



## Magic in the Air as Andover's Armchair Answercall Receives Entrepreneur Accolade

Over 200 business people from the region gathered at the De Vere Grand Harbour Hotel last week as Armchair Answercall scooped the inaugural Hampshire Institute of Directors (IoD) Mentor Magic 2006 award.



**Winner on the Night –**

Neil Murphy with the Members of the Mentor Magic Panel.

Neil Murphy, Managing Director of the Andover-based, 60 strong staff business outsourcing company that offers telephone answering services, received the award from serial entrepreneur and author of best selling business book 'The Beermat Entrepreneur', Mike Southon, who was also the keynote speaker on the night.

Mentor Magic is a 'Dragon's Den' style initiative that has been one of the most talked about and exciting business events of the year in Hampshire and the prestigious gala dinner was the culmination of a number of regional heats held across the area during 2006.

Created by the Hampshire and IoW branch of the IoD to give budding entrepreneurs and business owners the expert advice and guidance they need to develop their companies, Mentor Magic invites participants to pitch their business ideas and issues to a panel of experts from the fields of marketing, manufacturing, business growth and funding.

Other finalists on the night included Matthew Pardoe-Williams from Convert Bin, Chloe Percy from Handover HR, but it was Armchair Answercall who received the most plaudits from the judges for the steps they had taken to develop the business based on the advice given by the panel of mentors earlier in the year. The judges commented particularly on the company's quality of staff and superior customer service as a key part of its unique offering and future success.



The company, which was launched in 2000, turns over £1m and is one of the fastest growing outsourcing companies of its type in the UK and boasts Saab and Cable & Wireless as two of its many hundreds of clients.

Neil Murphy said: "The Mentor Magic initiative has been a real success for us – not least raising our profile in Hampshire to business decision makers but also with direction of the company. We have received some invaluable advice and will be looking to put much of it into practice."

Colin Potter, Chairman of the Hampshire IOD said: "The evening was a huge success – Mentor Magic is all about nurturing the region's best talent and taking them forward as businesses. So many businesses never get off the ground, not for lack of ideas, but for lack of experience. Neil's company really is going places and is one to watch out for in 2007."

Colin added: "This is what the IoD is all about – giving businesses a helping hand and steering them towards success."

For Armchair Answercall, 2007 is all set to be a very successful year and the company is actively recruiting for its fast-growing workforce.

**For more information on Armchair's success contact Adam Lovelock on 01264 341600.**