Supporting the Development of an Entrepreneurial Culture
Within Creative Industries SMEs in Scotland

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Abstract: The creative industry in the UK accounted for 8% of GVA (Gross Value Added) in 2002 and grew by an average of % per annum between 1997 and 2002. (Creative Industries Economic Estimates, 2004) Approximately 97% of companies in Scotland are SMEs. Of these the creative industries employ over 100,000 people with an annual turnover of £5 billion. The industry in Scotland aims to grow by 30 per cent, increase exports by 15 per cent and create p to 2000 new jobs by 2010. (Scottish Enterprise, 2004) In order to achieve these goals the industry must possess the ability to demonstrate skills in entrepreneurial practices, in particular exemplary marketing and business skills. At present there appears to be little assistance in helping existing SMEs within this industry develop the necessary marketing and business skills to run their enterprises successfully, which does not entail giving up time and money to attend central venues, usually in the central belt of Scotland, offering marketing and business skills development.

This paper critically evaluates existing entrepreneurial business skills training provision within the creative industries in Scotland. It identifies the difficulties practitioners experience in accessing training opportunities which assist in developing key marketing and business practices. An evaluation of current training opportunities and marketing/business support systems offering management and marketing skills development are explored.

Initial problems identified are that the industry in Scotland lacks a full range of business and marketing skills development input practitioners can access at any time and anywhere. To date the convenience of the practitioner appears not to have been considered in training provision.

Recommendations are therefore based on the need for this industry to access skills development packages in remote and outlying regions, such as the north of Scotland and Highlands and Islands. The development of skills based online teaching packages can then be developed to address these gaps and offer the industry easy access to the development of knowledge and understanding of marketing and business practices, at the convenience of the participant. Hence ‘chunks’ of teaching material can be provided to assist participants in developing the entrepreneurial skills necessary to run successful organisations, at their own pace. This will increase the competitiveness of Scottish Creative Industries SMEs both nationally and internationally.