



**The Quoted
Companies Alliance**

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David Blackwell, *Financial Times*
Farewell to John Pierce

The great and the good of the small cap world gathered on Tuesday to bid a fond farewell to John Pierce, who over the past 10 years has steered the Quoted Companies Alliance from obscurity to a position of influence.

His greatest achievement has been the establishment of a series of technical committees that bring their expertise to bear on issues ranging from corporate governance to tax and compliance with Aim website requirements. Their advice is available in handy pamphlets that all companies thinking of going public should study.

His replacement is Tim Ward, 53, who was involved in the launch of Aim when he was working at the LSE in 1995, and was for three years finance director of FTSE. He sees the organisation as an insurance policy against the slings and arrows fired by the European Union, the government and regulators. "The FTSE 350 can look after itself – companies below that level cannot," he says.

There is plenty on his plate, not least the expected change of the UK government and the departure of Charlie McCreevy as EU Commissioner for the internal market and services. But his biggest challenge will be increasing the membership, which has shrunk during the recession.

It is a problem that appears almost insurmountable for such bodies – those who benefit do not have to be a member to enjoy the power of the organisation fighting on their behalf.