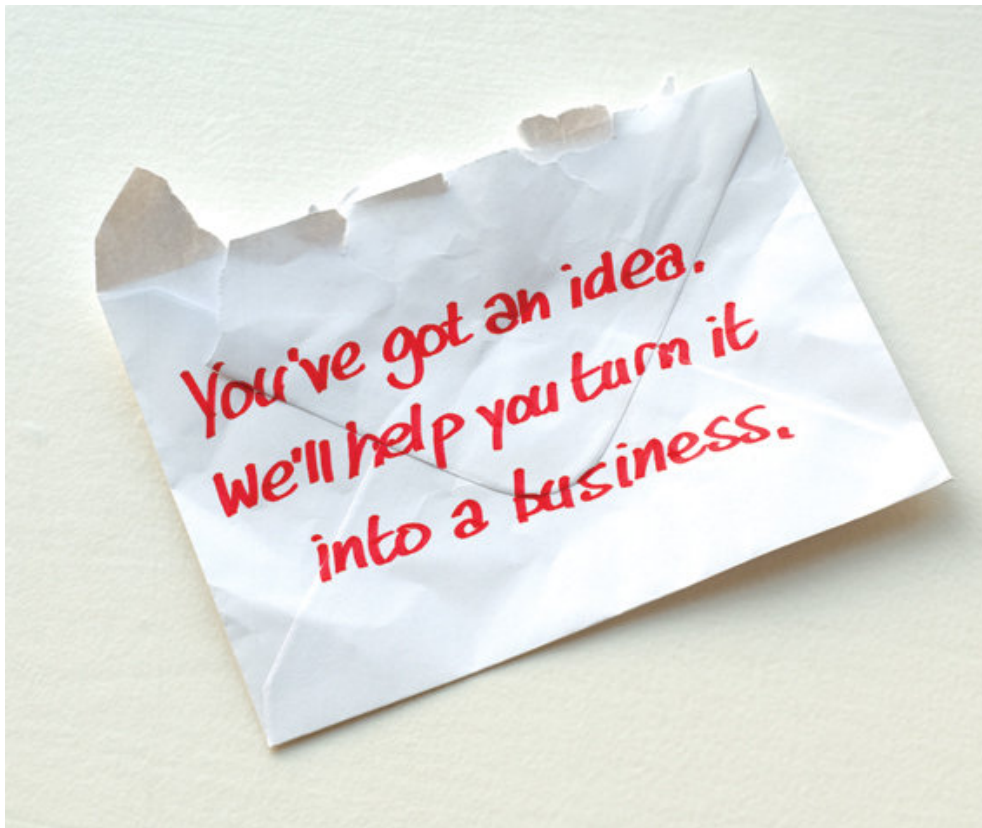


www.bl.uk/bipc

Supporting London's Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Entrepreneurs during the Recession

March 2009



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Executive Summary: Supporting SMEs and Entrepreneurs during the Recession

According to the Federation of Small Businesses, over two-thirds of all new jobs in London have been created by self-employment or by the starting-up of micro-businesses (those employing fewer than 10 people) over the past few years.

There are over 750,000 enterprises in London. More than 90% of them are micro-business or the self-employed. They provide jobs for nearly two million people - about 40% of London's business employment. These businesses are the backbone of the London economy and their creation and survival will be critical to bringing London out of recession.

Rachel Elnaugh, ex-Dragon from BBC2's *Dragons' Den* who runs Entrepreneurial Masterclasses and is a business advice expert in the Business & IP Centre, gives her views about how people are feeling in the recession:

"There's no doubt that the recession is biting and I receive e-mails daily from entrepreneurs in distress who are on the edge of both business and personal financial meltdown. On the other hand, there is a whole raft of entrepreneurs who are approaching the problems fighting - and for whom, as a result, business is booming. The difference I notice in these two groups is purely one of mental attitude. The entrepreneurs who are not prepared to 'say die', who are willing to adjust and remodel their business with changing needs and who are open to working in collaboration with other businesses to build value are the ones who will survive."

This document summarises how the British Library Business & IP Centre, which is match-funded by the London Development Agency, is supporting people and businesses in the current recession in London and beyond.

Recent surveys held between October 2008 and February 2009 show that our users are more optimistic about the outlook for their businesses, than the economy as a whole.

In a survey held during Enterprise Week (17 – 21 November 2008), Centre users said that sourcing finance, market research, business planning and networking were the topics and events that they thought would be of most help during the 'Credit Crunch'.

In support of the Mayor's Economic Recovery Action Plan (December 2008), the British Library Business & IP Centre is pursuing the following activities:

- Strengthening business support in London by increasing the number of relevant workshops and advice sessions that we run and providing them free or at heavily discounted rates. We estimate that, together with our partners and business experts, we are subsidising business support to our users by over £0.5 million pa.

- Helping unemployed people to develop the skills they need to become self-employed or start their own businesses¹; use of the Centre by unemployed people has more than doubled over the last nine months.
- Giving undergraduates and postgraduates the skills they need to become self-employed or start businesses when they graduate through a tailored programme of events.
- Giving people the networking opportunities that they need to develop their support network, meet 'role models', collaborate with other entrepreneurs and build their confidence.
- Opening up the British Library's tendering process to SMEs via the Business & IP Centre web pages (and eventually via CompeteFor).
- Conducting a major awareness-raising campaign, through outreach, press, e-marketing and advertising in order to raise awareness of the Business & IP Centre's services for businesses in the recession.

1. The British Library Business & IP Centre

The British Library Business & IP Centre, which opened in March 2006, with the help of London Development Agency funding, supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs from the first spark of inspiration to successfully launching and developing a business.

The Centre is unique in offering free access to business and intellectual property information in one place, with impartial experts to guide users to the information they need; this is complemented by our partners and marketing associates who help users make the most of the information in the Centre through relevant workshops, advice clinics, events and referrals.

The Centre aims to support the backbone of London's business community i.e. its entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, including those from minority groups and disadvantaged backgrounds. Over three-quarters of our users come from within the M25 and others come from as far afield as Glasgow, Newcastle and Manchester.

▪ ¹ According to the major outplacement firms, at least a quarter of their clients, who have recently been made redundant, are considering self-employment or setting up their own businesses.

Just under half (48%) of the Centre's users are business owners/managers and the vast majority of those are either sole traders (self-employed) or employed in micro-businesses. The rest of our users are planning to or are in the process of setting up a business. Overall, just over half our users are women and over a third are from Black and Asian Minority Ethnic groups. A profile of the Centre's users is given in Appendix 1.

The Business & IP Centre has received broad recognition and support:

"The British Library supports business, the creative industries in particular, through networking events and tailored workshops. The Library's Business and IP Centre provides a combination of excellent facilities, information and expertise, offering a unique combination of business and IP information, including free access to more than 30 high-value subscription databases, hundreds of market research reports, and the resources of UK-IPO." Creative Britain 2008²

"This task force advocates for the British Library's Centre to serve as a model for other similar centres to be rolled out across the country." The Richard Report 2008³

"The British Library Business & IP Centre has gained a reputation for providing solid support for start-up operations." Financial Times

"The British Library Business & IP Centre is, quite simply, the most valuable resource for aspiring entrepreneurs in London. And even more remarkable, it's free! I know of many entrepreneurial ventures that could not have succeeded without the founders' access to the Business & IP Centre's business information." Matthew Rock, Group Editor. Real Business magazine, January 2007.

Case studies from users of the Business & IP Centre and their reactions to the recession can be found in Section 5 of this report.

2. Business & IP Centre Achievements

The Business & IP Centre measures its contribution towards employment support, business support and skills development and how effective these interventions are in creating and assisting businesses within the economy.

The Centre's accomplishments speak for themselves:

Since the Centre opened in March 2006, it has welcomed over 90,000 people through the doors, providing them with up-to-date business and

² Creative Britain. Report. February 2008.

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/CEPFeb2008.pdf>

³ Small Business and Government: The Richard Report, June 2008.

<http://www.conservatives.com/pdf/document-richardreport-2008.pdf>

intellectual property information to help them, for example, to protect their ideas, research a market, and write a business plan. Visits to the Centre are up 16% on this time last year.

It has delivered, together with its partners, over 1,000 workshops and events (either free or heavily discounted) since it opened, as well as over 500 sessions offering one-to-one advice and basic mentoring.

It provides free access to over £5 million worth of business and intellectual property information⁴ in the form of hard copy (including reports, journals, directories and patents) and electronic databases, giving users access to the same – if not better - resources as a multinational company.

An independent e-survey conducted by ORC International in 2007, showed that within the sample of 230 users, the Business & IP Centre had helped to create 47 new businesses and 115 new jobs within the London economy, and taken a further 64 businesses to start-up stage.

Having both business and IP information together to support the innovation cycle is clearly valued by entrepreneurs. Business & IP Centre users appear to be more aware of the need to protect their ideas than the general business community.

There is a high degree of loyalty to the Centre and people keep coming back. Respondents to the e-survey attended an average of 2.5 events each. The level of repeat visits clearly indicates that SMEs feel the Centre is delivering value.

3. Business & IP Centre User Needs during the Recession

Levels of confidence in the current economic climate

Since the recession in the autumn of 2008 the Centre has regularly surveyed users about the impact of the recession and the support they need. In total, 872 users of the Centre's services have taken part to date. The results of these surveys are presented below.

Figure 1 shows that Centre users are more confident about the future of their business than they are about the economy as a whole; this could be because they have more control over the former; some see the recession as an opportunity (see the case studies under Section 5). A large proportion (37%) of users are uncertain about the economy in spite of the barrage of bad news over recent months.

⁴ Note that the British Library is the library of the Intellectual Property Office and, as such, holds its collections of patents, trade marks and registered designs.

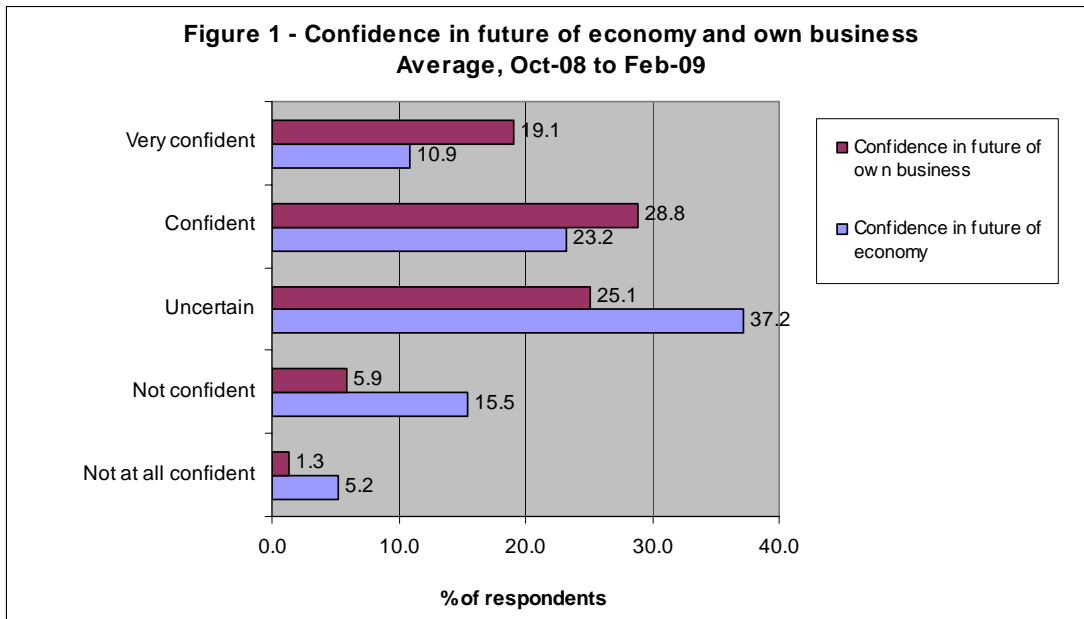
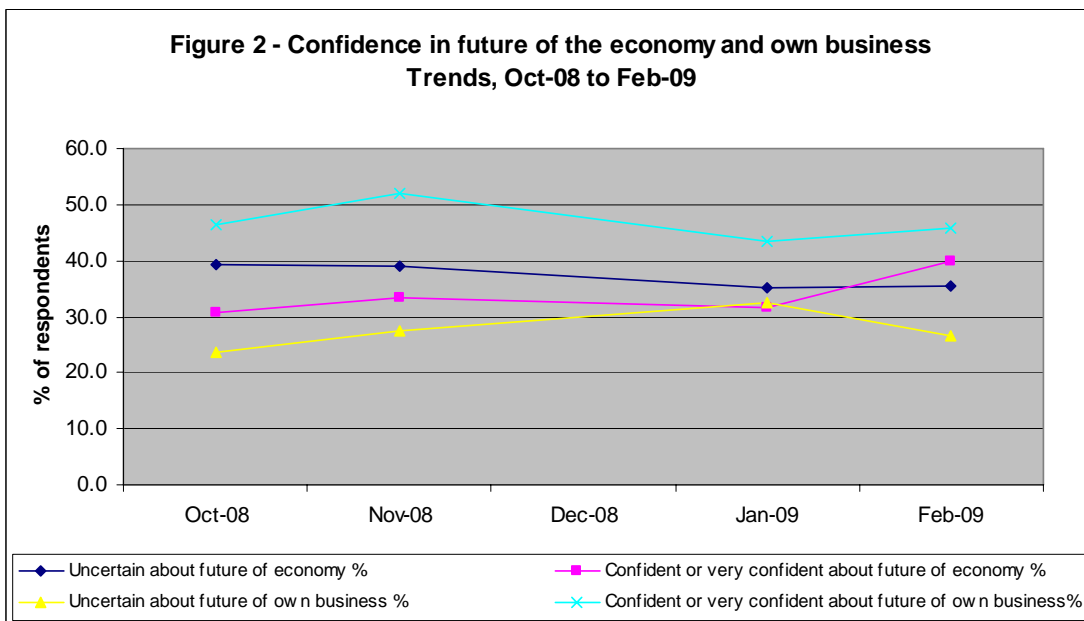


Figure 2 shows that respondents' confidence in their own business was at a peak in November, dipped in January and then recovered in February. People's confidence in the economy also bounced back in February.



Support requirements in the current climate

During Enterprise Week in November 2008, we also asked respondents about the support that they would like to receive in the current economic climate. The results of this survey are shown in Figure 3.

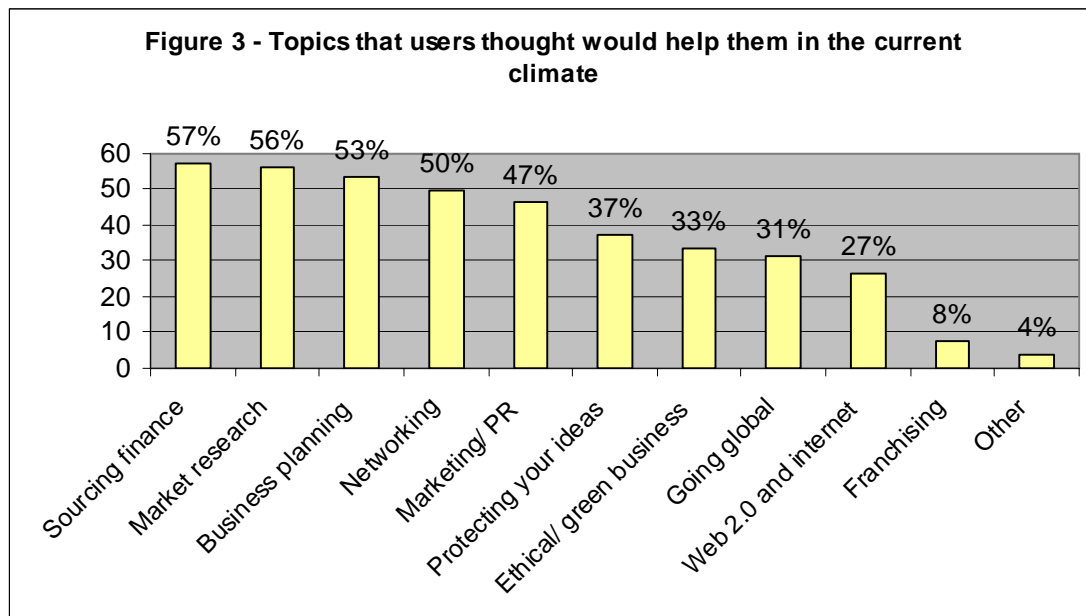
Overall, respondents thought that sourcing finance, market research, business planning, networking, marketing and PR were the most important topics in the current economic climate.

It is perhaps not surprising that 57% were interested in sourcing finance and, while the Centre is not in a position to provide loans, it does run relevant workshops, including: business planning and how to prepare to apply for a bank loan; the basics of finance and issues such as cost control and cash flow management; and how to get access to Islamic finance. It also hosts regular 'First Tuesday' networking events, where technology entrepreneurs can meet venture capitalists and potential investors.

In addition, the Centre staff are able to refer entrepreneurs and businesses to partner organisations who can give direct assistance; these include Business Link in London, GLE oneLondon, GK Partners and the London Technology Network. The Centre also provides free access to the Grant Net & Grant Finder databases.

What is perhaps surprising is that market research was ranked almost as highly as sourcing finance and that people are aware of the need to understand their markets and their customers. The Centre focuses on market research and ideally placed to meet this need.

As a result of these findings the Business & IP Centre has responded by increasing its support in these areas, detailed in section 4 below.



4. How the Centre is addressing the needs of SMEs and Entrepreneurs

The Centre is addressing the needs of London businesses during the recession by offering workshops and advice sessions, helping unemployed people to develop business skills, supporting students to become entrepreneurs, providing networking opportunities, opening the tendering process at the Library to users and conducting a major awareness raising campaign to promote the Centre's help to the unemployed, SMEs and entrepreneurs.

Providing subsidised business support services

The Centre's information experts runs a regular series of free 'hands on' practical workshops such as 'A Beginner's Guide to Intellectual Property' and 'Knowing Your Market', which are designed to teach people the skills they need to carry out their own business and intellectual property research.

Through its Partner Programme, the Business & IP Centre is also able to offer complementary workshops and valuable advice for free or at heavily discounted rates. A list of business partners is given in Appendix 2.

Not surprisingly, in the current climate, many of our users are unable to afford commercial prices and the Centre has been able to agree discounted rates with its partners. We estimate that, together with our business partners and experts, we are subsidising business support services to our users (including workshops, events and one-on-one advice) by over £0.5 million pa.

The following business experts give pro bono one-hour one-on-one advice and basic mentoring as part of the Centre's *Ask an Expert* programme. Their charge-out rate or fees would be at least £1,000 per day in the commercial market.

- **Rachel Elnaugh**, entrepreneur, former dragon from BBC2's *Dragons' Den*, business speaker and mentor
- **Mark Sheahan**, entrepreneur and inventor, the Centre's Inventor In Residence
- **Kresse Wesling**, social entrepreneur, government social enterprise ambassador and founder of Babaloo and EAKO
- **Sam Gyimah**, co-founder of Workology and specialist in funding advice
- **Helen Parkins**, legal expert, specialising in SMEs
- **London Business Support Services** team of business advisors

In addition, several government-funded partners, such as Business Link in London and ideas21, also give free one-on-one advice sessions in the Centre.

The Centre provides three hours of research for free on behalf of users and has helped over 250 people this year with more than £20,000 of research, such as patent searches.

Enhanced workshop programme

The Business & IP Centre runs a regular series of workshops and events to support businesses and ensure that they make the most of the information in the Centre. All users are offered a one-hour clinic with one of the Centre's information experts to assess their specific requirements and recommend relevant workshops and advice sessions.

The monthly workshop programme has been revised and expanded in response to the findings of the survey of users' needs and includes the following:

Intellectual Property

- *A Beginner's Guide to Intellectual Property*
- *Introducing Copyright/Patent Searching/Trade Marks/Registered Designs*
- *Protecting Your Ideas (delivered as a 'road show' within London)*
- *Innovation Surgeries*
- *How to make sure your Idea or Invention will sell*

Marketing and Business Planning

- *Knowing your market*
- *Researching a Company*
- *Market Research on Shoestring*
- *Business Planning Toolbox*
- *Have You got News for Us?*

In addition, from October 2008 the Business & IP Centre has run and continues to run workshops and events which address the needs of users affected by the recession. These include:

- *Recession Busting for Creative Businesses*, 26 November 2008 (in partnership with CreateKX)
- *Business Nightmares and How to Recover from Them*, 21 January 2009 (part of the 'Inspiring Entrepreneurs' Series)
- *Boost Your Business Masterclass* (regular workshop with Rasheed Ogunlaru)
- *Moving Up in a Downturn*, 3 March 2009 (in partnership with CreateKX)
- *Recession-Proof Your Business* (regular workshop)
- *Business Trends for 2009* (regular workshop)
- *Kick-starting the Sustainable Economy: The Entrepreneur in a Changing Market*, 6 May 2009 (part of the Inspiring Entrepreneurs' Series)

The full details of the workshop programme are listed in Appendix 3 or on our website at www.bl.uk/bipc. Some workshops are now delivered offsite e.g. at the Thames Innovation Centre.

Broadening our reach

In April 2008, the Library launched a series of e-courses on intellectual property, which entrepreneurs and SMEs can access from their desktop. Over 2,500 people have registered for the online courses and feedback has been extremely positive:

"I found the material easy to follow and understand and it gave me many new insights, as well as reinforcing my existing knowledge. Overall an excellent programme and one I have already recommended to other colleagues. I will continue to read the course notes on a regular basis." Gwyn Jones - Newport and Gwent Chamber of Commerce.

"I will definitely recommend this course! This is a wonderful introduction to intellectual property. This gives a concise, practical review of IP for non-legal and non-IP related people." Bruce Girvan - Ceres Power, Crawley, UK.

From 10 March we started to provide live web casts of our highly successful series of Inspiring Entrepreneurs events, in partnership with, and with funding from, HSBC Start-Up Stars.

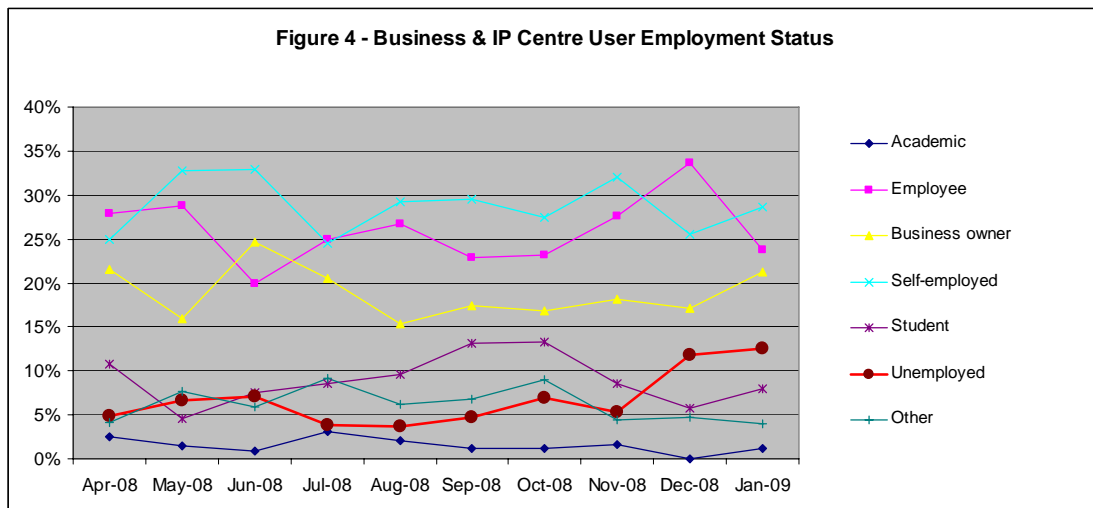
Supporting unemployed people

According to the major outplacement firms in London as many as 25% of their clients who have been made redundant since the start of the 'Credit Crunch' are considering self-employment or setting up a business. While the Centre has not developed specific workshops for unemployed people, it has actively sought to make people aware of the one-on-one advice sessions, workshops and information resources on offer to help people become self-employed or start up a business.

As part of its outreach programme the Centre management has worked with all the major outplacement firms in London (Drake Beam Morin, Penna Consulting, Right Management and Rialto) and made presentations to their consultant and clients, to ensure that they are aware of the support on offer by the Centre.

The Centre has also formed a partnership with InBiz and Jobcentre Plus, so that they can refer relevant people to the Centre.

Figure 4 shows that the proportion of unemployed people using the Centre and its services has more than doubled between April 2008 and January 2009.



Supporting students' entrepreneurship skills

On 9 February 2009 the Library ran an 'Entrepreneurship Training Day' for 70 postgraduate students. Highlights included a panel discussion with representatives from the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship, Vitae⁵, the Royal Veterinary College and Centre business and life coach, Rasheed Ogunlaru; as well as sessions on intellectual property and market research. Feedback was extremely positive, one attendee called it *"the most useful day that I have spent in several years"*.

The Library is planning to hold more of these events in the future; in March it is running an event called 'Student Start a Business Day' which will include a combination of interactive workshops, talks and networking sessions. In addition, we are working closely with the Peter Jones Academy, who brought 28 students to our latest 'Inspiring Entrepreneurs event 'Blueprints for Business', which explored franchising as a potential business opportunity.

Providing networking opportunities

The Centre recognises that networking is crucial in helping people to start and develop a business and provides a modern and lively networking area for people to meet like-minded people and hold informal meetings. The Centre's event programme includes regular networking events and themed open evenings on topical subjects such as 'How to Harness Web 2.0'; each workshop usually has a networking element as well.

⁵ Vitae is a national organisation championing the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes.

Through its 'Inspiring Entrepreneurs' programme, the Centre also provides the opportunity for users to meet 'role model' entrepreneurs and gain from their insight and experience.

Opening up contract opportunities

The British Library is opening up a number of its contract opportunities to SMEs via the Business & IP Centre. Entrepreneurs will be able to find out about new tenders via the Centre's website, e-newsletter and other communication channels. SMEs can then register on the Library's e-tendering website, where they will also have access to a pan-government portal with hundreds of opportunities from central government agencies.

In addition, the Library regularly promotes CompeteFor to its users to raise awareness of opportunities around the Olympics.

Major awareness-raising campaign

The Library has increased its above-the-line advertising to entrepreneurs and SMEs in London. Using the 'envelope' (see front cover) and 'shed' (see back cover) creatives it has recently advertised the Business & IP Centre on the internet, the London Underground and in relevant publications such as the 'Metro', 'London Lite', 'London Paper', 'City AM', 'Growing Business' and 'Real Business'.

The Centre has developed a presence on a number of social networking sites including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. The Centre's e-newsletter is also very popular; over 10,000 entrepreneurs and SMEs receive it every month.

To increase support for unemployed people and raise awareness of the Centre, the Library has been working closely with outplacement firms, JobCentre Plus, public libraries, local chambers of commerce and universities.

5. Business & IP Centre Case Studies

The Centre runs a Case Study Programme which demonstrates how entrepreneurs have used the Centre to successfully start up and run their own businesses. There are some thirty case studies within the programme.

A 'case study of the month' is featured on the Library's website and a there is a rotating display in the Centre's networking area.

In the run up to Christmas 2008, we asked the subjects of our case studies how they were being affected by the 'Credit Crunch'. A cross-section of case studies and their responses are given below.

Unfortunately, two of our case studies have ceased trading over the past few months, but both have plans to launch a new company in the future.

Sabina Ali - Founder and Director of Motasem



Sabina studied Textile and Knitwear at DeMontfort University and went on to work in design and production for Naf Naf, Jigsaw, Marks & Spencer and Virgin Clothing. She worked for Condé Nast Publications, Channel 4 and on numerous projects as a fashion stylist. In a change of direction she developed her graphic design skills and worked at Lehman Brothers, where she became aware of the great importance of branding and finance. She continued to design clothes and work as a freelance fashion stylist.

In 2005, she received commissions to design cocktail style wedding dresses. They were a huge hit and other orders quickly followed. There was clearly a gap in the market and the idea for Motasem was born. The wear-once wedding dresses seemed extravagant and wasteful. A collection of beautiful dresses for the perfect day was produced. Not only were the dresses just right for a glamorous wedding, but after the honeymoon they were versatile enough for a chic party.

About the Centre, Sabina said " *I first heard about the Library's resources many years ago, when I used to research design ideas and use Mintel reports to look at target markets in my past role as a fashion designer for different companies. I started using it [the Business & IP Centre] a lot more a couple of years ago when I decided to start my own business*".

How the recession is affecting Sabina's business:

"I am doing very well as it goes, it seems that the timing is perfect for people who want to be less wasteful when selecting their wedding dresses, as mine are ones that you can wear again and again. The pricing is much more affordable than traditional bespoke dresses, which means in credit crunch times, it's appealing to a lot of brides. I am getting lots of requests for appointments and selling more dresses." 2 January 2009

William de Lucy - Co-founder of Amplify Trading



William studied Economics at the University of Leeds before starting his career as a futures trader with Goldenberg Hehmeyer Trading Company Ltd. After six years of trading futures he decided to set up a business that allowed him and his business partner to share their professional knowledge.

Amplify trading is fast-growing financial futures trading company that uses years of successful trading experience to develop professional traders. Based in a prominent trading floor in Canary Wharf, London the company continues to develop profitable traders by providing cutting edge technology and support to ensure that their traders, be they novice or professional, have the best opportunity to succeed.

William has recently completed an MSc in Environmental Finance, with a view to expanding their business into the arena of 'carbon trading' later in 2009.

"The Business & IP Centre was crucial to getting our business off the ground. It gave us a professional space we could use to hold meetings and develop our business plan and strategy before we moved into our offices. We also had access to a multitude of databases such as Business Insights that gave us grounding in areas such as marketing where we had no previous experience. It has been a fantastic place to network with other entrepreneurs, this was especially the case in the networking receptions after evening events, such as 'Inspiring Entrepreneurs', that we attended.

"Starting my own business is the most challenging thing I have ever done, The Business and IP Centre has provided great support that has given me the confidence to drive our business forward."

How the recession is affecting William's business:

"The UK recession has created a great opportunity for us to hire new traders. Starting a career in trading carries a risk that is reflected by the potential rewards for successful candidates. The current employment market now gives us exposure to many talented candidates who have had experience in the financial sector to whom we can offer a new opportunity.

"The recession has created fantastic volatility in the financial markets which provide unprecedented opportunity to develop as a professional trader, whilst many see the current climate as a threat, for us it is the perfect environment for us to pursue an aggressive growth strategy." 11 March 2009

Mandy Haberman – Founder of Haberman Associates



Mandy began by inventing the Haberman Feeder which is now used in hospitals throughout the world. Her latest invention, the "Anywayup Cup", has revolutionised the infant feeding cup market and ten million cups are sold per year using the technology. Mandy was named British Female Inventor of the Year 2000 and also won the Design Effectiveness Awards 2000.

Having successfully enforced her intellectual property rights through the courts, Mandy has become an avid campaigner for improvements in the patent system: *"As an independent inventor and entrepreneur, I know how essential it is to research and protect your patent. The British Library's Business & IP Centre houses intellectual property information and expertise which can demystify the patenting process and save you money on lawyers' fees."*

How the recession is affecting Mandy's business:

"The short answer is yes - it (the recession) is having an affect. We are planning to launch a new range of products under our own brand. Unfortunately, our preferred business partner/investor was badly hit financially and had to drop out. This set us back a long way. So we have had to be more innovative in our strategy. We live in exciting (and a trifle scary) times." 12 December 2008

Vanessa Hutchinson – Founder of Mahoe Café



Vanessa spent ten years as a lawyer before taking a career break and deciding to set up a proper café-bistro-bar in the City, close to St. Paul's Cathedral. With her Caribbean background, Vanessa wanted to promote Jamaica Blue Mountain coffee. The name Mahoe refers to Jamaica's national tree, a kind of hibiscus.

Vanessa started her business development at the Business & IP Centre: *"I relied a lot on the Centre when I was getting started. People think starting a business in the restaurant sector is about an excellent chef or a lot of experience in the kitchen. Actually it's about researching your market, finding a fantastic location, and making sure you understand your pricing and your competitors."*

Vanessa also found the Centre's business plan clinics invaluable: *"If you need to raise finance as I did then you'll want to have a really sensible business plan that allows people to understand what you're proposing. The Centre pointed me in the right direction."*

How the recession is affecting Vanessa's business:

"I don't think the recession has really affected the business- of course it's hard to tell because we're new so only experiencing growth, but that may be only to do with the growth phase (and the fact it's Christmas) and not to say that we're beating the recession. Anyway I've always felt that some types of businesses are to a certain degree "recession proof" (or at least only suffer indirectly- and I feel that if a café is properly positioned it could be one such business). But whatever the explanation, I am happy to say that we are seeing some good business from office parties and regular walkers-in. It's hard work to make that happen but I am enjoying it!" 11 December 2008.

Veronica Jones - Founder and Director of VJEM Events

Veronica first came up with the idea for VJEM Events (pronounced v-gem) after being involved in events as a child and growing up in the industry. She founded VJEM (formerly VJ) Events in 2003 when she decided that she wanted to stop freelancing and start running her own company.

The company specialises in the planning and management of outdoor and special events in both the private and public sectors and is delighted to have scooped the Best Creative Growth Business award at the recent Haringey City Growth Business Awards 2008.



For the past two years VJEM have run the One Love Hackney Festival, which is a festival to promote peace in the community. The company has also been involved in the Lord Mayor's Show, the Notting Hill Carnival, and the Reading and the Leeds Festivals.

"When I first came up with the idea of running my own event company I needed to know who my market was, who I was going to target and also, more importantly, which competitors were out there and what I'd be up against. I decided the first thing I needed to do was research. It was then that I found out about the Business & IP Centre in the British Library and I was amazed at the amount of information that they had and the access I had to information that I probably couldn't get that anywhere else, e.g. looking at the directors, looking at their spend, where they advertised, who they target, who their clients were. So that helped me in positioning my business.

"Using the information I gathered from the Business & IP Centre, I was able to use that to create my business plan and use that as a working document to carry me forward and take the business where I needed it to go."

How the recession is affecting Veronica's business:

"I think that dreaded 'R' word is putting the fright in everyone. We're doing OK at the moment. I have definitely noticed a slow down on the corporate side but we're doing OK with the public and 'third sector'. At the moment we're securing work for 2009 which is more challenging than usual but we're still in a good position.

"We were finalists in the community involvement and growth business categories at this month's North and West London Business awards, which has raised our profile. We also secured two contracts and a few speaking opportunities following my interview and publicity on the British Library website and in the literature, which has been great. Thank you again for the opportunity. That made a significant difference. We just have to hang in there and keep everything crossed." 18 December 2008

Imtaz Khaliq - Bespoke Tailor



Imtaz set up business more than twelve years ago and is now regarded as one of the leading lights in the new couture tailoring movement. She has been named by *Cosmopolitan* as one of the top four tailors in London and her high-profile client base includes pop star Dina Carroll, actress Michelle Pfeiffer, newsreader Kay Burley, and supermodel Tatjana Pattiz.

Her tailoring work has been featured on GMTV, Central TV, Channel 4, and in numerous magazines including *The Face*, *Tatler*, and *Cosmopolitan*. Imtaz also offers one-to-one and group tailoring classes at all levels, to enable people to learn or re-learn skills such as pattern-cutting, designing, fitting, and sewing techniques. Imtaz is a keen user of the British Library: *"The Business & IP Centre provided me with on-site access to a treasure trove of a research collection, which offers users from the creative industries an intoxicating mix of inspiration and information under one roof."*

How the recession is affecting Imtaz's business:

"We are quite in demand at the moment, thankfully! People seem to be ordering more than before but some areas have suffered a little. There has been a lot more interest in the classes and the tailoring from new and existing clients."

"People want quality and skills during a recession - they don't want throw away fashion. They want quality that lasts and when you have a tailored suit that can last you twenty years- it's an investment. With the classes you are investing in yourself. It's not cheaper to make your own or having something tailored but you get quality and fit and exactly what you want. This saves you time and money in the long run." 11 December 2008

Mark Sheahan - Founder and MD of Compgen Ltd



Mark is 'Inventor in Residence' at the British Library and gives free one-to-one mentoring sessions in the Business & IP Centre. He was named Innovator of the Year 2003 in a

ceremony held at the British Library. His 'Squeezeopen' containers are a real breakthrough in packaging design.

Cheaper and quicker to produce than standard closing systems, his invention has already been taken up by major packaging producers in the USA, Japan and the UK.

During development of the product, Mark visited the Business & IP Centre and our website to check on existing patents for packaging. *"It's vital to do thorough searches. Otherwise you can waste so much time, and companies can spend thousands of pounds, developing an idea, only to find that a patent already exists. The Library can also help innovators and entrepreneurs assess the market. There's no point developing a prototype unless there's a big enough market out there."*

How the recession is affecting Mark's businesses:

"It has affected me in some negative ways but, actually, I have never been so busy. I took on two new Directorships this year and, I am about to open a new business in the New Year." 12 December 2008

Mark currently owns, or has interests in, seven companies.

Ed Wray - Founder & MD of The BarbeSkew



Ed was motivated to design the BarbeSkew because he was fed up with eating badly cooked barbecued food. BarbeSkew is a hands-free barbecue that cooks food to perfection by combining the traditional BBQ with features of a spit roast.

From the British Library's website, Ed found that the Business & IP Centre was offering workshops on intellectual property: *"It was the perfect time for me to learn about patents, design rights and trade marks and how to use market research databases as well. The workshops are great value, and most of them are free."*

Ed won the leisure category New Product of the Year Award 2007 at GLEE, an international garden and leisure trade fair held at the National Exhibition Centre. The BarbeSkew is now available from a number of leading retail stores worldwide, including Harrods. Ed is still using the Business & IP Centre as he develops a budget version of BarbeSkew.

How the recession is affecting Ed's business:

"We've just about managed to get through the winter months; obviously there are no sales during these months, so there are only outgoings and no income! But the great news is, we've passed the 2 year mark - remember 80% of companies fail within the first 2 years, and so we are one of the 20% that's survived."

"As for the recession, the orders are coming in (although it does seem to take extra time to get people to sign on the dotted line!) and so I'm very positive for 2009. Added to which there is a lot of interest in the small BarbeSkew priced at £149.95

"So overall I'm in a buoyant mood, but I've certainly learnt a great deal about business in the last 2 years which has really built me up especially as it's all real life - if I don't get the money in then I fail!" 17 January 2009

Richard Woods – Co-founder of DIY Kyoto



Richard Woods started the company DIY Kyoto straight out of art college with two friends; as graduates from the Royal College of Art, they were not the most likely business entrepreneurs. Richard was lucky enough to get on to NESTA's 'Creative Pioneers Programme', where they were introduced to the resources of the Business & IP Centre/

The first DIY Kyoto product was called 'wattson' an energy monitor which makes it easy to see how much electricity you use in your home; a unique coloured light system that glows blue when you save money. DIY Kyoto has received over £0.5 million worth of investment and 'wattson' is now in full production with distribution deals around the world.

In 2007 the 'wattson' was listed in 'Stuff' magazine in their Top Ten products, beating the iPod. Last year it was listed in the 'Zoo's Top Three products.

"Using (the Centre's) facilities we were able to put together a business plan, which enabled us to get a £35,000 grant from NESTA, which is how we started the company. Without that, who knows where we'd have been; it made all the difference at the early stages.

"The Centre has a fantastic set of resources and the staff are very knowledgeable: they know the Library inside out, so you just go to them and ask them for some market research about a particular subject. Obviously I was looking at the environmental markets and how we could show that there's a massive trend in that area and thus make a strong business case for ourselves."

How the recession has affected Richard's business:

"We're seeing an increased interest in 'wattson' as the recession starts to bite as the 'wattson' is a product that enables people to save a significant amount of money – 'wattson' typically pays for itself in less than a year, and the very visual feedback on the amount of energy being used gives the user a feel good factor about saving money and reducing their environmental impact." 15 March 2009

Dee Wright – Founder of The Hairforce



Dee Wright's new business The Hairforce is an innovative nit and lice removal service. After just three sessions with one of Dee's "lice assassins" both the nits and the lice are gone. Her business mainly attracts female workers, many of whom are mothers who need a job to fit around school hours. She currently has 13 staff.

Dee credits the British Library with enabling her to put together such a strong business case which recently won her an important financial grant: *"I initially used the British Library to research the medical facts and reports, and then a wonderful gentleman at the Library told me to go to the Business & IP Centre to find out more about the market and population demographics - the resource was invaluable."*

She also appreciates the events put on by the Centre: *"Because, like any start-up, The Hairforce is on a careful budget the fact that these are very often free is a fantastic benefit. The workshops are great for stimulating thought, for giving you toolkits to apply, and for supporting you in the start-up journey. The Business & IP Centre facilitates networking which is incredibly valuable. This is a very special resource and I feel privileged to have access to it."*

How the recession is affecting Dee's business:

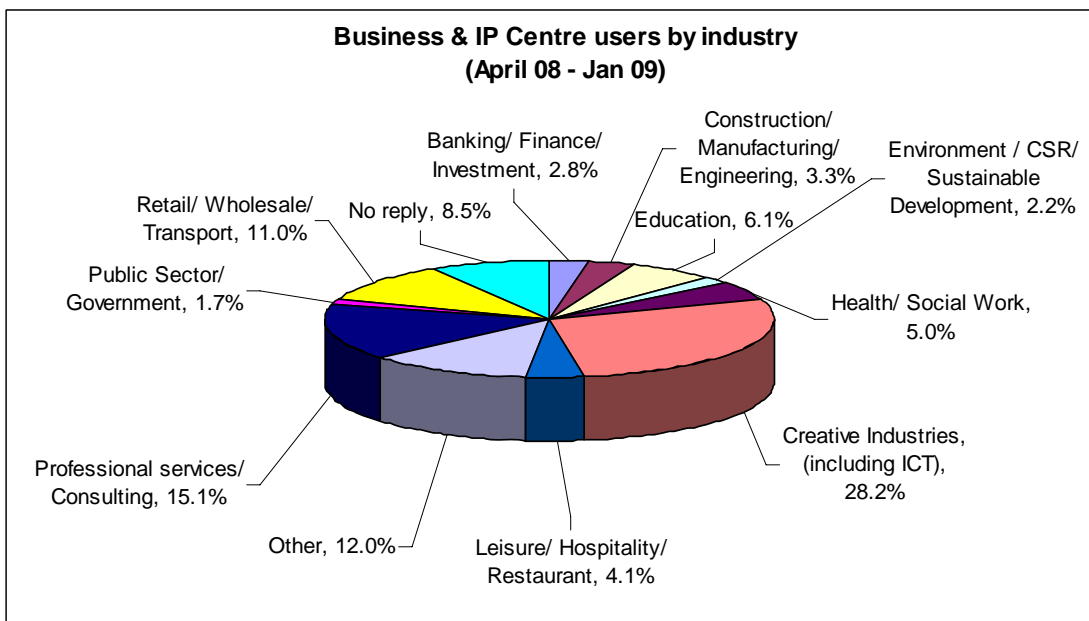
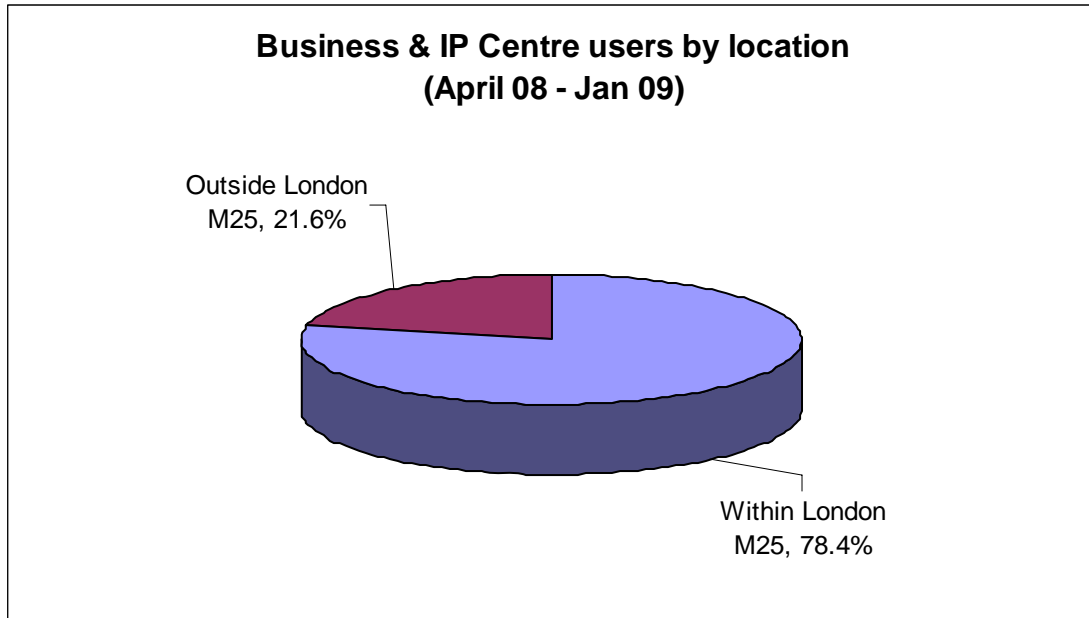
"I've seen some impact – three weeks ago when reality seemed to hit the general public/the newspapers/the TV, we saw a downturn. There was a silence and this seems to have been prevalent in other businesses I've spoken to. Things are picking up again but it is now very close to Christmas. We filled that silence with some good marketing activity – getting those leaflets out in schools, door drops, database emails, giving leaflets out at events like the Marylebone Christmas Fair. So we used our energy differently and pushed at it."

"Last week I won a great Knowledge Connect grant to assist me with the work behind franchising. We will get on with that in the new year and kick in with some professional PR which we will use to more aggressively market ourselves (versus advertising)."

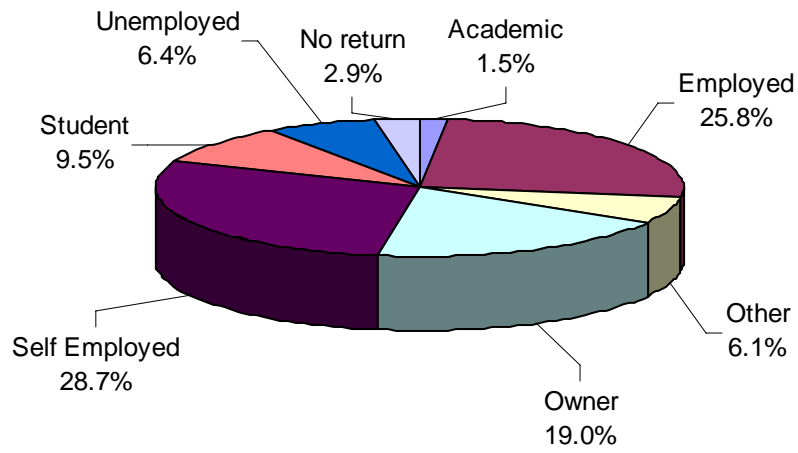
"A lot of this recession will be about surviving. The problem with small entrepreneurial businesses like mine is that survival is just not enough – we have to grow. The only thing we can do is market ourselves and keep pushing - as well as being realistic." 12 December 2008.

Appendix 1: Profile of the Centre's Users

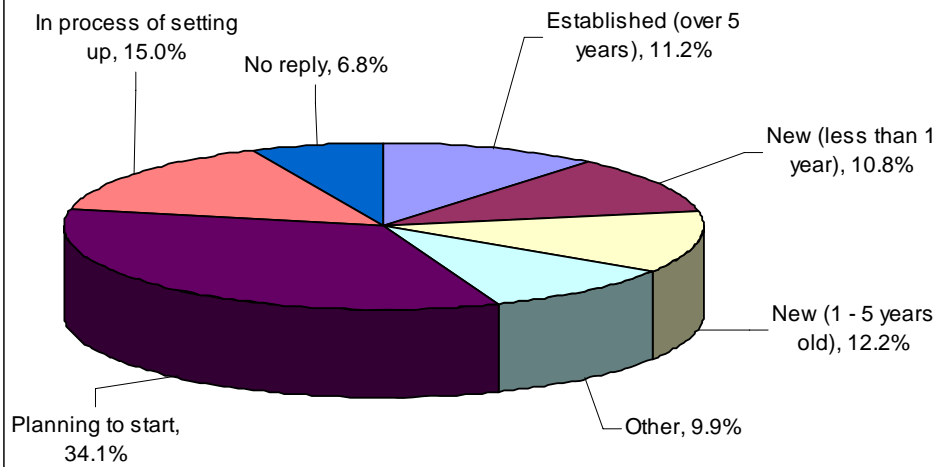
This section summarises users of the Business & IP Centre over the period April 2008 – January 2009.



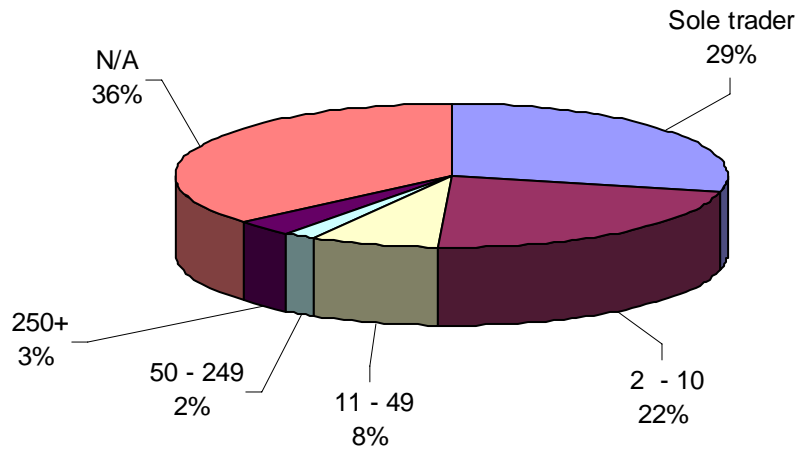
Employment Status (April 08 - Jan 09)



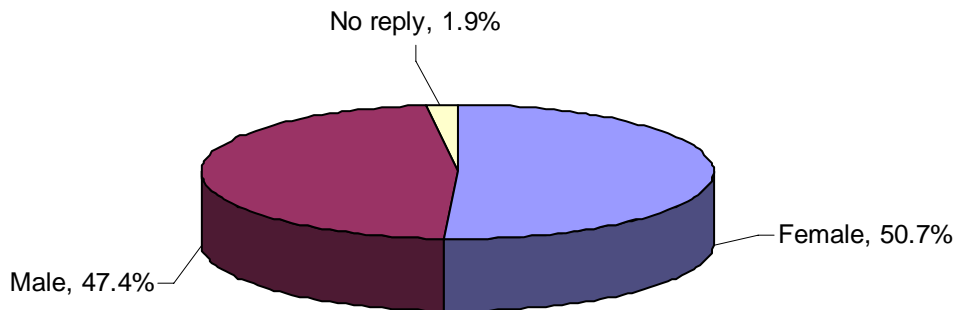
Business & IP Centre users by business status (April 08 - Jan 09)



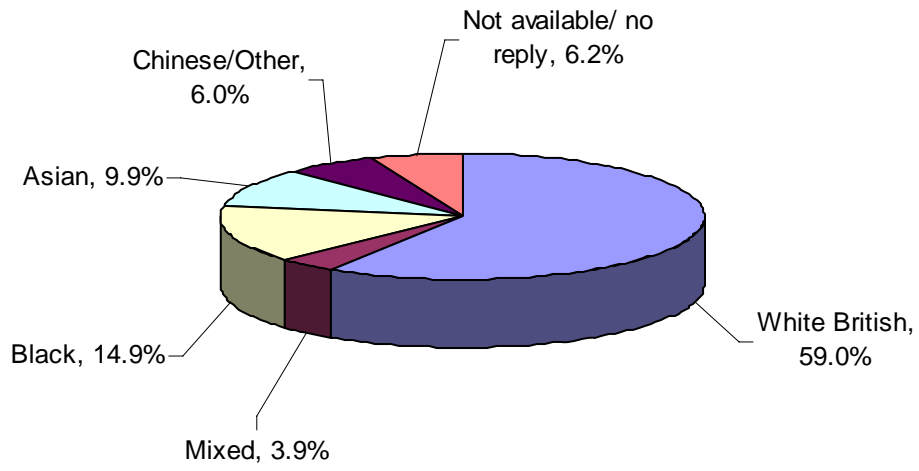
**Size of business (no of employees)
(April 08 - Jan 09)**



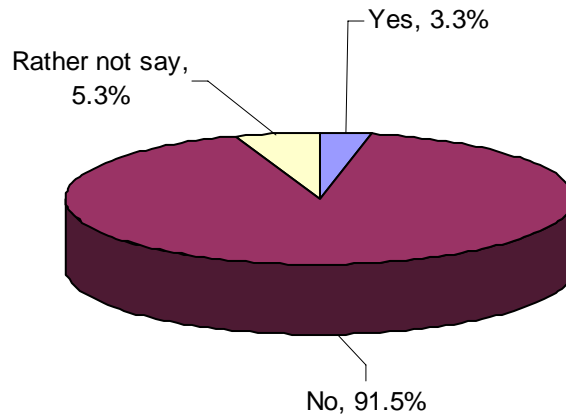
**Business & IP Centre users by gender
(April 08 - Jan 09)**



**Business & IP Centre users by ethnicity
(April 08 - Jan 09)**



**Business & IP Centre users with a disability
(April 08 - Jan 09)**



Appendix 2: The Centre's Business Partners

The Business & IP Centre has three categories of partners which are summarised below.

Strategic Partners

These are partners who are national and government funded. Note that the British Library is the library of the Intellectual Property Office and, as such, holds its collections of patents, trade marks and registered designs.

- Designing Demand
- Business Link in London
- Knowledge Connect
- Gateway2Investment
- Supply London
- Train to Gain
- Mark your Mark
- Intellectual Property Office
- UK Trade & Investment
- HMRC
- Companies House

Service Delivery Partners

These are partners which help to deliver workshops and events in the Centre

- Business Plan Services
- CENTA
- Create KX
- GK Partners
- Halebury Legal Consultants
- Helen Parkins (TBC)
- ideas21
- Invention Intelligence (Ideas into Action)
- Integra Communications Limited
- Kings Cross Business Forum (KXBF)
- Leonard Cheshire Disability
- London Business Support Service
- Prince's Trust (TBC)
- Rasheed Ogunlaru
- Red Ochre
- Striding Out
- Sound Delivery (TBC)
- TiE UK Ltd (TBC)
- Wandsworth Youth Enterprise
- Women Unlimited

Marketing Partners

These are partners who help us to market and cross-promote services

- 3Cs
- ABI Associates
- ACID (Anti Copying in Design)
- Action for Blind People
- Association of Disabled Professionals (ADP)
- Angels Den
- Bang Edutainment
- Barker Brettell
- Bizunlimited
- Bright Ideas Trust
- British Business Angels Association
- Business Start up Community
- Business Zone
- Capital Enterprise
- Centre for Creative Businesses
- Centre for Scientific Enterprise & Learning
- Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (CIPA)
- China Innovation Centre
- CmyPitch
- CompeteFor – London Business Network
- Connect London
- Cultural Industries Development Agency (CIDA)
- ECCA
- East London Small Business Centre
- Executive Training Solutions
- Enterprise Insight
- E Skills
- Everywoman
- Flexible Talent Bank
- First Tuesday
- Fredericks Foundation
- GWIIN (Global Women's Inventors & Innovators Network)
- HM Customs & Excise
- HRM Coaching
- InBiz
- Innovation Central
- Institute of Directors
- Institute of Trademark Attorneys (ITMA)
- IP21
- Knowledge Dock
- LaunchLab
- Learning House
- London Bioscience Innovation Centre
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Chamber of Commerce
- London First
- London Innovation Centre
- London Knowledge Innovation Centre
- London Technology Fund
- Make Your Mark
- Making Lemonade
- Marks & Clerk – Patent & Trademark Attorneys
- MLA London
- Mo Luthra Branding
- MS Business Consulting
- NESTA
- NFEA
- Ogunte Network
- Openeyed
- Own-it
- Pie Finance
- Precious Online
- Prime Thinkers
- Prowess
- QED Consulting
- Ravensbourne College
- Significant
- Social Enterprise Coalition
- Social Firms UK
- SME Academy
- Sound Delivery
- Thames Innovation Centre
- The Hub
- The Innovatory
- The Raft
- The Rainmakers
- UnLtd World
- Zest Works

Appendix 3: The Centre's Workshop Programme

Monthly workshops:

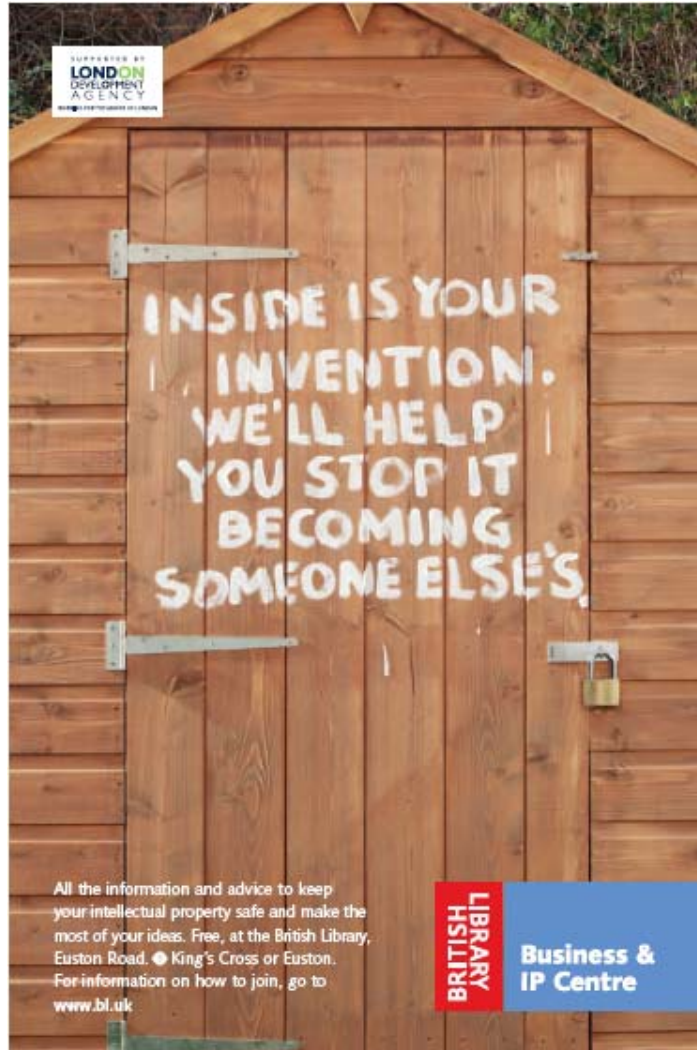
Title	BL/Partner	Description
Knowing your Market	British Library	Familiarising yourself with your market is critical to business success. This workshop shows you how, using the published market research, business journals and free web sources.
Researching a Company	British Library	Do you want to find out more about a particular competitor, supplier or a potential customer? We can help you find up-to-the-minute information on company financial performance and the products or services they offer. Whether you are looking for information on specific companies or wish to find lists of companies by their characteristics this workshop will show you how.
Beginner's Guide to Intellectual Property	British Library	Intellectual Property is a valuable tool for protecting ideas but a failure to understand it can present risks to anyone involved in business. This one hour workshop provides an introductory overview of the main elements of intellectual property; patents; trade marks; registered designs; and copyright.
Introducing Copyright	British Library	Copyright protection is different from other forms of IP in that it is automatic and that there is no official registration or fee. As the creator (or potential creator) of copy, artwork, music, film and broadcasts, you need to know how to control the use of your original material. Copyright allows you to gain economic rewards for your efforts and to be acknowledged as the creator of your material. This workshop will explain how.
Ask an Expert with Inventor in Residence	Mark Sheahan	Free, one-to-one advice for inventors. Mark specialises in plastic packaging and easy opening mechanisms. These sessions afford delegates with excellent chance for feedback on prototypes, funding, working with manufacturers and referrals to wide support community.
Ask an Expert	Rachel Elnaugh	How strong is your brand? Are you making the most of your marketing spend? Learn from Rachel's experience of starting up, and making an impact, on a shoestring budget.

Innovation Surgeries	Business Link in London	One-to-one advice from Business Link experts in new product/service design, product launch and company growth.
Inventions Advice Clinics	ideas21	Expert advice on areas including licensing, design and prototyping, manufacturing, grants and more. Clients able to sit with a few experts in that one day.
Have You Got News For Us?	Integra Communications Ltd	This workshop is ideal for anyone who is about to start a business, has already got underway or who has been trading for some time but is new to working with the media. You can be running any kind of business in any part of the UK.
Making it as an Entrepreneur	Rasheed Ogunlaru	Are you starting or growing your own business? As an entrepreneur you are your business. Your success, survival and happiness rests with you, your vision, belief, passion, action, skill, courage, insight, vision and staying power. Making it as an Entrepreneur is an inspiring, insightful and holistic workshop.
Business Plan Toolbox	Business Plan Services	Anyone can write a business plan, but not many people can write a good one! An effective business plan is one that gets results, whether compiled for internal management use or to raise finance. These workshops are held monthly at the British Library.

The programme of additional workshops during the recession:

Title	BL/Partner	Description
Recession-proof Your Business: how to defy the downturn	Helen Parkins	Are you thinking of starting a business? Or already up and running? And worried about what the recession might mean for you? We're living in uniquely challenging times at the moment, and with some big commercial names going bust, it's as well to know what you can do to make sure your business survives. This practical workshop will show you how to get your business in shape to weather the storm and emerge a winner!
Market Research on a Shoestring	British Library	Market research can be the make or break factor for your business, especially within the current economic climate. It doesn't have to be expensive, and will save you from making pricey mistakes. Our day-long interactive workshop will give you the skills needed to find out if there's a commercial market for your idea, and establish your customers' needs.

Title	BL/Partner	Description
Business Trends for 2009	Striding Out	If you want to stay one step ahead of the competition, this one's for you!
How to Make Sure Your Idea or Invention Will Sell	Invention Intelligence	Find out how to make selling easy, why you are the best salesperson for the job (whatever you may think now), how to get appointments, what to build into your idea or invention to spark potential buyers' interest, how to present yourself for most credibility, and plenty more.
Boost Your Business Masterclass	Rasheed Ogunlaru	<p>Building a successful business is about more than having a great idea. Once you've launched you need to maintain your energy and enthusiasm to inspire and motivate your staff, supporters and clients, especially in the current economic climate.</p> <p>This practical all-day workshop, run by the British Library's life and business coach Rasheed Ogunlaru, will give you a chance to step back and assess your business, so you can move to the next level of success, performance and profit.</p>



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All the information and advice to keep your intellectual property safe and make the most of your ideas. Free, at the British Library, Euston Road. ● King's Cross or Euston. For information on how to join, go to www.bl.uk

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