



# News Release

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**10 December 2007**

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## **New association gives UK technology SMEs an EU voice**

Birmingham, 10 December 2007: Small to medium-sized technology companies in the UK now have direct representation in Brussels, thanks to a new industry association.

Called the Pan European ICT & eBusiness Network for Small to Medium Enterprises (PIN-SME), the new body is the first to specifically represent the needs of smaller technology businesses in the EU – a critical area traditionally dominated by larger technology enterprises.

PIN-SME is made up of national federations and ICT clusters from 8 EU countries. The United Kingdom is represented by the UK IT Association (UKita), the national trade association for technology SMEs.

Fred Noble, Chairman, UKita said: “The creation of a Europe-wide network representing the needs of technology SMEs is a huge step forward for the industry. The UK has a strong track record in fostering successful smaller high tech businesses, and this announcement will ensure that this continues”.

“We believe that European SMEs must speak with one voice on the development of European ICT policies – a voice that is becoming stronger today with the creation of PIN-SME. We fully support this new initiative, which is rooted in the past battles fought by small businesses on software patents, which reinforce monopolisation in the software sector, damage interoperability and act as a barrier to innovation by SMEs”

PIN-SME will focus on gaining consensus over issues such as ICT standardisation, software patents, e-invoicing, e-health and e-skills. The new organisation represents more than 50,000

enterprises employing around 200,000 people from EU countries including the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Austria.

Fred Noble continued: “It is vital for the continued health of the UK technology SME sector that we are fully integrated into the decision making process at an EU level. Historically smaller organisations have had little say in EU legislative decisions that have affected the way they do business, but this has now changed with UKita’s membership of PIN-SME.”

UKita is a national organisation for technology SMEs funded by Advantage West Midlands and is one of several projects, including the new national supplier standard Accredited UK, within the Advantage West Midlands ICT Cluster, designed to put the region at the forefront of the technology sector in the UK.

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#### **EDITORS’ NOTES:**

PIN-SME was announced via an UEAPME news release on 7 December in Brussels. PIN-SME has currently members in the following EU countries: Austria (UBIT), Bulgaria (BASSCOM), Denmark (it-forum midtjylland), France (GPNI), Germany (BestPractice-IT), Italy (CNA Comunicazione e Terziario Avanzato), Spain (ESTIC) and United Kingdom (UKita). For further information visit <http://www.pin-sme.eu/>

UEAPME is the employers’ organisation representing crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 84 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across Europe, covering over 12 million enterprises with 50 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner.

#### **About UKita**

The primary focus of UKita is to encourage the growth of small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) through the provision of training, the delivery of business networking opportunities and by promoting the credentials and image of the industry in general. Member companies work together across a variety of product and service sectors, providing a high quality and sustainable service and value for money solutions.

Membership is open to anyone involved in the delivery of ICT products and services, to those working within the ICT sector, and those who provide products and services to the ICT sector.

For further information visit <http://www.ukita.co.uk/index.htm>

### **About ICT Cluster**

The ICT Cluster is one of ten clusters established by Advantage West Midlands as part of its economic development strategy. These clusters have been chosen on the basis of their current strength in the region and their potential to create jobs and economic growth.

Advantage West Midlands is one of nine Regional Development Agencies in England whose role is to provide leadership and action to create more, better jobs and in improve the standard of living for all in the West Midlands.

### **Further information:**

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