



Testing times:
the PetScreen team
– and friend

The facts

The Opportunity Grant programme, organised by British Airways and promoted in conjunction with *The Daily Telegraph*, offered dynamic and enterprising small- and medium-sized businesses prizes of Business Class travel for a year to help them compete for overseas work.

Launched last year and judged by a panel of experts from partners in the award scheme, the programme gave 12 return Business Class tickets to 100 companies who could demonstrate that face-to-face meetings with potential clients or suppliers overseas would help take their businesses to the next level.

Entrants were required to explain their brief history and the size and scope of current operations, and to detail what could be achieved by face-to-face meetings enabled by business travel that would not be possible for their company otherwise.

More than 4,500 small- and medium-sized businesses entered the competition and the winners are now at various stages of using their travel prizes and beginning to reap the rewards.

Ambition put to the test

How an Opportunity Grant can help, by Andrew Cave

With 80 million dogs and 92 million cats, America is an even bigger nation of pet lovers than Britain, so it holds great potential for PetScreen, a firm that provides two unique tests for cancer in domestic canines and felines.

One in four dogs die from cancer and PetScreen, founded by Kevin Slater and Graeme Radcliffe in 2004, has developed tests to diagnose the disease and work out the best plan of treatment.

Its canine lymphoma blood test is used by vets as an easy, inexpensive and non-invasive test to detect lymphoma, the most

common cancer in dogs, while its directed chemotherapy test helps vets to select the most effective treatment.

Both of the tests are carried out in the UK by PetScreen, which employs five staff in Nottingham, and they are also available to veterinarians throughout the world via international couriers, with clients as far away as the United States, Australia and South Africa.

However, the founders have long felt that there is potential to build a much bigger business in the US through the licensing of PetScreen's tests to

established US clinical testing companies.

Clinching such deals needs face-to-face contact with potential clients, says Mr Slater, and the 12 Business Class return flights that the company has been given as one of the winners of British Airways' Opportunity Grant are providing PetScreen with the help it needs.

The company has taken four of the flights so far, jetting into Chicago, Los Angeles and New York twice, and the effort has already reaped rewards.

"We're in the final stages of talking to a US producer

of veterinary diagnostic tests about them taking on our products," says Mr Slater.

"This was always in the pipeline, but taking the trips has enabled us to fast-track it. Opportunity Grant has been a magnificent initiative for us."

PetScreen is now developing new tests for conditions including feline lymphoma, mast cell tumours and osteosarcomas.

It is also setting up a research laboratory in Columbia, Missouri, where there is a major veterinary school, and has been able to visit that too on its trips to the US.

Find out why face-to-face is a better way to do business at telegraph.co.uk/ba