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LABJ Poll

Do you trust Jim Cramer, Suze Orman or other TV personalities with financial advice or market tips?

- Generally, no. They're entertainers, mostly.
- , yes. They're at the top of their profession and they know what they're talking about.

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Planting British Flag in L.A.

BritWeek event will out influence of our English cousins.

By CHARLES PROCTOR

LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL STAFF

A few years ago, Bob Peirce, the British consul general in Los Angeles, stood in front of a classroom at USC and asked them to name British brands and businesses in Southern California. They couldn't name any.

Peirce was mildly miffed, but not surprised.

"I had been struck ever since coming here in 2005 by the fact that here British people are the largest investors in California, with British brands all over the place, but nobody seems to know that," he said.

Enter BritWeek, a non-profit Peirce founded in 2007 that aims to showcase the local presence of British companies. The non-profit will kick off an annual series of events – also called "BritWeek" – on April 21 with a gala dinner headlined by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Also on the agenda: a celebrity soccer tournament at Carson's Home Depot Center, receptions for luminaries in the film and music industries, and an exhibition of famous British retail brands such as Jimmy Choo. There also will be dart tournaments at several bars, and the food at local British-owned restaurants or establishments with British chefs will be highlighted.

BritWeek was born when Nigel Lythgoe, producer of reality TV shows including "American Idol" and "So You Think You Can Dance," approached Peirce about putting on an exhibition to spotlight Brits in the entertainment industry. Peirce liked the idea but decided to expand it to the general business community.

"It just kind of snowballed from there," he said.

"I honestly think we've got a very powerful message here, which is that Brits are very deeply invested in Los Angeles, and we're here for the long-term even in an economic downturn."

WEEKLY EDITION

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