

Get your business off to the best **start**

A Warwickshire woman has returned from Asia and has set up her own business to help other firms manage the mundane.

Kate O'Donnell spent eight-and-a-half years in both Shenzhen, Southern China, and then Singapore due to her husband's work and is now back in Tanworth-in-Arden. She has launched The Virtual Pod, which covers all aspects of administration including finance, diary management, database management, transcription services and marketing.

The service is being offered to small, local businesses either remotely or in-house. Kate was assisted by Emma Sharman, of Marketing Hat, who introduced her to the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber gave Kate support in starting the business providing places at workshops, networking opportunities and mentoring through the Coventry and Warwickshire Business Support Programme.

Kate said: "I'm thoroughly enjoying being a significant part of several, diverse working teams, dropping in, working hard yet still being able to juggle all the numerous family commitments. It's a wonderful new lease of life, meeting new people in new businesses and helping to make a difference for them as well as for myself. "I hope to be the missing cog for businesses to allow them to increase productivity and run multiple projects smoothly, efficiently and with minimal stress.

"I enjoy picking up the pieces, running with the day-to-day chores, organising and working hard. In this way, I can free up valuable thinking space and resource for the company to focus on other important aspects of the business.

"My marketing background also successfully lends itself by offering additional services which a small business might not have even considered possible at a particular stage of their growth."



She added: "The Chamber of Commerce has provided me with valuable advice and support when setting up my business in order to help make it a success.

"The workshops that the Chamber has put on have served as an excellent 'refresher' course on how to do business after living in Asia for the past eight years. Furthermore, it's given me the renewed confidence and motivation to grab the bull by the horns and get well and truly stuck in!"

e: startyourbusiness@cw-chamber.co.uk

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