

## Spring 2007 Newsletter

Welcome to Orion Innovations' Spring 2007 Newsletter. We are pleased to report that our business continues to grow and we have welcomed a number of new and enthusiastic recruits to the team (see page 2). November last year saw us hold the first of what we hope will be a series of regular Breakfast Briefings to encourage knowledge sharing on key topics of interest to our clients. We present a 'Thought Piece' below based on the work that prompted this initial Briefing session which was titled 'The 'How Factor' - success in emerging energy technology businesses'. We are currently working with our business partners at E4tech Ltd ([www.e4tech.co.uk](http://www.e4tech.co.uk)), to prepare for our next session which is likely to focus on the challenges of taking new and innovative technologies to mass manufacture and large scale commercialisation. Please get in touch if you would like to be informed of details nearer the time...

### The 'How Factor' - success in emerging energy technology businesses

High performance growth in a highly regulated environment is inherently complex. All too often new ventures fail to fulfil their potential, either destroying shareholder value or, at worst, ceasing to exist. So, what defines a successful new venture in sustainable energy and allows some companies to outperform others?

In November 2006, Orion Innovations and E4Tech hosted a *business breakfast* meeting at the Royal Institute of British Architects' HQ in London to discuss these issues with guests from a range of interested sectors, including business incubators, investment banks, government programmes, new starts-ups and venture capitalists.

Drawing on many years of experience, in conjunction with recent research into the wind turbine industry by Michael Ellis of Imperial College Business School, Orion Innovations Partner, Noel Botha, presented six factors that help to differentiate between successful and failing businesses within the sustainable energy market: -

- a focused commercial strategy
- technology that is 'fit-for-purpose'
- competent management with aligned organisation, processes and plans
- proactive supply chain management
- the ability to adapt to change
- the appropriate source of finance

Within the wind turbine industry these factors help explain, for example, why Bonus Siemens remained solvent when all other major competitors went bust; why Wind Energy Group, a business having a sound technical capability, backed with corporate funds and born out of government research grants, failed to make a long term commercial impact and how a catastrophic component failure ultimately forced Howden from the market.

The importance of these themes both for the successful commercialisation of emerging technology businesses, and for investors wishing to identify a *best-fit* option in a rapid growth industry was apparent from the lively debate that followed the presentation. We would like to extend thanks to all those who attended the breakfast briefing for making it such a success. If you would like to know more about how Orion Innovations can help your business individually, or should you be interested in obtaining more details about this research, please contact us directly.





## Orion Innovations supports development of TUV NEL Ltd within low carbon sector

Orion Innovations recently completed a project with TUV NEL Ltd, a leading engineering consultancy and centre for engineering and mechanical research based in East Kilbride. The objective was to analyse a range of emerging low carbon technology markets and to identify growth opportunities for TUV NEL. After an initial market review and supply chain analysis, priority markets were identified and business opportunities within each were outlined. Priority was given to those that offered a strategic fit with the TUV NEL's existing business and core skills.

'The Orion Innovations study has given us a factual based appraisal of the areas covered and a road map on options for development which is of fundamental importance to the future direction of the NEL business.... It is probably fair to say that the deliverables have exceeded my expectations.' Alistair Mackinnon, Business Manager, TUV NEL Ltd

## New Faces at Orion Innovations

As the company grows we are looking for experienced, high calibre personnel to join our team. We have recently been joined by:



**Michael Ellis** - with particular expertise in industry analysis, business planning and intellectual property, his focus is on technology-driven businesses, including renewable energy technology, materials, chemistry, pharmaceuticals and medical devices.

Michael has a first class degree in Chemistry from Edinburgh University and in addition to being a qualified patent attorney has an MBA from Imperial College London and a PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences from Nottingham University. Michael sits on the Examining Committee of the European Qualifying Examinations for patent attorneys.



**Juliet Kauffmann** – an Associate of Orion Innovations since 2005, has recently joined the company as Business Analyst. She has particular skills in market analysis, data and knowledge management, with a specific interest in the fields of low carbon technology and sustainable development.

Juliet has a first class degree in Biology from London University and a PhD in Biological Sciences from The Open University. Juliet has previously worked as a consultant with a wide range of clients, including Conservation International, The Carbon Trust, The Open University, The Wine Society, A&C Black and SCHIN.

## Who are we?

Orion Innovations LLP provides specialist strategic and business development support to new ventures, early-phase and growing businesses. We work with organisations across many sectors, but have specific experience in the following sectors: energy; environmental; electronics, and process industries. We help businesses define their critical path in the early stages of development and provide support as they grow by providing pragmatic, hands on resource. This may be in the form of mentoring, interim management support or consultancy as appropriate to your needs.

Please contact us if you would like to discuss how we may assist in the future success of your venture. Noel can be reached on 07836 723940 and Alison on 07816 754614, or email below.