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# East of England companies eye Canada drive

by Tony Qusted

East of England companies in the wireless, digital media and photonics clusters have been handed a unique opportunity to strike collaborations with contemporaries in the Ontario Technology Corridor.

The corridor has annual ICT revenues of more than \$40 billion and more than 5,500 hi-tech companies employing a quarter of a million technicians and technologists.

Representatives of the innovation gateway were in Cambridge for a visit organised by East of England International and met companies in synergistic clusters with a view to working together in the future.

The exchange brought the Canadian delegation face to face with representatives of EEI – headed by Steven Ireland and Dennis McGlynn; Cambridge Network, Innovation Martlesham and Cambridge Wireless. The delegation also visited the University of Cambridge's Centre for Advanced Photonics and Electronics (CAPE).

Although their initial objective was to target investment for the



**Canadian sunrise:** Front: Left to right: Melanie A Troiano (Artaius Limited); Clare Barnett (Ontario International Marketing Centre); Blair Patacairk, (OCRI); Dennis McGlynn (EEI). Middle: William T. Elliot (Canada's Technology Triangle); Cheryl Donais (Ontario International Marketing Centre); Robert Schweinberg (Ontario Ministry of Economic Development & Trade). Rear: Gerald Piszarsowski (Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance); Nick Stephens (HSBC).

Ontario corridor and demonstrate that North America didn't just mean the US, the delegation opened up some serious two-way trade opportunities.

Gerald Piszarsowski, VP of

business development for the Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance, was impressed by the opportunities paraded by EEI. He felt there were particular synergies between the technopoles in sec-

tors such as wireless, the Internet, digital media and photonics.

Echoing Dennis McGlynn's optimism over long-term opportunities between two economically vibrant corridors, he said: "This visit

has demonstrated the synergistic fit between our regions. It may be a tough time for economies around the world but there are lots of technology companies still doing well – it's just that the deals they are doing are different.

"Companies are more knowledge intensive, focused on IT or involved in genuine niche sectors. There are plenty of success stories in both regions because of this factor.

"Our contemporary wireless clusters have developed roughly over the same timespan. Our wireless growth probably mirrors the life cycle of the BlackBerry, whose home is in one of our key regions, Waterloo. The Cambridge wireless cluster is leader in Europe and in the world top six so there is much we can do together.

"The East of England also seems to be rich in vibrant young companies with good technology in mobile content and digital media. We were also impressed by the advanced nature of the photonics R & D being done at CAPE.

"R & D is another strong suit of both our territories. Our government realised in the '80s that the country's investment in R & D was

simply not enough. Handsome R & D tax credits have redressed that imbalance in spectacular fashion and we can now lay those benefits before East of England companies that want to come and get involved with us."

The Ontario Technology Corridor has also evolved through a Cambridge-style commitment to focused interface between academia and industry. Mike Lazaridis, co-founder of BlackBerry's inventor, Research in Motion, is an alumni of the University of Waterloo and the company continues to be involved with the university.

Piszarsowski recalls reading and being stimulated by reports of the Cambridge Phenomenon and felt at the time there was much his region could learn from the collaboration between academia and technology consultancies that helped spawn so many new businesses. At the other end of the scale, the way many large East of England companies were moving to an open innovation model offered other lessons to the Ontario corridor, he felt.

• Spotlight on the Ontario Technology Corridor – Page IV of Export Now supplement

## Ambassador visits £400m German investment in UK

by Alice Walker

The British Ambassador to Germany made a two-day visit to the East of England to further business links between the UK and Germany.

Hosted by East of England International (EEI), which delivers UK Trade & Investment Services in the region, Sir Michael Arthur met with staff at EEI's Cambridge headquarters before embarking on a tour of five different companies, from Norfolk to Bedfordshire. EEI is the region's official international business support organisation.

The Ambassador was accompanied by David Steele, EEI Director of Inward Investment & Investor Development.

Sir Michael toured the new £4.7million Marshall Business Aviation Centre in Cambridge, where he was welcomed by Michael Marshall, chairman and chief executive of Marshall of Cambridge.

The Ambassador went by helicopter, courtesy Sterling Helicopters, for the flight to King's Lynn to meet Derek Harman, managing director of Palm Paper Limited, who took him on a tour to show how construction work is progressing on the company's new state-of-

the-art paper mill on the Saddlebow Industrial Estate.

The Palm Group, a privately-owned German company, is investing £400 million in the paper recycling facility which is capable of turning wastepaper into newsprint.

The project will create 150 long-term permanent jobs. An intensive training programme is already underway in preparation for the mill starting production in September 2009.

**"It is an extremely impressive project which will bring great benefit to King's Lynn."**

Sir Michael acknowledged the size and significance of the investment and what it will bring to King's Lynn. He said: "Palm Paper's new mill is a hugely exciting development and I am delighted to have been given an early preview. It is an extremely impressive project

which will bring great benefit to King's Lynn."

Back in Cambridge, Sir Michael attended an evening dinner at Peterhouse College, hosted by Sir Robin Young, EEI chairman at which guests included German inward investors and UK companies already interested or active in Germany.

On the second day of his visit, Sir Michael joined a breakfast meeting at Plastic Logic, Cambridge which recently opened its organic electronics manufacturing plant in Dresden. There he met with Catherine Ramsdale, materials group leader, Plastic Logic and Hermann Hauser, major funder and founder of Plastic Logic and a current director.

Plastic Logic is revolutionising the way people acquire, organise and consume information by using its proprietary technology leadership in plastic electronics. Its first product focusing on reading digital contents will enter the market in early 2009.

Sir Michael also visited The Technology Partnership in Melbourn where he met group director Chas Sims, Jas Sanghera, commercial director, TTP Lab Tech and Ray Southam, CEO of Tonejet.



**High flyers:** From left – David Steele and Jacky Holtby of EEI; Sir Michael Arthur, British Ambassador to Germany and John Watkins, director, Airport Operations and Development, Marshall Aerospace

TTP is a technology development company, working in partnership with clients to bring new products to markets and create new business from advances in technology. Earlier this year, TTP was selected by SWR to join the 'Future Radio' project which will trial innovative new visual interactive radio service in Germany.

The final stop was at Liebherr in Biggleswade where the Ambassador was given a tour of the company's UK headquarters.

Liebherr is a global leader in the design, development and manufacture of what is believed to be the large range of construction,

mining and materials handling equipment still in private family ownership.

The group, which employs 30,000 people worldwide, also has other diverse interests including aviation, white goods manufacture, hotels, engine and component manufacture.

Commenting on the visit, David Steele said: "It has been a great privilege to welcome Sir Michael to our region and to show him some outstanding examples of German inward investment. This has cemented relations between Germany and UK and will reap future reward in terms of fostering

stronger links between the two countries."

Sir Michael Arthur's career has taken him to New York, Washington, Brussels, Bonn and Paris. Most recently he was Head of Mission in India, New Delhi.

• The Ambassador and his party were taken to King's Lynn courtesy of Sterling Helicopters which operates from Norwich Airport and offers charter and aerial surveying services. The company also holds contracts to operate the East Anglian Air Ambulance and Norfolk police air support units.

\* Germany calling: See Page II of the Export Now supplement.