The DTI drives our ambition of 'prosperity for all' by working to create the best environment for business success in the UK. We help people and companies become more productive by promoting enterprise, innovation and creativity.

We champion UK business at home and abroad. We invest heavily in world-class science and technology. We protect the rights of working people and consumers. And we stand up for fair and open markets in the UK, Europe and the world.

Achieving best practice in your business is a key theme within DTI's approach to business support, providing ideas and insights into how to improve performance across your business. By showing what works in other businesses, we can help you see which approaches can help you, and then support you in implementation.
Best practice is about doing what works. Whatever your area of interest, the publications and resources in this booklet will show you how other businesses have tackled problems and become more efficient, competitive and profitable as a result.

All of the publications listed are available as printer-friendly PDFs (or as plain text versions) on our web presence at www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice. Or you can order those available in hard copy free of charge by:
• calling the DTI Publications Orderline on 0870 150 2500 and quoting the URN; or
• visiting www.dti.gov.uk/publications.

For more information about best practice, including real life examples of how other UK businesses have adopted it, visit www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice.

**This booklet is for:** anyone interested in how they can use best practice techniques to improve their business’s performance.

**It covers:** a whole range of best practice publications, and a taster of what’s inside them.

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How to use this booklet

This booklet groups all of the *Achieving best practice in your business* material into sections by subject matter.

However, some titles could fall into other categories equally well, so a quick skim read of related sections is recommended. Each publication has a brief description followed by details of the URL (web location) and URN if hard copies are available (order number).

**www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice**

All of our material is available as printer-friendly pdfs at this address. These pdfs have fewer images than our printed brochures so you can print any piece about best practice and read it easily offline. We have included a shortcut web address to take you straight to it. In the address bar of your internet browser, enter our website address (www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice) and then the shortcut listed. This will usually be the slash sign followed by assets/ and an abbreviation of the publication’s title.

**Printed brochures**

30 of our publications are available not only on the site above, but also as printed brochures. Order them from the publications section of the DTI website (www.dti.gov.uk/publications), free of charge, or by calling the Publications Orderline on 0870 150 2500 (calls to this number are charged at national rate). Either quote the name of the publication you want or give the URN. You can also contact the Orderline by fax on 0870 150 2333 or Minicom on 0870 150 2100.
Visit www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice

Our web presence contains numerous case studies and factsheets in addition to the publications in this guide.

Case studies
Our large bank of case studies cover businesses of all sizes, type and locations, and show how real companies are using best practice to improve their performance. You’ll find case studies in most of our printed publications and in each section of our website. You’ll also be able to search our new Case Study Database from January 2005, which will help you locate the examples you’re most interested in. This will be on the web presence at www.dti-bestpractice-tools.org/casestudies

Factsheets
Over 50 factsheets give you in-depth information on specific areas of best practice. The factsheets can be printed quickly and easily, and give you facts and figures on subjects such as Open Source Software (OSS), Exporting (selling abroad), and Content Management Systems (CMS). For a full list, see pages 16-19.

Online tools
There’s also a range of online, interactive tools to help you self-assess your business and develop effective strategies for improvement. These include an E-business planner, a Broadband checker, a technology Benchmarking tool, an IT Security healthchecker and an E-payments tool.
Management publications

The success of your business depends on careful planning and skilful day-to-day management. The publications in this section offer guidance on leadership, benchmarking, forecasting, strategy and finance.

- **Ideas for business management**
  This brochure looks at the management ideas of some of Britain’s most successful businesses and explains how they could be relevant to your business. A useful read for anyone seeking ideas to improve the way it manages a business.
  URL: /assets/ideas4busman.pdf
  URN: 04/810

- **Best companies: best practice**
  A look at some of the forward-thinking practices used by companies featured in *The Sunday Times 100 Best Companies to Work for survey*.
  URL: /assets/bcbp.pdf
  URN: 04/813

www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice
• **Inspirational leadership**
  How do you motivate people? What kind of leadership do people respond to? This brochure looks at some examples of best practice.
  URL: /assets/leadership.pdf
  URN: 04/1085

• **Accountancy services – a guide to best practice**
  This guide is for small and medium-sized companies who need accountancy services, not just tax and year-end accounts, but advice on finance and other business issues.
  URL: /assets/accountancy.pdf
  URN: 04/1909

• **E-business planner**
  This guide is designed to help your business plan and execute a complete e-business strategy. It takes you from assessing your needs and setting objectives, through to selecting technologies and creating an implementation plan.
  URL: /assets/planner.pdf
  URN: 04/672
Sales & marketing publications

How do you find new markets and customers, retain existing customers and market your business more effectively? Read these publications and find out.

• **E-marketing**
  A look at how e-mail, websites and other technologies are giving businesses better and more flexible ways to market their goods and services to customers. It explains the benefits of e-marketing, what the options are, and how to go about it.
  URL: /assets/marketing.pdf
  URN: 04/670

• **Building an e-commerce website**
  E-commerce is about using the internet to buy and sell goods and services online. This brochure shows you how you can use the internet to sell more. Find out whether an e-commerce website is right for your business, what options are available and how to build one.
  URL: /assets/building.pdf
  URN: 04/926

www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice
• **Understanding your customers**

By looking at the experience of one company, this brochure shows how you can gather, interpret and use information about your customers to improve customer service and market your business more effectively.

URL: /assets/uyc.pdf
URN: 04/1724
Operations publications

Get your business working more efficiently. From quality management through to logistics and purchasing, these publications will put you on the right track.

- **Quality management**
  This brochure discusses proven quality management tools and techniques that could improve your business’s performance. It offers practical, introductory guidance on the steps involved in quality management, and would be helpful to any business wanting to improve the way it works.
  URL: /assets/quality.pdf
  URN: 04/815

- **Technology, customers and suppliers: the benefits of using technology in your supply chain**
  This brochure covers business processes from product development to final delivery. It advises on how to improve each process by closer collaboration with supply chain partners. Find out how to strengthen your position in the supply chain.
  URL: /assets/technology.pdf
  URN: 04/816

www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice
• Partnering and your business
This brochure explains how partnering can benefit your business. The concept of partnering is simple: customers, suppliers and competitors can achieve more by co-operating rather than being adversorial. Find out how to create and maintain a best practice approach to partnering.
URL: /assets/partnering.pdf
URN: 04/812

• QCD: measuring manufacturing performance
This brochure explains how using seven key performance measures under the umbrella of Quality, Cost and Delivery (QCD) can increase the efficiency and productivity of a business. These measures can be applied to most sectors.
URL: /assets/qcd.pdf
URN: 04/814
People publications

How do you manage your greatest asset? The publications in this section offer guidance on recruiting and retaining a skilled, diverse and committed workforce.

• Maximising potential: High Performance Workplaces
  High Performance Workplaces encourage best practice methods of working in human resources, work organisation and employee relations. This short booklet looks at how businesses can benefit by adopting the key characteristics of a High Performance Workplace.
  URL: /assets/hpw.pdf
  URN: 04/808

• Flexible working in practice
  This booklet brings together fifty enlightened UK organisations, both large and small, from across a wide range of sectors that have enjoyed real business benefits as a result of their modern approach to work-life balance. Pick up some helpful hints on which flexible working policies might work for your business.
  URL: /assets/flexible.pdf
  URN: 04/806

www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice
• The business case for diversity and equality
  A leaflet explaining how businesses can benefit by building a workplace that reflects the community around them. Read real life examples of other UK businesses that have successfully broadened their workforces.
  URL: /assets/bcdiv.pdf
  URN: 04/804

• Building your business’s skills and capabilities
  A look at how businesses can improve by identifying where they need to invest in skills. It also includes case studies that show how other businesses have filled their skill gaps effectively.
  URL: /assets/bsc.pdf
  URN: 04/802

• Employee partnerships in practice
  This publication contains examples of businesses that have promoted good communication internally, so that employees know and understand the business’s objectives and can contribute to important developments. Find out how partnership can help you to create a happier and more productive workforce.
  URL: /assets/employee.pdf
  URN: 04/811

• Work-life balance and flexible working – the business case
  This brochure explains the business benefits of work-life balance initiatives and advice on how to go about introducing them.
  URL: /assets/wlb.pdf
  URN: 04/2012

Publications Orderline: 0870 150 2500
Communications & IT publications

Better communication can transform your relationship with customers and suppliers. Find out which tools you can use and how they could benefit you.

• Mobile working
  New technologies are making it easy to access information and work regardless of location. This brochure explains the benefits of mobile working, the most common mobile technologies and their costs, and gives you help on how to introduce mobile working into your business.
  URL: /assets/mobileworking.pdf
  URN: 04/759

• Internet and e-mail
  The internet is the most significant business development of the last few years, while e-mail has revolutionised personal and business communications. This guide looks at best practice in e-mail and internet use and explains how you could get more out of your existing set-up.
  URL: /assets/intweb.pdf
  URN: 04/1127
• **An introduction to e-business**
This introductory guide explains the benefits of using technology in all areas of your business, from the internet and e-mail to extranets and mobile communications. See how other businesses have used technology effectively and find out how it could work for your business.
URL: /assets/intro.pdf
URN: 04/671

• **Broadband**
Broadband offers fast, always-on access to the internet. Find out how it works, the costs involved, and the options for using it to transform your business.
URL: /assets/broadband.pdf
URN: 04/644

• **Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)**
VoIP lets you make phone calls using a computer network. Find out how it can make your business more productive and cut your phone bill.
URL: /assets/voip.pdf
URN: 04/1855

• **Wireless**
A brochure looking at the benefits of wireless working. Read how your business could benefit from it, and how other UK businesses are capitalising on wireless technology.
URL: /assets/wireless.pdf
URN: 04/651

Publications Orderline: 0870 150 2500
Information Security publications

• Information security: Hard Facts
A booklet looking at the importance of information security, the potential risks to information, preventative measures you can take, and how to deal with security breaches should they occur.
URL: /assets/hardfacts.pdf
URN: 04/619

• Information security: A business guide to using the internet
Using the internet brings great benefit to your business but its openness makes it vulnerable to security threats. This guide covers the five steps you can take to protect your business.
URL: /assets/isbusgde.pdf
URN: 04/624

• Information security: A business manager’s guide
This guide looks at what information security is, why it’s important and how to implement information security solutions. It includes guidance on developing a security policy, security roles and responsibilities and risk management.
URL: /assets/isbusman.pdf
URN: 04/623

• Information security: Protecting your business assets
A guide for those responsible for initiating, implementing or maintaining information security. It covers the issues surrounding a business’s vulnerability to the loss and/or damage of its information.
URL: /assets/ispyba.pdf
URN: 04/626

www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice
• **BS 7799 and the Data Protection Act**
  This guide explains how BS 7799 can help you meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act.
  URL: /assets/dpa.pdf
  URN: 04/621

• **Guide to the Electronic Communications Act 2000**
  A look at the importance of secure electronic trading and an overview of the Electronic Communications Act.
  URL: /assets/eca.pdf
  URN: 04/622

• **Guide to the UK ISO/IEC 17799 users’ group**
  ISO/IEC 17799 is the international standard for information security management. The User’s Group looks at the uptake of the standards.
  URL: /assets/isoiec.pdf
  URN: 04/620
Factsheets at
www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice

MANAGEMENT FACTSHEETS:

E-collaboration
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/ecollaboration.pdf

Technology and the law
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/elaw.pdf

Online banking
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/banking.pdf

Electronic payments
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/epayments.pdf

Integrating back office and online systems
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/ibo.pdf

Corporate Social Responsibility
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/csr.pdf

OPERATIONS FACTSHEETS:

Quality management toolkit: 5 steps to improving your business
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/qintro.pdf

Balanced scorecard
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/balance.pdf

Six sigma
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/6sigma.pdf

ISO 9000
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/iso9000.pdf

The Excellence Model
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/em.pdf

Integrated business systems
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/ibs.pdf

Data storage
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/data.pdf

Relational databases
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/relational.pdf

www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice
Intranets
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/intranets.pdf

Contact Management Software
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/cms.pdf

E-collaboration
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/ecollaboration.pdf

Just-in-time working
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/jit.pdf

Electronic Data Interchange
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/edi.pdf

Outsourcing
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/outsourcing.pdf

Electronic outsourcing
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/eoutsourcing.pdf

Online auctions and trading hubs
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/auctionshubs.pdf

Electronic payments
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/epayments.pdf

Integrating back office and online systems
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/ibo.pdf
SALES AND MARKETING FACTSHEETS:

Search engine optimisation
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/seo.pdf

Exporting
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/exporting.pdf

Electronic Data Interchange
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/edi.pdf

Extranets
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/extranets.pdf

Contact Management Software
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/cms.pdf

PEOPLE FACTSHEETS:

Virtual teamworking
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/vt.pdf

Intranets
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/intranets.pdf

Technology and training
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/techandtrain.pdf

COMMUNICATIONS & IT FACTSHEETS:

Search engine optimisation
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/seo.pdf

Networking
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/networking.pdf

Bluetooth
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/bluetooth.pdf

Personal Digital Assistants
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/pda.pdf
Smartphones
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/smartphones.pdf

WiFi
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/wifi.pdf

3G
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/3g.pdf

Open Source Software
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/oss.pdf

Web services
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/webservices.pdf

Electronic outsourcing
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/eoutsourcing.pdf

Integrating back office and online systems
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/ibo.pdf

Integrated business systems
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/ibs.pdf

Video conferencing
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/videoconferencing.pdf

Extranets
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/extranets.pdf

Computer Telephone Integration
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/cti.pdf

Virtual teamworking
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/vt.pdf

Intranets
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/assets/intranets.pdf

A WIDE RANGE OF FACTSHEETS ABOUT INFORMATION SECURITY:
http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/technology/security.htm
Further help and advice

**WHAT IS BEST PRACTICE?**

*Achieving best practice in your business* is a key theme within DTI’s approach to business support, providing ideas and insights into how to improve performance across your business. By showing what works in other businesses, we can help you see which approaches can help you, and then support you in implementation.

To find out more about the concept of best practice, read our brochure *Achieving best practice in your business - An Introduction*  
URL: [assets/bestpractice.pdf](/assets/bestpractice.pdf)  
URN: 04/1293

**SUPPORT TO IMPLEMENT BEST BUSINESS PRACTICE**

To get help bringing best practice to your business, contact Business Link – the national business advice service. Backed by the DTI, Business Link is an easy-to-use business support and information service, which can put you in touch with one of its network of experienced business advisors.

- Visit the Business Link website at [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)
- Call Business Link on 0845 600 9 006.

**ACHEIVING BEST PRACTICE IN YOUR BUSINESS**

To access free information and publications on best practice:

- visit our web presence at [www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice](http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice)
- call the DTI Publications Orderline on 0870 150 2500 or visit [www.dti.gov.uk/publications](http://www.dti.gov.uk/publications).

You can download all our publications directly from the website as PDFs (or as text versions for screenreaders), and find a wide range of other information that’s free and easy to access:

- **Real life business examples.** Covering businesses of all sizes, types and locations, these examples show how real businesses have used best practice to improve their performance. They are on our website in PDF format for reading online or downloading and printing quickly and easily.

- **Online tools.** These include an E-business planner, a Broadband checker, an Epayments tool and a Benchmarking tool, all of which will help you get feedback tailored to your business. You can use them to assess your business’s needs, find solutions and plan implementation.
GENERAL BUSINESS ADVICE
You can also get a range of general business advice from the following organisations:

England
• Call Business Link on 0845 600 9 006
• Visit the website at www.businesslink.gov.uk

Scotland
• Call Business Gateway on 0845 609 6611
• Visit the website at www.bgateway.com

Wales
• Call Business Eye/Llygad Busnes on 08457 96 97 98
• Visit the website at www.businesseye.org.uk

Northern Ireland
• Call Invest Northern Ireland on 028 9023 9090
• Visit the website at www.investni.com