



## **Just two weeks to go to win £40,000 in E-Commerce Awards**

**7 July 2003:** Small businesses across the UK have until 31<sup>st</sup> July to enter the fifth InterForum / UK online for business E-Commerce Awards. Companies stand the chance of winning a total £40,000 cash prize but with just over two weeks to go until the application deadline on 31 July its time to act now.

So far almost 2,000 companies have started their entry for the Awards, which are free to enter and aim to recognise and reward innovation in the use of Internet, information and communications technologies to transform small and medium businesses in the UK, and are open to any UK business with up to 250 employees. Entries or nominations can be made via the dedicated web site [www.ecommerce-awards.co.uk](http://www.ecommerce-awards.co.uk)

Phil Flaxton, Chief Executive of InterForum, commented: "A significant factor in the successful adoption of Internet, information and communication technologies has been the way in which small and medium businesses have paved the way for each other. Since their inception in 1999 the Awards have highlighted the successes of over 3,500 organisations that have entered the awards. To reflect the growing maturity of the marketplace this year includes a new focus on business innovation and business transformation through the inclusion of the four new national innovation categories."

The Awards consist of regional heats with four different categories; e-business start-ups, e-trading, e-business and voluntary & community sector. The category winners from each region will receive £2,000 and will go on to the national finals where they will compete with other category winners for an £8,000 prize. The four National Category winners will then go head to head for the National E-Commerce Awards Champion 2003 title and £30,000 in cash.

Liz Grant, Director of ePolicy and Delivery said: "I would really urge companies to enter the E-Commerce Awards. Many smaller businesses in the industry are using technology in innovative and effective ways and the Awards present a great opportunity for this to be recognised and rewarded. We have already seen some impressive entries across the categories and from a range of sectors. If the way you use ICT has helped the way your business works and improved your competitive edge, we want to hear from you."

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of the E-Commerce Awards, four new national innovation categories have also been introduced:

- Use of Mobile & Wireless Technology
- Use of Broadband Technology
- Advanced Supply Chain Integration
- Use of Technology Means Business (TMB) accredited advice

Each Innovation Category winner will be presented with an £8,000 cash prize.

The E-Commerce Awards are the only Government-backed technology awards scheme and are sponsored nationally for the third year by Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBS) and Cisco Systems.

**Notes to Editors:**

1. UK online for business

UK online for business is a partnership between Government and industry and promotes the use of e-business amongst small and medium sized businesses. There is a network of UK online for business advisers situated in the Business Links in England and their equivalents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These advisers provide down to earth, practical and impartial advice to individual businesses on how technology can cut time and cost from the way they do business. For further information call 0845 715 2000 or visit [www.ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk](http://www.ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk)

2. [www.interforum.org](http://www.interforum.org) is a not-for-profit organisation that helps British companies to conduct their business electronically. All of InterForum's activities are governed by the need to raise awareness of the many business opportunities and challenges presented by new Internet, information and communications technologies. InterForum works to ensure that education, legislation and technology are in place to help British businesses to profit from the digital economy. For further information on InterForum please visit its website <http://www.interforum.org>

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