Unlocking Cornish Potential programme places graduates with small and medium sized businesses in Cornwall for up to 12 months. Investment in UCP through Objective One means that participating businesses receive 30% of the cost of taking on their graduate for the duration of the project. Graduates and their employers also receive support from an independent mentor, 70% of previous UCP graduates have been offered a permanent position with their host company at the end of the project. UCP was the first project launched by the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) initiative to offer direct business support and is managed by Cornwall College.**

**UCP has proved highly successful in ensuring graduate knowledge remains in the region and gets harnessed for the benefit of businesses. Two key priorities for the EU's Lisbon Agenda,**



Peter 'Chops' Lascelles (left) and Unlocking Cornish Potential graduate employee Toby White-Chambers

**which aims to achieve economic regeneration, are knowledge and innovation for growth and to create more and better jobs. UCP is an effective way of achieving these aims.**

**For more information on Unlocking Cornish Potential visit [www.unlockingcornishpotential.co.uk](http://www.unlockingcornishpotential.co.uk).**