

Rowan Best Business Innovation Awards 2007 launch

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Closing date for receipt of applications is Monday 11th June 2007.

The hunt is on for the best business innovation in the Midlands in 2007. The award, created and run by Rowan Group, will recognise the best ideas for new products and services and celebrate the ingenuity and inventiveness of Midlands companies and individuals. Winners will receive hands-on support to help them take their innovation to market, making the award unique and more practical than the usual certificate or trophy.

Now in its second year, the Rowan Best Business Innovation Award has been pioneered by sales and marketing specialists the Rowan Group and has gained widespread support in the region after an exciting first year. Judges will include Chris Clifford, the CBI's Regional Director for the West Midlands, Norman Price OBE, Deputy Chairman of Advantage West Midlands and Chris Rattigan, Managing Director of Rowan. "We believe passionately in the innovative potential of this region," commented Chris Rattigan, MD of Rowan. "It's what makes the Midlands special. We see it all the time in the companies we work with and we wanted to do something to encourage this strength by helping businesses to realise their potential. We introduced the Rowan Best Business Innovation Awards in order to recognise and reward the significant contribution that new and innovative thinking makes to the vibrancy of the Midlands economy."

The awards are open to individuals or companies who can demonstrate a well thought-out idea which has the potential to become a commercial high flyer. Winners will receive up to £8,000 of advice and support from Rowan Group to help make their innovation a commercial success and there will be second and third prizes of £4,000 and £3,000 worth of support respectively. Candidates should be able to demonstrate that they have investigated the market opportunity for their product or service, have developed the idea to prototype or trial service stage and have a clear vision of the potential for their innovation in the market. Prizes will be in the form of consultancy and support provided by Rowan in order to take the chosen innovations significantly closer to achieving commercial success. Last year's winners included hairdresser Tracey Budd whose invention of a protective glove to prevent hairdressers cutting their fingers while working has now won a national distributorship with the help of Rowan.

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Chris Rattigan commented: " We come into contact all the time with people full of fantastic ideas who need to make them commercially successful. Rowan wanted to celebrate the wealth of inventiveness in the region and offer at least two companies each year the help they so richly deserve."

Rowan Group helps a wide range of businesses, from major companies to start-ups, to make their sales and marketing more successful and deliver increased revenue and profits. The company uniquely specialises in taking a hands-on approach to its customers' needs. Where other consultancies are well-known for weighty reports on what needs to be done, Rowan gets involved at the sharp end, leading change from the front and becoming part of the client's team. Combining the best in practical sales experience and the highest quality business processes, Rowan helps businesses by delivering improvements in top-line performance and commercial outcomes. From getting innovations to market to leading transformation in sales, Rowan focuses on the top line to help customers meet their revenue and profit targets.