

# SFA “Business 2 Business Evening” with Guest Speakers; Michael Dawson, CEO of the Gift Voucher Shop and George Hook, Broadcaster

October 2nd, 2007



The Small Firms Association (SFA) last week (Wednesday, 26th September 2007) held a “Business 2 Business Evening” which was attended by 230 companies, all members of the SFA. Guest speakers on the night were Michael Dawson, CEO of the Gift Voucher Shop (GVS) and George Hook, broadcaster, rugby commentator and Newstalk Presenter.

The purpose of the evening was for members to meet each other, develop business contacts and to promote the National Small Business Awards 2008 which were launched by An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern earlier in the month (September 5th).

As winner of last years National Small Business Best

Services Award, Michael Dawson was asked to speak about the experience in partaking in these awards and what it meant to win the Best Services category.

“We have always found the SFA to be a great source of quality information and support so when the first National Small Business Awards were launched in 2005, we were confident that the high standards and professional experience that we had previously enjoyed with the SFA would present again in these Awards – which they certainly were. The Gift Voucher Shop take great pride in the service it delivers so winning the service category last year was a particularly proud achievement for everyone involved,” said Dawson. GVS became members of the SFA five years ago and have like many of their 3,500 plus members benefited through participation at the SFA Seminars and from the use of the SFA support services.

The aim of the National Small Business Awards is to celebrate the achievements of small business in Ireland and to recognise the vital contribution of the small business sector to the Irish economy.

Speaking at the SFA Award launch, Pat Crotty, SFA Chairman said, “Companies who enter these awards are competing to be ‘The Best Small Business in Ireland’.

An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, TD also said at the awards launch

that, “There are some 250,000 small businesses currently operating in the Irish economy, which provide employment for over three-quarters of a million people. In this competitive international economic climate, it is vital that we continue to nurture and grow our indigenous enterprises.”

The SFA is partnered by O2 Ireland and Bank of Ireland Business Banking in presenting the awards.

Sponsorship for individual category awards being provided by Bord Bia, Enterprise Ireland, FAS and the ICAI, with media partners Newstalk 106-108fm and the Irish Independent.

Application forms for the Small Business Awards 2008 can be found on [www.sfa.ie/awards](http://www.sfa.ie/awards).

The Gift Voucher Shop take great pride in the service it delivers so winning the service category last year was a particularly proud achievement for everyone involved

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Note to Editors:

The Gift Voucher Shop Ltd.

The Gift Voucher Shop (GVS) was established in 2002 as a unique and unrivalled service that eliminates any hassles normally associated with gift giving by offering consumers and recipient's ultimate choice and flexibility. Through each country's Post Office network, web and telesales channels, GVS offers the most comprehensive range of gift vouchers for an extensive and attractive array of top brands as well as smaller independent retail partners, the most popular of which being the **One4all**<sup>®</sup> Gift Voucher.

GVS has over 750 of Ireland's shops and services with 4,000 outlets nationwide making them the leading provider of Gift Vouchers in Ireland. Leading stores such as Argos, Arnotts, Brown Thomas, Champion Sports, Debenhams, Easons, Great Southern Hotels, HMV and Smyths Toys benefit from the service's unique distribution system.

Over 50% of GVS's business is now generated by its highly effective corporate sales division that provides a wide range of facilities and services to the corporate sector. These include staff incentives, HR support services, trade promotions and specialised software solutions for the management of the employee BIK allowances.

In July 2005, GVS launched their Online Corporate System (OCS) for Small Benefit Relief to the corporate market. The OCS is a special software development that provides a number of unique functionalities for the efficient management of the small benefit concession and has been approved by the Revenue Commissioners.

Following its success in Ireland, GVS have begun to develop internationally. The first of its markets was with Maltapost in November 2004. In October 2005 GVS and the Post Office Ltd launched in all of the 14,600 Post Office branches across the UK.

Latest Products from The Gift Voucher Shop

#### **One4all**<sup>®</sup> Gift Card

The **One4all**<sup>®</sup> is an electronic Gift Voucher which is redeemable in participating gift card retail partners. The One4all<sup>®</sup> electronic card is designed to deliver even more choice and flexibility for the recipient as it acts as a debit card allowing the recipient to spend the full value in one store of their choice or to spend it partially across as many stores as they wish. The **One4all**<sup>®</sup> Gift Card is available in an array of attractive designs and carriers, in denominations from €15 - €250.

#### **Experiences4all**<sup>®</sup> Gift Voucher

The new **Experiences4all**<sup>®</sup> Gift Voucher will cover a wide range of activities that will compliment the already successful and market leading **One4all**<sup>®</sup>. This innovative Gift Voucher has been developed as a direct response to many corporate clients who specifically wish to provide an experience type Gift Voucher for their staff and trade promoters.