

Regus launches £10m support package for UK start-ups

Submitted by: Regus UK

Tuesday, 27 January 2009

In a campaign called Get Started, Regus makes significant investment to get the economy moving by offering free use of business centres for 50,000 entrepreneurs struggling with set up costs

LONDON 26 JANUARY 2009: Regus, the leading UK and global provider of workplace solutions, has announced plans to support UK start-up businesses with an investment worth up to £10 million by offering free use of its business centres. In the Get Started campaign, backed by the British Chamber of Commerce, Regus calls upon other businesses to join the cause and do what they can to inject new activity into the UK economy.

Mark Dixon, CEO of Regus said:

"In years to come people will look back to 2009 as a time of great economic depression. We all have a part to play in getting Britain working again, which is why we have launched the Get Started campaign. Whilst the government has announced plans to get the unemployed and small businesses moving again, it's vital the private sector takes decisive action now to support people who want to set up their own business.

We believe the key to kick-starting the economy is to help our entrepreneurs create new enterprise, the life blood of the economy. I'd encourage other private sector companies to support the movement and develop similar packages."

Managing Director, John Dunsmure, of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

"Entrepreneurs and small companies are currently being squeezed on all sides – from declining consumer confidence to increasing energy and office costs as well as lack of access to credit. Small business closures have risen to around 85 a day, meaning over 6,000 have closed since October 2008 creating a huge amount of redundant people.

We welcome the commitment by Regus to help entrepreneurs get going. They need huge amounts of support, and our Chamber Business Start-up and the access to Regus' extensive network and facilities will for many make the difference between disaster and a successful future."

The BCC will run a number of mentoring sessions for entrepreneurs throughout the year in Regus centres (<http://www.regus.co.uk/locations/default.html>) across the country. Their business experts will provide support and guidance to all those embarking on a new venture.

Latest figures* show the number of new businesses opening in the third quarter of 2008 fell by just 4% to 129,282, improving on expectations for a 10% decline. The research suggests there is still a desire to embark on new business ventures despite increasingly volatile economic conditions.

Get Started offers office space (<http://www.regus.co.uk/>) and practical support for start-up's who need help getting off the ground. Under the scheme, Regus is offering unlimited use of its business lounges and cafés – worth approx £10m - in over 1,000 locations worldwide by signing people up to its revolutionary businessworld program. More than 100,000 people have become members of businessworld since its launch in 2008 and are already benefiting from the flexible low cost workstyle it provides. The Get

Started campaign will help up to 50,000 budding entrepreneurs realise their business ambitions whilst mitigating some of the risk.

Potential Entrepreneurs can access three options within the scheme:

1. Gold membership to Regus businessworld for three months – Unlimited access to 135 Regus business lounges and cafes (1,000 worldwide) with administrative support, free internet access, complimentary refreshments and preferred rates on additional products
2. Free use of day offices or meeting rooms – If a business plan is not finalised Regus will provide day offices (<http://www.regus.co.uk/default.htm>) for intense planning and meeting rooms (<http://www.regus.co.uk/meetingrooms/default.htm>) so entrepreneurs can meet with potential partners, suppliers and customers in a professional setting
3. Free office space for three months – If you have a clear plan and are ready to get started then Regus will provide free office space for up to three months. Office space is a significant cost for start ups and therefore this offer will aid start up businesses

Get Started gives access to an environment built for business with free use of the internet and private office space. Regus intends to make the step of launching your own business that much easier.

“You have to start somewhere. I began at the bottom so I know what it takes to get things moving” said Dixon, Ernst & Young’s Entrepreneur of the Year. “Despite the gloomy economic outlook there is still opportunity for businesses to flourish. Entrepreneurship is in the Regus DNA giving us the ability and experience to support the next generation of successful businesses. Through our Get Started campaign we want to encourage people to fulfil their entrepreneurial dream by making it easy for them to set up a new venture giving them and the economy a much needed boost.”

Britain has produced many of the world’s most influential and successful entrepreneurs. One entrepreneur who used Regus as a platform to get started is Sunay Shah , CEO of CDO Software. “We were a small business start-up 3 years ago needing a flexible and professional work-space to support the development of the business. Regus provided the perfect solution. We now have offices in London (<http://www.regus.co.uk/offices/uk/London.html>) and a virtual office (<http://www.regus.co.uk/virtualoffices/default.htm>) in New York, and Regus continues to provide us with the resources we need to succeed, particularly in the current environment.”

Sign up to Get Started can be done online at www.regus.co.uk/getstarted or by visiting any Regus centre.

More information on the BCC’s start-up scheme can be found at www.thebusiness-startup.co.uk

- ends -

*Figures from the British Bankers Association

For further information, please contact:

Regus Group plc

Tel: + 44 (0) 1932 895135

Mark Dixon, Chief Executive Officer

Lewis Woodward, PR Director

Brunswick

Tel: + 44 (0) 20 7404 5959

Simon Sporborg / Saadia Saeed

Notes to Editors:

The Regus Group is the world's leading provider of workplace solutions, with products and services ranging from fully equipped serviced offices (<http://www.regus.co.uk/offices/default.htm>) to professional meeting rooms, business lounges and the largest network of videoconferencing studios. The Regus Group delivers a new way to work, whether it's from home, on the road or from an office.

Clients such as Google, GlaxoSmithKline, IBM, Nokia and Accenture join thousands of growing small and medium businesses that benefit from outsourcing their office and workplace needs to The Regus Group, allowing them to focus on their core business. Over 400,000 clients benefit from Regus Group facilities spread across a global footprint of 1,000 locations in 450 cities and 75 countries, which allows individuals and companies to work wherever, however and whenever they want to. For more information, visit www.regus.co.uk