

EchoBusiness

BUSINESS ECHO
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business supplement
Every Tuesday

World-class exam results

THREE young accountants from the Newcastle office of PricewaterhouseCoopers have gained world-class results in their accountancy exams. Katy Bothick, part of the public sector team, came fourth in the world in the business analysis exam. Joe Sample, an associate in the tax department, came 15th in the world in the corporate reporting paper. Nathan Galer, an associate in the assurance practice, was ranked seventh and eighth in the world for two of his exams, in tax and audit and assurance.

NEW CONTRACT: Newcastle-based CSM+ Architects is celebrating a contract to provide architectural, project management and co-ordinator services for the first of a number of privately-operated radiotherapy centres to be built outside London. The Ouseburn Valley-based architects will be working directly for Elekta, which designs and produces radiotherapy systems for cancer care, which has been contracted by Cancer Partners UK, a company established to deliver high-quality cancer care for private patients. The first is in Portsmouth in a £4m contract which started in January.

100 YEARS: A family-owned business has marked its 100th anniversary with its first international order. Newcastle based NBT Limited has secured £50,000-worth of orders from China. The company supplies goods and services including adhesive tapes, packaging, abrasives, electrical goods and maintenance and project management. Managing director Toby Bridges is the fourth generation to be involved in the business.

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL: An event is being held by Durham University's Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning to look at adding value to a business. The session is being held at Newcastle's Live Theatre on Thursday, April 23, from 6pm to 8pm, and costs £15 to attend. For details, call Chris Harper on 0191-3345143 or email entrepreneurial.learning@durham.ac.uk

CASH HELP: Higher York, the organisation which represents the city's colleges and universities, has received £600,000 in grants to offer a programme providing practical help over the next 18 months for firms and individuals struggling with the recession.

JOBS CREATED: Fashion retailer Peacocks has opened a store in Chester-le-Street, creating 21 jobs. It is part of plans by the budget retailer to open 20 stores by the end of the year.

Small firm is delivering big solutions for industries

A SMALL family-run engineering firm has solved an international chemical company's problem in checking bottles and containers for contamination.

Addington Engineers, based in Richmond, North Yorkshire, were called in when GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) plant at Barnard Castle, needed to remove the airtight aluminium and plastic caps from bottles and phials.

The containers are randomly selected from the production line, to comply with rigorous testing standards.

The process had been car-

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ried out manually, but was laborious and could have led to potential claims of repetitive strain injury.

So, Addington created a cap removing machine for the company, which can remove one cap a minute.

Addington's managing director, Craig Vine, said: "It was a difficult one for GSK. They needed to remove the caps as efficiently as possible without damaging the phials

and accessing the contents for these important tests.

"What we came up with was a machine that was programmed to slice through caps and remove them in a clean but non-sterile environment.

"It is simple to operate - very little training is needed - and it's highly efficient.

"It can handle a variety of different phials by gripping, twisting and slicing.

"All the operative has to do is insert a phial into the nest and close the guard to begin the cycle."

The process from design of

the machine to installation took about six to eight weeks.

Mr Vine believes that with small design adjustments, the cap remover could be adapted to help other pharmaceutical companies with similar problems.

The testing process is vital so that the drugs are free from contaminants and are the correct volume.

Addington, established 40 years ago and employing four staff, specialises in designing and commissioning custom-built machinery.

Its clients come from the pharmaceutical, food packag-

ing, electrical, chemical and automotive industries in the UK and Europe.

Mr Vine added: "In fact, anyone who needs to outsource to overcome those knotty little problems that are blighting their production processes."

The company, which has worked with GSK for more than 15 years, has a significant amount of repeat business with its customers.

Mr Vine said: "I think it is the service we provide, the quality of the product and the fact we always deliver on time and within budget."

Promoting important high-quality message

A PROFESSIONAL photographer has become one of a handful in the North-East to receive an accreditation.

John Boddy, from Eaglescliffe, near Stockton, has received certificate of confidence from the British Institute of Professional Photography.

Mr Boddy set up his business, Reflect Your Life, almost four years ago and although the majority of his work is weddings, proms, portraits and portfolios, he

has seen more demand recently from companies.

He said: "Organisations overlook the importance of high-quality images to help promote their products and services.

"They say that a picture speaks a thousand words and I firmly believe that professional images add value to websites, company brochures, press releases, newsletters and product portfolios."

For further details, visit reflectyourlife.co.uk



PRODUCT PROMOTION: John Boddy, who is increasingly in demand by companies

Market report

GLOOMY US economic news sent the FTSE 100 Index into negative territory yesterday amid signs the world's biggest economy is far from recovery.

Figures revealed US consumer inflation dropped into negative territory for the first time for more than 50 years.

Swiss bank UBS's 8,700 job cuts and predicted first-quarter losses of almost two billion Swiss francs (£1.18 bn) had already knocked financial stocks.

Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds Banking Group fell 1.5p to 27.7p and 3.8p to 84.1p respectively. HSBC was also off 4.75p at 476.5p. Barclays was up 1.3p at 196.8p. Legal & General was the FTSE's biggest faller, off eight per cent or 4.5p at 50p, after posting strong gains in the previous session. Aviva dropped 1.75p to 241p and Friends Provident eased 0.4p to 68.2p.

Miners were also in negative territory as US economic data caused con-

cern over demand.

On the risers board, telecoms firm BT enjoyed a better session. Shares rose 1.1p to 82.2p, a gain of more than one per cent.

Housebuilders experienced mixed fortunes in the FTSE 250 following data showing signs of life in the UK's beleaguered housing market last month, alongside separate price figures confirming heavy falls in February.

Taylor Wimpey lifted 1p to 51.5p, but Persimmon dropped six per cent - or 23.75p - to 387.75p and Bovis Homes declined 1p to 464p.

Carphone Warehouse saw its shares fall nearly three per cent as internet provider Tiscali revealed its auditors had refused to sign off its accounts. Shares lost 3.75p to 136.75p.

And pub groups were in favour after Marston's announced better than expected recent trading. Its shares rose 1.25p to 158p, while Enterprise Inns also received a fillip, ahead 12p at 125.75p.

NORTH AMERICAN	
Du Pont	1777.85
AEROSPACE	
Chemring	1912 +47
Cobham	1753 1/2 -2 1/2
Meggitt	154 1/4 -1 1/4
AIM	
API Grp	6 1/4
Cape	103 1/2 + 1/2
Chapelthorpe	11 1/4
Dawson Intl	2 1/2 +
Inveresk	3 1/2
GKN	103 3/4 -5
AUTOMOBILES & PARTS	
Johnson Service	14 + 1/4
Metalex	4 1/2
Nichols	222 1/2 +4 1/2
Scapa Grp	11
Youngs	485
BANKS	
Allid Irish	84 -8 1/4
Barclays	196 1/2 +1 1/2
Bk Ireland	70 1/2 -4 1/4
HSBC	476 1/2 -4 1/4
Lloyds Banking Grp	84 -3 1/4
Ryl Scotland	27 1/2 -1 1/2
Stan Chart	998 1/2 -26 1/2
BEVERAGES	
Barr AG	1225 -17
Diageo	790 +14
CHEMICALS	
Croda	575 +4
Delta	125 1/2
Elementis 98	31 -1 1/4
Johnsn Mat	1196 -40
COMP SERVICES	
Computacenter	124 -1/2
Logica	73
Misys	133 1/2 -5 1/4
CONSTRUCTION	
Balfour Beatty	352 1/4 -2 1/4
CRH	1443 1/2 -5 1/2
Costain	25
Low Bonar	30 1/2 -1
Marshalls	108 1/2 -1 1/4
ELECTRICAL EQUIP	
Chloride	151 1/2 -3 1/4
Domino Ptg	230 +20
Invensys	163 1/2 -3 1/4
Morgn Cru	110 1/2 +2 1/2
Ox Instmts	166

London STOCK EXCHANGE	
Volex Grp	35 +3
FOOD RETAILERS	
Morrison W	247 +3 1/2
Sainsbury	307 +3 1/2
Tesco	329 1/4 +5 1/4
Thorntons	82 1/4 +2 1/4
FOOD PRODUCERS	
AB Food	636 +10
Carrs Millg	412 1/2 +12
Nth Foods	53 1/2 +1 1/2
REA Hldgs	352 +50 1/2
Tate Lyle	272 +1
Unilever	1308 +36
GENERAL FINANCIAL	
3i Group	352 1/2 -14 1/4
Close Bros	590 -3 1/2
Provident Fin	812 1/2 -2
Schroders NV	713 1/2 -26 1/2
Avon Rbbr	50 1/2 +4
REXAM	291 1/2 -1 1/2
Smith DS	68 1/2 + 1/2
Tomkins	150 1/2 -2 1/2
GENERAL RETAILERS	
Ashley L	1289 -12 1/2
HR Owen	71 +4 1/2
Incipace	17 1/4 +2
Kingfisher	160 1/4 -1
M&S	308 -1 1/4
Next	1389 -16
Signet Jewellers	985 +11
WH Smith	393 1/4 -2
HEALTH CARE	
Smith Nph	465 1/4 -4 1/2
HOUSEHOLD GOODS	
Reckitt Benckiser	£26 +1
Taylor Wimpey	51 1/2 +1
IND ENGINEERING	
600 Group	15 1/2
Charter	483 1/2 -2
Fenner	62 +3
IMI	320 -6 1/2
Man Brnze	78 +5
Molins	37 1/2 +1 1/2
Renold	17 + 1/2
Senior	33 1/4 -1 1/4
Spirax Srco	836 1/2 +1
Weir Grp	482 1/2 -13 1/2
INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORT	
Fort Ports	936 -19 1/2
INVESTMENT	
Alliance Trust	264 1/2 +4
Br Assets	86 -1
Candover Inv	213 +11 1/2
Dunedin Inv	142 1/2 -6 1/2
Dunedin Sml	79 +1 1/2
Edin Invst	296 1/2 -5 1/2
Edinburgh USTT	451 -13
Forgn & C	222 1/2 +2 1/2
Hend Smrlr Cos	141 +1
Scot Am	130 -2 1/2
Witan	331 -3 1/4
LIFE INSURANCE	
Friends Prov	68 1/4 -1 1/4
Lgl & Gen	50 -4 1/2
Old Mutual	82 1/2 -3 1/4
Prudential	362 1/2 +5 1/4
MEDIA	
BSkyB	427 1/4 +10 1/4
Chrysalis	55 1/2 -1 1/2
D Mail Tst	270 1/2 -3 1/4
Pearson	677 1/2 +4
Thomson Reuters	1640 -71
Trinity Mirror	39 1/4 +1 1/2
MINING	
BHP Billiton	1388 -57
Lonmin	1389 -41
Rio Tinto	£234 -1 1/4

NONLIFE INSURANCE	
Marsh Mcl	1347 1/2 +4 1/2
OIL & GAS PRODUCERS	
Norsk Hdro	284 1/4 +7 1/4
Premier	1119 +10
R Dutch Shell A	1418 -21
R Dutch Shell B	1390 -8
Glaxo	1024 + 1/2
PHARMACEUTICALS	
Astrazeneca	£23
Axis-Shield	290 + 1/2
Land Secs	544 -29
REAL ESTATE	
Brit Land	421 1/4 -28
DTZ Hldgs	48 +1 1/2
Gt Portland	277 1/4 -3 1/4
Hamsrn	307 -8 1/4
Land Secs	544 -29
SUPPORT SERVICES	
AMEC	580 1/2 -4 1/2
Bunzl	538 +9
Capita	631 +13 1/2
Davis Service Group	270 -7
De La Rue	916 -3 1/2
Electro Com	137 1/4 -2 1/2
Hays	78 1/4 -1 1/2
Menzies J	88 1/4 +3 1/4
Prem Farnell	140 -1 1/4
Rentokil	57 -1 1/2
Travis & P	569 1/2 -20
Wolesey	1157 +10
TECHNOLOGY	
IBM	£65 1/2 -3 1/2
Pson	62 1/2 +3 1/4
Spirit Comms	54 -1 1/4
TELECOM (FIXED LINE)	
C&W	139 1/4 +2 1/4
Coit Telecom	88 1/2 +2
TELECOM (MOBILE)	
Vodafone Group	120 1/2 -1 1/4
TOBACCO	
Br Am Tob	1566 +71
Imperial Tobacco	1482 +52
TRAVEL & LEISURE	
Compass Grp	339 1/4 +3 1/4
FirstGroup	299 1/2 -10 1/4
Ladbrokes	196 1/2 -1 1/4
Rank Org	73 1/4 -1 1/2
Stagecoach	134 1/4 -3 1/4

Indicators

The FTSE 100	3968.00
Down	20.6
US dollar	1.4899
Up	0.0092
Euro	1.1377
Up	0.0155

Popular shares

Aviva	241 -1 1/4	Intl Power	224 -1 1/4
BAE Systems	334 1/4 +11 1/4	M&S	308 -1 1/4
BG	1043 -1	National Grid	522 1/2 +7
BP	429 1/2 -9	Pennon Grp	417 1/2 -3
Brit Airways	156 1/4 -5 1/2	Sainsbury	307 +3 1/4
BT Grp	82 1/4 +1 1/2	Scott&Stn Enrgy	1050 +11
Centrica	236 1/4 +9 1/4	Severn	991 1/2 -13 1/2
GlaxoSmithKline	1024 +16	Tate Lyle	272 +1
HSBC HLDGS	476 1/2 -4 1/4	Tesco	329 1/4 +5 1/4
		United Utils	490 1/4 +2

Northern shares

Arriva	430 1/4 -8 1/4	Northern Investors	100
Barrat Dev	151 1/2 -3 1/4	Northern Venture Tst	43
Bellway	764 -11	Northgate	128 1/2 +2 1/2
Black & Decker	£21 1/4 -1 1/4	Northbrn Water	213 1/2 -8
Garner	3 1/4	Opsec Security Group	9 1/4 -1 1/4
Go-Ahead	1187 -3	Persimmon	385 1/4 -26 1/4
Grainger	165 1/4 +3 1/4	Sage Group	166 1/4 -1 1/2
Greggs	£36 1/4 + 1/4	Severfield Rowen	186 1/4 -6 1/4
Helius Energy	20 -1 1/4	Southern Cross	109 +1 1/2
Northern2VCT	40 +2	Stadium	37
		Vp	143 +4