

# A Fresh Perspective

YEM talks to ex-lawyer, Ashish Prodder, a social entrepreneur who has launched Freshties. A website to rival business support agencies and acts as a port of call for anyone looking for advice and guidance on starting a business.



Ashish launched his community website in January this year. The site, which is aimed at the wider community, allows entrepreneurs to promote themselves and be more successful from community involvement. Using the website, new and aspiring entrepreneurs can learn about the potential pitfalls of business and gain insights from those already running a business, essentially it is an online venue that allows small businesses to network with each other. Businesses are using Freshties to promote themselves by entering details and a web link in the form of a blog, an online diary style web page. Quick and simple to use, businesses are reaching a wider audience of people aged from 16, right up to retirement age.

The Freshties ethos is that businesses should contribute more to the community and Freshties has already contributed to its current charitable appeal, the Arctic Challenge 2007, in aid of cancer relief. Various streams generate revenue and the site donates up to 60% of revenue to community funds that help everyday people.

Freshties is about connecting with different people, issues and perspectives on life. As Ashish explains, "We are showing how a social business model not only benefits others but benefits you and your business, for example, through generating a good will and greater loyalty, everybody can gain and that's a good balance to have in society. Freshties give straight to charities from the different revenue streams and we believe that a balance between achieving community and commercial objectives works well for everyone."

Despite only launching in early 2006, the site is already creating a buzz around the UK with its fresh and innovative concept. It provides a much-needed networking bridge for individuals, businesses and the not-for-profit sector, and has won plaudits from the likes of Glenys Kinnock (MEP) and Professor Geoff Layer, Pro-Vice-Chancellor at the University of Bradford.