

Tina Woollard in running for national award

A Reading businesswoman has been shortlisted in a hunt for the UK's most outstanding virtual assistant of 2007.

This is the first national awards scheme of its kind, aimed at boosting awareness of the rapidly growing profession of virtual assistance, and Tina Woollard of Hartland Road, Reading is one of 9 in the running for the accolade.

VAs support businesses or individuals in a personal assistant's role, but from their own premises. It is already an established profession in America, but was virtually unheard of in the UK until a few years ago.

Carmen MacDougall, of Midlands-based CMA Coaching and Training, launched the ambitious search after creating a support network and training resource for such assistants across the UK and Europe.

It is hoped the awards scheme will promote a wider understanding of the fledgling industry and the International Association of Virtual Assistants and the Institute of Qualified Professional Secretaries are backing the initiative as sponsors and judges.

Tina will attend an awards ceremony on Saturday, April 21 in Milton Keynes where the winners of two categories will be announced.

The two awards up for grabs focus on VA's in their first 18 months, and more established practitioners of 18 months and over. Tina is eligible for the second category, having set up her VA business in October 2001.

Quote:

"I believe this will further demonstrate to my existing clientele and prospective clientele my professionalism, dedication and willingness to provide a first class Virtual Assistant service.

I am to expand onwards and upwards with the assistance of additional outsourced virtual assistants and this too will prove to them, my dedication to ongoing commitment."

Tina said: "Our aim is to also build on our Tesla Typing! website to include online courses and examination CD's to retail to recruitment agencies, schools, universities and the like as there seems to be a demand for this.

We further aim to expand our VA assistance with willing professional and equally dedicated virtual assistants who require themselves to expand their own clientele base, thus everyone winning. "

Winners' prizes include a PR campaign for their business, courtesy of Staffordshire-based Passionate Media, a professionally designed winner's logo, a marketing consultation, a three month VA coaching programme courtesy of CMA Coaching and Training, free IQPS and IAVA membership for a year, a Fujitsu Photo Scanner and a winner's certificate.