

News

Total Ltd AIMS high with Beacon South West.

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Total Ltd, a Cheltenham-based business which is hoping to float on AIM (Alternative Investment Market) within the next two or three years, is the latest high profile company in the county to be awarded the coveted Beacon status.

The telecoms provider, which this year celebrates its 10th anniversary, looks set to become an even bigger player in the sector, using its listing on AIM as the platform to extend its range of integrated services to the B2B sector in the South West. Its offering includes converged mobile, system and fixed line services for major corporates through to SMEs.

Explains Stuart Baikie, managing director of Total Ltd: "AIM will provide the company with the security it needs to continue to grow at the rate it has done in recent years. We have never sought external finance to date but we feel now is the time to capitalise on the opportunity we have developed for ourselves in the B2B marketplace."

Part of the success of the company, which was highly commended in the National Customer Service Awards 2008, has been its ongoing commitment to its staff, an investment which has not only seen it rewarded with Investor in People (IIP) status but caught the attention of Beacon South West.

An initiative of the South West of England Regional Development Agency (RDA), Beacon South West brings together the region's most forward-thinking companies to cultivate excellence among businesses.

"We have a culture of developing our people from within," reveals Stuart, whose company is on course to turn over £10m this year. "We have been in business for a decade now, which is no small achievement in this sector given the continuing consolidation. Without the commitment of our staff, we wouldn't have got to where we are today."

Stuart believes the team's efforts have ensured that they experience little or no competition in the region. "We have carved out a real niche for ourselves in the

South West, particularly in terms of what we can offer. Our ability to provide an integrated solution makes us unique, particularly within B2B."

Commenting on the company's new Beacon status, Stuart added: "We are really pleased to have been awarded Beacon status at this point in our company's evolution. We are seeking professional advice to steer us through the flotation on AIM but there is nothing like being able to ask business peers about their real life experience of the process. Beacon South West is all about learning from the best companies in the region and I am looking forward to picking a few brains at the regular Beacon Boardrooms about the pitfalls and opportunities surrounding AIM listing."

Adds Sue Baker, director of Beacon South West: "Total Ltd stands out from the crowd for its commitment to customer service. It has a low client churn rate, way below industry standard, and is constantly looking for ways to provide more innovative solutions to its customers including initiatives such as its online helpdesk and online billing system."