

Inaugural New York City Entrepreneur Week (NYC ENT) To Celebrate The City's Thriving Startup Community

Call for Business Proposals from Tri-State Area Startups

NEW YORK, March 18, 2009 – The New York City entrepreneur community is coming together to hold the inaugural New York City Entrepreneur Week (NYC ENT), a week-long forum, taking place April 20-24, 2009, that unites entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial groups, service providers, investors, and technology and business experts. Today, NYC ENT officially launches its business plan competition, inviting startups in the Tri-State area to submit their business plans for an opportunity to win over 100 hours of services from leading technology, marketing and consulting companies in the NY Metro Area.

Organized by Solidea and Connectors Group, NYC ENT was created to strengthen and accelerate the collective entrepreneurial spirit of New York City. The event seeks to bring together disparate organizations, institutional investors, service providers, universities, and early-stage ventures throughout the region, providing a platform which fosters innovation, growth and ultimately creates jobs. The organizations participating in the event to date include PCM Exchange, Bloomberg L.P., Fulbright & Jaworski L.L.P., Sun Microsystems, Inc., Geller & Co., Bite Communications, FreshThrills, Inc., and Mobile Mondays.

“Despite a highly active startup community, there is no organizing force that serves to gather all of its stakeholders into a more efficient marketplace. As a result, many important connections that could serve to grow emerging companies, and create jobs, have yet to be forged,” said Randall Kane, Managing Director, Solidea. “As the financial industry continues to shrink, small businesses will play an ever increasing role in New York City’s recovery, so nurturing the city’s next generation of emerging businesses is key to its economic growth.”

Competition Awards Over 100 Hours of Service to Winning Startup

At the center of the week’s events is a 21-company business plan competition with a full day of customized training developed exclusively for the select participants of the event. From these 21 teams, six semifinalists will be chosen by a panel of judges to continue throughout the week, while the addition of a seventh wildcard will be voted on by the online community at www.nycentweek.com. These seven semifinalists will have the opportunity to attend educational workshops throughout the week that will focus on topics that are traditionally difficult for entrepreneurs to master as well as those that all emerging companies need to consider in order to engage investors and successfully run their business. The goal is to coach each early-stage company on the key success factors that allow ideas to launch effectively.

Both Connectors Group and Solidea will integrate success stories from their portfolio companies into these forums in order to share real world lessons. At its conclusion, the invitation-only bootcamp will position the seven semifinalists for success by challenging each management team to refine its pitch into the most compelling package possible. A winning team will be selected to gain over 100 hours of services from leading technology, marketing, and consulting companies in the NY Metro Area.

Companies applying for the Business Plan Competition must have:

- An Executive Summary, Business Plan and Financials
- A Working Prototype
- A Management Team in Place
- Received Less Than \$1.5MM in financing to-date.

During the three days between the quarterfinal and semifinal presentations, topic focused panels and discussions will be held throughout the city to further energize New York's base of entrepreneurs. These events will be open to the public and include sessions from investors, technology and media companies including Bloomberg L.P., NYCSeed, Sun Microsystems, Inc. and DFJ Gotham Ventures. NYC ENT is currently planning both sponsored and affiliated events to make this week significant for all of the entrepreneurial community. More information about the competition and business proposal submission guidelines can be found at www.nycentweek.com/competition.

“While recent market turmoil has served to dampen sources of capital and support for emerging companies, there remains a thriving marketplace within the entrepreneurial community of New York City,” said Jeevan Padiyar, Principal, Connectors Group. “This network is bustling with creative talent, support services, angel groups, venture capital and forums all geared toward helping entrepreneurs get to market. Connectors Group and Solidea are two of many support and service organizations serving this emerging marketplace.”

For more information about the weeklong event, please visit www.nycentweek.com. For media inquiries, please contact NYCENT (at) bitepr.com.

Follow NYC ENT and receive event updates on Twitter at www.twitter.com/NYCENT.

ABOUT CONNECTORS GROUP

Connectors Group (CG) is a management consulting firm focusing on middle market and select early stage companies. CG collaborates with entrepreneurs to deliver measurable results, whether they seek to improve elements of their existing operations, raise external capital, or identify acquisition targets for growth. Its Strategists are successful entrepreneurs who have cultivated expertise in product acquisition and development, sales, marketing, operations management, fundraising and other disciplines relevant to companies in the developmental and growth stages. CG Strategists have helped to build companies across a variety of industries, including medical devices, biotechnology, software, media and entertainment. They have also guided many companies through successful initial public offerings and acquisitions. Connectors Group seeks to work with companies that have the desire and potential to be shaped into "best of breed" organizations. Focusing mostly on the New York metro area, CG also holds various educational events like the New York City Entrepreneur Week, and sponsors the Connectors Angels angel investor group. For more information about Connectors Group visit www.connectorsny.com

ABOUT SOLIDEA

Solidea is the affiliate company of Acquis Consulting Group, a New York based, boutique management consulting firm that uses innovative thinking to help our clients become more efficient and more competitive.

Solidea augments this knowledge by leveraging expertise in our core practice to help emerging firms at various stages better position themselves to be strong players in the marketplace. We use smaller team configurations and high-touch services to integrate seamlessly into our portfolio company environments. This allows us to directly support both strategic and tactical objectives. We streamline the process and accelerate growth exponentially, supporting and implementing every step of the way. It is an unprecedented model for a firm working with emerging companies. For more information about Solidea visit www.solideacapital.com