

Digital company secures £2m in export orders

Object Matrix is famous for its Digital Content Governance platform, MatrixStore, which stores digital content and provides protection and governance for its lifetime.

The MatrixStore platform can service organisations in any market, but is currently being predominantly used by companies that create, curate and distribute digital video content. These include major players such as NBC Universal, France Televisions, Orange and EDF, along with many others.

The Economy Secretary said:

“Object Matrix’s work to secure over £2m of trade from a wide range of international markets is real achievement and I would like to warmly congratulate the directors and employees of the company on their success.

“The Welsh Government has worked closely with Object Matrix, providing support and advice to help the company develop and grow the export arm of its business.

“Its continued success is a great example to others and shows that given the right advice and support, many businesses in Wales can successfully expand their operations by seeking to penetrate new markets.”

Nick Pearce-Tomenius, Object Matrix Sales and Marketing Director said:

“Content providers, whether they be large broadcasters, or small companies using a little bit of video, naturally need somewhere to protect that video. But more than that, they need to ensure they can still easily access archived content whilst keeping that content secure with little or no management effort.

“MatrixStore does just that, as well as providing automated and integrated business continuity functionality, so even when the worst happens and all power is lost, for example, you can still manage that content.

“The platform offers several benefits for organisations that require archive storage, content curation, distribution at scale and would like their staff to work on higher value functions. It provides, on-site, off-site or private cloud deployment that can grow and scale with requirements, robust and proven disaster recovery, a business continuity platform, and high levels of

security.”

Object Matrix initially focused on developing sales within the UK market. In 2009, after a successfully securing a number of customers, including the BBC, BT and Gorilla, it began to look at exporting, and visited its first market, France.

Nick explains:

“It is good to prove yourselves locally before you can be successful globally. With good established customers in the UK, exporting was a natural progression for our business. It has helped transform our business, not only through increasing sales but by getting to grips with the challenges of new markets and new trends.

“Exporting can seem daunting at first, but the key lessons we have learned is the importance of good partners, perseverance and visiting your market. Also, access the support that is available. We have definitely benefited from advice and support from the Welsh Government.”

[Health Secretary hails success of Welsh Government campaign as all GP training places filled](#)

Following the conclusion of all three rounds of recruitment in 2017, the Wales Deanery has now confirmed the appointment of 144 GP training places, surpassing the 136 places available. This compares to 121 places that were filled in 2016 – an increase of 19%.

It follows the launch of an international and UK-wide campaign to promote Wales as an excellent place for doctors – including GPs – to train, work and live.

The campaign includes two financial incentives schemes: a targeted scheme offering a £20,000 incentive to GP trainees taking up posts in specified areas with a trend of low fill rates, and a universal scheme offering a one off payment for all GP trainees to cover the cost of one sitting of their final examinations.

Ceredigion, North East Wales, North West Wales and Pembrokeshire, areas that have traditionally found it difficult to recruit have benefited from the

targeted incentive scheme, achieving 100% fill rates this year.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“I am delighted we’ve filled all the GP training places for Wales this year, and in particular some of the traditionally hard to recruit rural areas. It shows our marketing campaign has been a great success and Wales really is a great place to train, work and live.

There are a number of benefits for doctors coming to Wales, including an Education Contract for junior doctors, the first in the UK. It guarantees ring-fenced time for learning within the working week to ensure trainee doctors will have access to a wide range of educational opportunities to support their career development.

The campaign was recently extended to encourage trainee psychiatrists to come to Wales, which is a particular recruitment challenge across the whole of the UK.

I was pleased to re-launch the medical campaign in October. I have also approved the continuation of the incentives we have put in place for GP trainees. I expect the campaign to go from strength to strength and attract even more doctors to Wales.”

[Minister praises work of Wales’ environmental groups](#)

The Minister was speaking before Keep Wales Tidy’s annual Tidy Wales Awards, in Cardiff Bay’s Pierhead Building, where she will present awards and thank volunteers for the work they carry out to improve the quality of their local environment.

Welsh Government funding has enabled Keep Wales Tidy to work collaboratively with Local Authorities, community groups and the public to engage in a wide range of projects to improve the local environment.

Hannah Blythyn said:

“I am extremely honoured to have been given the opportunity by the First Minister to lead work that affects every corner of Wales, from improving the quality of the air we breathe, to enhancing access and recreation opportunities.

“I am grateful to Keep Wales Tidy for inviting me to this event today – my first as Minister. They are a great example of an organisation that is carrying out important work to improve local environment quality in communities across Wales. Their activities help keep our public spaces free from litter and fly-tipping so people can take pride in and make good use of the places where they live.

“I look forward to working closely with Keep Wales Tidy and the many other organisations represented by my portfolio. Together, we can help achieve a cleaner, greener Wales that benefits communities and future generations in Wales and beyond.”

Further calls for devolution of Air Passenger Duty to Wales

According to new, independent analysis, devolving and then reducing APD in Wales would directly result in a significant boost for the economies of both South Wales and the South West of England.

And a meeting with influential business leaders earlier this month showed that support for this move from prominent figures in the aviation, tourism and business sectors in Wales is unanimous.

The UK Government has previously said that devolving APD to Wales would cause “unjustifiable disadvantages to Bristol [airport]” and would not be in the interests of passengers in those areas.

However, APD is already devolved to Northern Ireland and UK Minister’s have also given the same commitment to Scotland.

The Welsh Government argues that the UK Government’s reluctance to devolve APD continues to place unjustifiable constraints on Wales’ ability to promote itself abroad and is hindering growth in its aviation sector and wider economy.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“With APD already devolved to Northern Ireland and the commitment given to devolve APD to Scotland, the UK Government’s refusal to move on this issue is undermining our economic position compared to our colleagues in other devolved administrations.

“Following publication of independent analysis on the devolution of APD to Wales, we recently held a meeting with prominent figures in

the aviation, tourism and business sectors in Wales to discuss this new evidence. That meeting showed that support for the devolution of APD is unanimous, with it being broadly viewed as a move that will help ensure Wales is open for business across international borders.

“The meeting also showed that there is a widely held view that APD is negatively affecting businesses within our economy and its reduction or removal would be a stimulus to enable competition and increase growth.

“I have made clear that if APD was devolved I would reduce it in Wales, a move that I am confident would better connect Wales with transport and business hubs and act as a huge stimulus for business and investment.

“The UK Government gave a clear commitment to review any new evidence – I call on them again to act in the interests of Wales on this important matter.”

[Devolution of air passenger duty to Wales.](#)

Minister champions Welsh skills talent at national Skills Shows 2017

Held annually in Birmingham’s NEC, the Skills Show – which runs from 16-18 November this year – is the largest skills and careers event in the UK. It also hosts the WorldSkills UK Finals, where Wales has secured the highest number of entrants of all UK regions into this year’s competition.

The Finals are used to benchmark excellence across a range of vocational skills areas. They are also used as part of the selection process for the international competitions EuroSkills Budapest 2018 and WorldSkills Kazan 2019.

Around 500 competitors are taking part in the WorldSkills UK Finals, which consists of up to 60 national competitions where entrants battle it out for Gold, Silver and Bronze medals and recognition as the best in the UK. Of that figure, 71 competitors are Welsh, accounting for approximately 14% of the UK total making it the highest regional representation.

In addition, nine talented students have been invited back to compete for a place in Squad UK for the WorldSkills Budapest / Kazan cycle. Sixteen entrants are also taking part in the ‘Inclusive Skills’ competitions, which have been specifically designed for those with disabilities.

WorldSkills UK will also announce the overall winner of its Local Heroes 2017 award at the Show.

Local Heroes are supporters of WorldSkills UK who drive their organisation's involvement in competitions. In addition to promoting benefits of WorldSkills to students, apprentices and senior managers, they give their time to support competitors, putting on additional training competitors and offering pastoral and moral support.

Six people have made WorldSkills UK's Highly Commended shortlist for the Local Heroes 2017 award and two are from Wales – Darren Collins from Airbus UK (Broughton) and Rona Griffiths from Coleg Cambria.

Speaking at the event, Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning Minister, Eluned Morgan said:

“That Wales has almost 100 competitors taking part in this year's Skills Show is a fantastic achievement and testament of our national skills excellence and talent.

“Supporting skills growth and talent development is a key priority for the Welsh Government. Through our various employment and vocational skills programmes – including our new Apprenticeship Policy which places a greater emphasis on higher level skills – we are committed to helping individuals achieve their goals and become valued members of the Welsh workforce.

“By taking part in Skills Competitions like this we are creating a highly skilled nation that will support our economy, safeguard our industries and improve the prospects of Wales.

“I wish everyone taking part in this week's competitions the very best of luck and extend my thanks to those who have supported them on their journey for all their hard work and dedication to help make this happen.”