

## Rise to the Ixion Challenge

### *Ixion Holdings Ltd offers £32,000 package to winning SME*

Ixion Holdings is proud to launch an innovative new challenge to re-energise the business community in the East of England. The Ixion Challenge offers businesses in the area the opportunity to win a package up to £32,000\* of financial support to help them grow and develop.

The competition is open for entry from the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and invites all SMEs, with up to 250 employees, to submit a business plan outlining how they would use the funding to their advantage in order to survive and thrive in an uncertain economic climate.

Entrants into the Ixion Challenge will have to go through a stimulating 3 stage process in order to win. After completing the online entry process, the judging panel will select six to eight businesses to go through to the semi finals where entrants will be asked to submit an in-depth business plan. From there, it is anticipated three to four successful finalists will have the chance to pitch their business plans to the Ixion Challenge Panel and convince the judging experts of their business aptitude. This will include a visit to the workplace to see the organisation in action.

Graham Baker, the CEO of Ixion, is keen for the challenge to reignite an entrepreneurial spirit amongst small businesses. He commented: "As a not-for-profit organisation that has helped businesses to grow and thrive for a number of years, we are delighted to launch the Ixion Challenge. It is our chance to give something back to the regional SME community that we have worked so closely with in the past. We want to encourage bold and creative thinking, and get

businesses to explore ways in which they can change and adapt in order to thrive in a challenging marketplace.”

The winner of the challenge will receive up to £25,000 cash to put their business plan in motion, £5,000 worth of academic vouchers donated by Anglia Ruskin University which can be used for a whole range of services and a Graduate Student summer placement worth £2,000.

The Ixion Challenge is a great opportunity for small businesses to access funding they may desperately need to regain momentum. By investing in employees and thinking strategically about the future, small businesses will be able to remain competitive and expand their horizons.

\*£32,000 package may be split on the recommendation of the judging panel

-END OF PRESS RELEASE-

### **Ixion**

1. Ixion Holdings Ltd is a limited by guarantee, not-for-profit organisation, passionate about giving back to the community. Founded in 2001, Ixion's headquarters are in Chelmsford, Essex with a presence in central London and Brussels. For more information please visit: [www.ixionholdings.com](http://www.ixionholdings.com)
2. Ixion is part of the Anglia Ruskin University Group with a combined turnover and integrated education and skills offering in excess of £140 million.
3. There are two companies trading within the Ixion Group namely:
  - a. Essex Business Support Limited – the contract holder for the East of England Brokerage Consortium delivering Train to Gain to the East of England.
  - b. Ixion Business Ltd - outsourced business support services to corporate organisations including: Business Advice, Marketing, Events, Management, Information Technology (IT) support, Telemarketing and Contact Centre.

4. Ixion jointly owns the East of England IDB Limited (trading as Business Link East) - delivers the Business Link service in the East of England region on behalf of EEDA
5. Under collaborative arrangements Ixion is a member of the London Brokerage Consortium - which delivers Train to Gain to the whole of London, matching training needs with training providers, and makes sure that training and support is delivered to meet employer's objectives