



CAFE CULTURE: Tom Acland (by the van) with Jeff Peters, Cafe2U franchisee in Belfast Harbour. The group is aiming to expand through Europe.

Growing Cafe2U is enjoying all the breaks

Ian Briggs

THE popularity of office breaks have helped mobile coffee supplier Cafe2U beat expectations and formulate plans to launch operations in Europe.

Cafe2U has opened 26 franchises across the UK, with nine more expected to have been launched by the end of this year.

Tom Acland, the Leeds Metropolitan University graduate who established Cafe2U in the UK in 2005, said the business was performing ahead of expectations and would be profitable during

this financial year, 12 months ahead of schedule.

The managing director said a further 35 franchises are planned to be launched, including one in Dublin and three in Europe by 2009.

Cafe2U, based at the Thorpe Park business park in Leeds, offers office workers the chance to take a break by wandering outside and purchasing a drink from one of its specially equipped vans which offer coffee, food and other drinks.

Mr Acland said franchisees paid around £12,000 to set up and could earn around £28,000 a year on turnover of £75,000.

Mr Acland said: "The Cafe2U team have all worked hard to get to this exciting stage, and we will keep on working even harder to ensure current franchisees continue to grow their businesses alongside the many new franchisees that will join the network."

He said there were no plans to sell the business at this stage.

"The business is something that the directors and management are looking to continue to run and fulfil its potential. It's a big market and it's a long way from being a saturated market.

"We never doubted that it would be successful and that

there's a market place for it but to be having 35 franchises by Christmas is over our forecasts."

Mr Acland brought the Cafe2U model across to the UK after becoming interested in the Australian firm when he worked Down Under.

He set up the business with financial backing from Cafe2U in Australia.

Meanwhile, Ian Holmes, a Cafe2U franchisee who operates in Leeds, has been recognised for the quality of his products and service by the Beverage Service Association. Mr Holmes was awarded a Bev-E award.