

SAVE OUR SOULS

The heavenly SOS exhibition is here to take your business to new heights.

BY JANE SMITH



'TAKING YOUR BUSINESS TO NEW HEIGHTS' is the theme to this year's SOS exhibition, the office products event for the UK industry. Now in its sixth year and recognised throughout the stationery industry it continues to grow and successfully bring sales opportunities and new product information to the office products trade. Sales initiatives, market knowledge and the ability to discuss product and market developments must surely be a great reason for you to get along to the show.

The show will take place over two days on Wednesday and Thursday, the 7-8 December at the NEC, Birmingham. A great venue with excellent road, rail and airport links making it easily accessible to everyone in the country.

This year over 65 of the industry's leading suppliers will be exhibiting and

the time you spend at the show promises to be a good investment. More than just an exhibition, SOS is designed to provide a complete experience. An information centre for new and existing products where you can talk to the exhibitors directly, as well as meet new suppliers showcasing their products for the first time. There's also an opportunity to network and to meet up with friends and colleagues. And the friendly atmosphere encourages a lively and fun, but also informative environment.

SOS BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Another highlight of the show is a one hour long session called the Business Experience. This year the star speakers are Sebastian Coe, OBE and impressionist Kevin Connolly.

Lord Coe is the chairman of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, London 2012. Coe headed the British bid, which finally triumphed over the favourite France in Singapore. One of the greatest British athletes of all time, Coe set twelve world records at four distances. He won four gold and three silver medals in the European Championships and the Olympic Games.

Kevin Connelly is one of the stars of BBC's highly acclaimed 'Dead Ringers' series. His impressions of public figures include Andrew Marr, David Dimbleby, Andrew Neil and Mark Lawson. His extensive repertoire also includes sportsmen, politicians and television characters.

The SOS Business Experience is being held daily 10 - 11am. Demand for places will be high given the star line-up and seats will be allocated on a first come, first

served basis, so registering now would be a good idea if you don't want to be disappointed.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The SOS event is going to be valuable to almost anybody working in the office products industry. You can potentially save hours on desk research and get ahead of the game for 2006.

Let's face it, when the new catalogues are launched in January it's really important that you capitalise on getting them into your customers' hands quickly and to bring attention to the new products. The first quarter is the busiest and potentially the highest revenue earner, so it's a really good time to re-focus your customers on their needs and for you to use your new catalogue to 'adjust' their core lists and find ways to retain margin and increase sales, especially with new products. >>

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LEFT TO RIGHT:

Trevor Brooking (guest speaker 2004), Steve Hone (Spicers), David Grassby (Spicers), Karen Brady (guest speaker 2004)

SEE

All the latest industry innovations and bright ideas and use them to enhance your own business

LEARN

Leading suppliers demonstrating new products

SOURCE AND COMPARE

Over 65 leading suppliers waiting to walk you through the latest product and service developments

BE INSPIRED

New ideas and inspiration to drive your sales forward and help your business grow

NETWORK

With industry contacts, friends and colleagues

“I was impressed with last year’s SOS and I surprised myself as to how much I got out of the exhibition, my sales guys also gleaned a lot of product knowledge.”

JOHN THURGOOD, MD, TOTAL OFFICE

SHOW DETAILS

VENUE Birmingham NEC Pavilion
TIMES Wednesday 7th December 2005
 10 – 11am Business Experience
 11am – 5pm SOS exhibition

Thursday 8th December 2005
 10 – 11am Business Experience
 11am – 4pm SOS exhibition

PARKING Free
TICKETS Free admission
REGISTER On line at www.sos05.net



There's no doubt that new products are the 'life blood' of our industry and while they may be hard to spot in the catalogue there are going to be some golden opportunities.

Another important aspect is that you'll get the chance to 'touch & feel' the products. There really is no better way to understand products and their potential sales revenue! Quite often the page just doesn't do the product justice.

We heard from two dealers who attended last year's show and are looking forward to coming along again in 2005. John Thurgood, MD Total Office in London, said, "I was impressed with last year's SOS and I surprised myself as to how much I got out of the exhibition, my sales guys also gleaned a lot of product knowledge." Julie Alston, owner of Evergreen Office Supplies in Colchester, was equally positive saying, "SOS is a must for me to keep up to speed on new products, to make marketing contact with manufacturers and to hear the excellent Business Experience speakers."

PROMOS & INCENTIVES

If all of this were not enough the exhibitors themselves want to make every second of the show count for them too and will have a lot on offer to entice you onto their stands.

You can look forward to:

- *Unique offers and competitions*
- *Ideas for promotions to boost your profile and sales*
- *Additional new product discounts for those who visit participating exhibitor stands*

We spoke to Neil Hillerby, senior national account manager of Sanford UK, who had this to say about the show, "We find the show a great way to launch new products for 2006. SOS is the biggest show of its kind in the UK and more and more dealers are seeing the importance and value in sending their sales people along to learn about the products and talk to us as manufacturers face-to-face. Everybody gets a lot out of it and ultimately that should translate into more sales opportunities for us all." ■

