

## **Women & technology – why is that NEWS?**

Despite the surge in social media and social networking sites, the MBA project research conducted by Bradford University School of Management, MBA student Nupur Chauhan, for Bradford Chamber's Network for Enterprising Women's Success (NEWS), revealed that the district's women recognise the time-saving benefits of online communication but still prefer traditional routes to training and networking.

The study concluded that while the district's business women are comfortable with social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter, a small percentage would choose online learning, podcasts or webinars over face to face instruction in a small group. Social interaction, immediate human interface and the discipline of turning up for appointments were cited as essential to managing a successful business.

NEWS Chairwoman Susan Clark, a partner at Bradford-based Last Cawthra Feather, said the group commissioned the survey to find out about women's preferences for training and networking to allow NEWS to help fulfil a gap in the market for provision.

"NEWS is very much about facilitating effective business management for busy working women – some of whom may be juggling a career with family commitments," Susan explained.

"The research has provided a fascinating and invaluable insight into the psyche of our local business women, who have clearly indicated that given a choice, women want to use social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook and other business forums but they are not ready to jettison the opportunity to meet up with other business people.

As most business people would concur, while social networking sites can extend the range of your contacts, there is a quality to human interaction which cannot be replaced by avatars and e-personas. The NEWS committee will use the research to formulate the basis of our 2011 networking and training programmes that will directly reflect the needs and wishes collated through our latest survey."

The NEWS network hosts a range of networking opportunities for women in business, management and enterprise. For those women who haven't yet taken the plunge into online communities, NEWS also holds regular seminars explaining how to use LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and other sites to benefit your business or career. See [www.bradfordnews.org.uk](http://www.bradfordnews.org.uk) for information.