



# IT'S ALL IN THE MIND

## *Transforming the way we do business*

**A** simple method of identifying potential new clients is radically improving the business fortunes of BNI members in parts of the UK where its adoption has transformed the way in which they promote their services to chapter colleagues.

The relatively new technique of 'mind mapping', devised by business psychologist Tony Buzan, has been adapted and

developed by BNI Executive Director Terry Hamill whose introduction of the concept to chapters in Merseyside and Scotland has produced some dramatic results, including:

- Over £100,000 worth of unexpected business in the past two months for a 'quietly spoken' Liverpool electrical contractor who had set himself a lesser target for the entire year.
- A prestigious £10,000 contract with Everton Football Club for a kitchen catering company, whose boss received the

referral just hours after visiting another local chapter...

- A £4 million contract for a former Liverpool noodle bar proprietor to manufacture and supply ASDA stores nationwide with a unique range of sushi products.

The potential of Mind Mapping techniques for focusing members on the strategic direction of their business and identifying their priority referral needs has been acknowledged by other BNI Regional Directors who are already introducing the concept at cross-chapter training workshops in their own regions, and hundreds of thousands of pounds of potential business is being identified at individual workshop sessions.

In its simplest guise, the BNI adapted version of Mind Mapping has been developed to help members describe the specific companies and people to whom they want to be personally introduced, and to demonstrate how many of those contacts are already known to their colleagues.

"It has worked for me in a quite dramatic fashion," said Phil Brumfitt, boss of Birkenhead-based catering equipment company, Windsor Cater-

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## 10 share £1.5m referral

**N**o less than ten members of two central London chapters have shared a £1.5 million contract to refurbish a prestigious office development next to Buckingham Palace, prior to helping re-locate a major investment company.

What is certainly one of the most widely-shared referrals in BNI's UK history began when Clive Deen, a member of Victoria Chapter and a partner in Oliver Jordan (interior builders and designers), was asked by a chapter colleague to talk to leading investment house, Caledonia Investments.



• *Sharing in the 'big deal' are Holborn members (from left) Warren Kempt, Dan Watkins, Alan Clarke, Chris Rumble and Paul Edelston.*

"Caledonia wanted to relocate its headquarters to premises in Buckingham Gate, and we were delighted to be awarded the contract to carry out exten-

sive internal alterations and refurbishments, and then organise the transfer of their operations to the new address," said Clive.

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• A BNI endorsement from happy Birkenhead caterer Phil Brumfitt.

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ing. There's no doubt that if you are specific in telling colleagues who you want to reach, they will help you get there.

"A few weeks ago I stood in as a substitute for a friend at a neighbouring chapter – **Merseyside Beta** – and said I would love to get a contract with either Everton or Liverpool football clubs," Phil added. "Within 24 hours I'd been put in touch with the catering head at Everton and I've now been given a £10,000 contract."

So impressed is Phil with BNI that he's had his delivery van signpainted in large lettering to read: "BNI gives me a buzz. What could you gain?" along with the website address of his Merseyside **Indigo Chapter**.

"I've even fitted a flashing red light to my BNI badge which I wear on business. Inevitably people ask me why, so I tell them that I'm one of BNI's shining lights! I'm proud to highlight what BNI has done for us – generating £75,000 worth of extra business within six months of my joining," he added.

Meanwhile, being more specific about the customers you want has paid even bigger dividends for Crosby electrical contractor John Goodwin, whose 30-year-old family business has seen its size and profits grow significantly since he joined Merseyside's **Lima Chapter**.

"The local work we particularly wanted has just flowed in through my chapter colleagues and in the past two months we've been given contracts worth well over £100,000."

John said that by focusing on 'named' potential customers, his chapter colleagues had been able to find him the ideal personal referrals.

"The other week I said I was really keen to establish contact with the contracts and maintenance division of Liverpool University, since it owns so much property in the city.

"A colleague said he knew the right person, and gave me a referral to the appropriate manager with whom we are now discussing considerable work."

Terry Hamill told *SuccessNet*: "It's all about concentrating purely on the customers you want to gain. The trouble is most of us are so entrenched in our businesses, that we've lost sight of what is important and what isn't.

"Having heard so many wasted 60-second infomercials at breakfast meetings, I felt mind-mapping could help members focus on the really important issues."

## 10 members share £1.5m referral

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"I'm sure one of the reasons our bid was successful was simply that our offices are opposite Caledonia's old offices, so they knew communication would be easy."

Having won the business, Clive recognised that much of the work could best be carried out by fellow members of his own BNI chapter, so he duly handed referrals to Austin Posner (for curtains and blinds), Emma Baker of Bowman Cleaning Company and solicitor, David Lewis.

Meanwhile Project Manager, Paul Edelston, also from Oliver Jordan and a member of Holborn Chapter, also identified several of his chapter colleagues to supply goods and services for Caledonia's relocation.

Chris Rumble of Quadtronix pro-



• Also sharing the referral are Victoria members (from left) Clive Deen, Emma Baker, David Lewis and Austin Posner.

vided new photocopiers, Warren Kempt of Admiral installed the new telephone system and Dan Watkins from ProNsys supplied the support systems for communications and the transfer of existing data.

Alan Clarke of Sterling Hay Corporate Risks organised insurance facilities while Carol Couling of SRS Recruitment found a temporary assistant for Paul, which may result in a long-term appointment.

Clive added: "Caledonia's new offices comprised nearly 30,000 sq ft, over seven floors and it required a very sensitive refurbishment to create better accommodation without losing the building's character.

"The company used to be involved in shipping and had some beautiful model ships in glass cases together with some interesting artwork, and we have been able to relocate these to dramatic effect in the new premises," said Clive.

The project is due to be completed by September and has gone very smoothly. "We found it so much easier to put this project together, since most of our sub-contractors are BNI chapter colleagues – people we know and trust," said Paul.

• You can contact Paul or Clive on 020 7481 6825.

## 'Bertie' sweet-talks BNI

MEMBERS OF Leamington's Royal Spa Chapter are accustomed to seeing licquorice allsorts among the bacon and eggs at breakfast meetings, used by Chapter Director, Brian 'Bertie' Bassett as a visual aid to his memory hook "all sorts of solutions to all sorts of design problems."

But at a recent chapter meeting, Brian was able to dispense with the sweets and show off his latest real-life 'solution' – in the shape of a superbly restored and converted listed building, Leigh House at Hatton, near Warwick – which has won his architects' practice a prestigious Millennium Design Award.



# Drake welcomes BNI invasion

**M**ore than 400 years after he famously played bowls before taking the English fleet into the Channel to repel the Spanish Armada, Sir Francis Drake has returned to Plymouth Hoe to welcome a 21st century invasion of a different kind – by BNI.

Back in 1588, Sir Francis insisted on finishing his game before setting sail to head off the Spanish invasion threat, but there was no such concern as BNI stormed into his beloved West Country home, ready to mount a triple assault on West Country businesses.

Sir Francis, alias Brian Whip – whose exploits as a goodwill ambassador for Plymouth are almost as legendary as the great Elizabethan explorer he impersonates – joined core group members of the city's new Drake Chapter on the historic Hoe, formally to welcome BNI to the region.

During July, BNI's new westerly outpost, Devon and Cornwall Region, launches its first three chapters – led by **Brunel Chapter** in Torquay on the 18th, **Plymouth's Drake Chapter** on the 19th and **Isca Chapter** in Exeter on July 24th.



• *Sir Francis Drake welcomes members of Plymouth Drake Chapter.*

Executive Director Guy Griffiths said: "BNI's arrival in the West Country has been enthusiastically welcomed by the business community, reflected in the larger than normal core groups we have created prior to launching each of our first three chapters.

"We are being assisted by a strong wind of change which is fuelling the economic regeneration of cities like Plymouth and Exeter and this has made the region's businessmen and women far more focused on success.

"They know they cannot ignore the challenge to get out of bed early to promote their services, if it will give them the edge over their competitors."

Guy said the BNI promise – 'join us in doing business around the breakfast table, and we'll quickly help your profits grow' – was striking a chord with a broad spectrum of local businesspeople.

"All the signs are that BNI's invasion of the West Country will be welcomed very keenly by the business community."

## It's all action in Las Vegas

WESTERN RANCHES, an ex-Vietnam pilot, the Grand Canyon, fruit machines and sore feet are just some of the memories our membership drive winners brought back from their action-packed trip to America's liveliest hot-spot.

The six lucky winners and their partners (plus Oliver, aged four) recently returned from a fabulous four-day trip to Las Vegas, the coveted prize for sponsoring new members to BNI earlier this year.

David Jacobs (Barnet Chapter), Nicola Cairncross (Worthing), Martin Eldon (Stansted), Stephen Broomhall (Little Aston), James Dick (Chester) and Satwant Bansal (Sheffield) took in some fantastic sights, including a spectacular helicopter flight over the Grand Canyon.

"We were flown by an ex-Vietnam pilot," said James Dick, "which conjured up visions of 'Apocalypse Now!'"

"The scenery was out of this world and the whole trip was a fantastic experience. We must have walked



• *Our winners line-up for their flight over the Grand Canyon*

miles, but blisters were the last thing on our minds!"

Dick, an ex-chapter director and commercial finance adviser with ASC Finance for Business, found two new members for his Chester chapter. "I was amazed when I heard I'd won a place on the trip – I've never won anything before in my life."

Martin Eldon was equally surprised

and thought he wouldn't be able to make the trip. He and his wife, Linda, run a training company, Marlin Management Training, and had courses booked during the relevant dates.

"We also had our son Oliver to think about. He's only four and there was no-one to look after him but happily we were allowed to take him along," said Martin.

## Lawsons' Lore

BNI National Directors MARTIN & GILLIAN LAWSON write...

**S**canning through the pages of this *SuccessNet*, it is rewarding to note how far BNI has come in less than five years, to establish itself as the UK and Ireland's most successful business networking organisation.

Nearly 300 chapters, more than 6,000 members, almost nationwide chapter coverage and, most important of all, the generation of millions of pounds worth of additional business – such statistics tell only one story, an exceptionally relevant business idea that has been properly executed.

But, while chapter returns tell us that the majority of members are doing quite nicely, we continue to be aware of what is perhaps the single obstacle preventing many members who are doing 'reasonably well' from doing 'fantastically good business.'

It is, of course, that hoary old chestnut: the 60 second infomercial and, whatever chapter you belong to, you will instantly identify with the minority of weekly presentations which still fall woefully short of their target.

Too many members are still using their 60-second slot each week to tell us who they are and what they do. They view their chapter members as prospects who should be sold to, instead of as their unpaid sales force, who need to be trained.

Before any of us will refer a fellow member to an important contact of ours, we need to be confident that we will not be let down by that member, who may thus do irreparable damage to our reputation in the eyes of our contact.

We all therefore need to concentrate on ensuring that our fellow members understand: how we add value as well as what we do; where the business we need can be found as well as what we want; and they should be given the tools they need to unlock the doors behind which the business lies – appropriate conversation starters, key phrases to listen for; etc.

We also all need to become known by a good Memory Hook that will cause our fellow members to constantly think of us at all relevant opportunities, even when we are not there.

Do these things properly, and you won't have to sell yourself at all. Learn to do them properly by attending the presentational skills and related member training courses held throughout the year in most regions.




## 6,000 and we're still counting...

**B**NI's rapid expansion across Britain and Ireland passed another milestone a few weeks ago when its UK membership passed the 6,000-mark – with the opening of nearly 30 more chapters during the past three months.

National Director Martin Lawson said: "One of the most pleasing aspects of our growth – apart from its speed – has been its consistency, with the creation of around ten new chapters each month.

"With our imminent launch of the West Country's first chapters and our increasing coverage across much of Scotland and northern England, there

are very few UK regions left where we don't have any presence – and we expect BNI to be introduced to these areas in the near future.

"We expect to pass the 300-chapter landmark before the end of the summer."

Recent new chapter openings include:

**Birmingham Central, Burton-on-Trent, Causeway (N. Ireland), City of Derry, City Airport (London), Colne Valley (Essex), Dublin South, Ellesmere Port, Knutsford, Leeds Armouries (Tuesday), Lichfield, Luton, Merseyside Echo, Merseyside Lima, Merseyside Saturn, Merseyside Scorpio, Midhurst (Kent), Nottingham, Oldham, Original Links (St. Andrews, Fife), Sheffield (Tuesday), Sheffield (Thursday), South Cork, St. Albans, Stockport 3, Tamworth, Wakefield (Thursday) and Wood Green (North London).**

## Education, education, education; It's such fun!

JUST 18 MONTHS after it was added to the formal agenda of every chapter meeting, BNI's networking education slot has become one of the most popular items at breakfast meetings.

Not only has it resulted in what, for many chapters, is the most creative and entertaining part of their meetings, but there are clear indications that it has struck a chord with members who like to receive their business education in bite-sized pieces rather than through lengthy formal training courses.

National Director Gillian Lawson told *SuccessNet*: "While we make no secret of the fact that education and training is one of the key benefits of BNI membership, we all know that professional and trades people do not always take kindly to being told how they can run their businesses better.

"Consequently, while our programmed training courses are valued by some, others prefer simpler, less formal advice – which they now receive through the training element in chapter meetings.

"Most of the credit for its success goes to the enterprising manner in which many of the first educational co-ordinators have gone about preparing their material, to make it interesting for chapter colleagues."

One of the principal benefits of the programme is that education co-ordinators can delegate the task of filling the slot each week to different members in turn, who are consequently motivated to study topics that they might not otherwise have done.

"Many chapters benefit by having all attendees at training workshops take a turn at their chapter meetings in the following weeks, to teach their fellow members one new skill that they picked up at the workshop session," Gillian added.

She reminded leadership teams that in addition to the growing library of business marketing and networking literature available through the national office and regional directors, education co-ordinators were encouraged to develop their own in-chapter training resources.



## The bank that likes to say yes!

**T**he Royal Bank of Scotland, one of the UK's top-performing businesses, has forged a long-term relationship with BNI which it says has already generated millions of pounds worth of new business for RBS managers.

RBS has been working hand in hand with BNI since the first UK chapters opened more than four years ago and, with many of its local business and relationship managers already members of BNI groups throughout the UK, the success generated for both organisations has led to a unique nationwide partnership being struck.

"A significant number of chapters throughout the UK now have a Royal Bank manager filling the banking position and the reason for this is quite simple – it works for both parties," said RBS's Communications Manager – Business Banking, Colin Nichol.

"At the Royal Bank, adding value to our clients' business is a major part of our customer proposition and what better way to add value than to introduce them to BNI! In the true spirit of 'givers gain', there are benefits for the Bank and for BNI," he added.

RBS says that BNI works for its managers because:-

- Royal Bank relationship managers are based in the community instead of a business centre, and have a wide circle of contacts to bring to meetings.
- Its relationship managers are used to networking and are familiar with the power of the givers gain principle – 'If I give you business, you'll want to give me some business back'.
- They are hungry for business and BNI offers new contacts and customers!

Colin Nichol stressed that the partnership was not a one-way street.

"For BNI, the advantages are numerous, including having dependable



• Royal Bank Regional Business Banking Director Robert Grindrod (centre) flanked by BNI's national directors and two Royal Bank members.

members who are aware of the benefits of networking. This gives RBS members the ability to tap into their circle of contacts and clients, spreading the word about BNI and generating business for other BNI members.

He added: "It is this approach that has led to a unique relationship between RBS and BNI. Both parties now meet regularly to review progress and train members to generate even more business.

"When any new BNI chapters are being considered, the local RBS manager has usually volunteered himself (or herself) as the first point of contact, to ensure that the new chapter gets off the ground quickly and with the right quality of member right from the start.

"It's just one of many ideas put into place jointly by two organisations that have recognised the power of working together to achieve more."

The value of the RBS/BNI partnership was reaffirmed at the recent BNI Northern Conference in Manchester (sponsored by

RBS) when Regional Business Banking Director, Robert Grindrod, told delegates: "Our managers have completed millions of pounds in new business by joining their local BNI chapters.

"We see BNI as an important part of our forward strategy. It is cost-beneficial to us, since one good referral more than pays for the subscription, and we can use it as an added-value item for our customers, by inviting them to join the BNI group and build their business."

## Make the news

BNI is preparing to mount a sustained media publicity programme to reflect its status as one of the leading business institutions in Britain and Ireland

The aim over the next few months will be to ensure that BNI achieves a significant share of relevant business media coverage, reflecting its continuing growth and success.

The programme will be handled by WriteAngle Communications, as an adjunct to its writing and production of *SuccessNet* and one of its first tasks will be to forge regular contact with chapter directors to identify 'good news' media opportunities.

While not every suggestion will produce coverage, WriteAngle is keen to hear from individual members who feel they have a newsworthy BNI story, publicity for which will benefit their businesses as well as BNI.

If you want to help BNI to help you, give your ideas to Barbara Blume or Malcolm Grosvenor at WriteAngle on 020 8541 0600, fax them on 020 8546 1611 or e-mail them at [successnet@write-angle.co.uk](mailto:successnet@write-angle.co.uk)

## Eight more for the Black Badge Club

ANOTHER SIX of BNI's high flying members have joined the elite ranks of the Black Badge Club in recognition of their success in attracting new members (and visitors), and generating high levels of referrals in their chapters.

This quarter's top performers are: Richard Smith (of Tayside Chapter),

Clive Deen (London Victoria), Steve Naylor (Solihull Central), Jonathon Miller (Pembroke), Noel Farrelly (Little Aston, West Midlands), Damian Turner (Uddingston), Graham Murray (Kilmarnock Kappa) and Willie Hendry (Giffnock).

Our congratulations to each of them, and keep up the good work!



*Inviting visitors needs a highly organised approach... says Daman Segal (Chapter Director, Watford)*

"Every BNI chapter knows how important it is to attract visitors and enlist new members, yet it seems a lot of groups don't plan their visitors' days in a structured way. At Watford, we give every member at least three weeks' notice about a forthcoming visitors' day and ask them to think about who they will invite, encouraging them to talk to their would-be guests beforehand. Two weeks prior to the day we ask every member to telephone their invitees and, only when they have verbally indicated they would like to attend do we write our formal invitation.

"We also limit each member to inviting a maximum of ten guests, because we found in the past that when you ask everyone to invite 20 or 30, they go straight to the Yellow Pages and you end up with fewer guests and, very often, people that nobody knows. For our most recent visitors' day, we received 35 confirmations and 28 guests turned up, out of which six joined us. I think that is a good outcome to a structured and properly planned approach."

• Daman Segal is a partner with Action Graphics (tel: 0208 954 1813).

## What makes YOUR group special

IN THIS NEW regular column, we invite the views of individual chapter directors on what makes their chapter 'special'. Although each of BNI's UK and Irish chapters has its own individual character, there is only one optimum way of running a chapter – and that is the BNI way. In this column, directors will offer their ideas on best practice and indicate their solutions to the occasional problems that can arise...

*Make guests feel important, and follow up their visit, says Terry Calder (Chapter Director, Northwood).*

"If you want visitors to feel valued when they attend your chapter meeting, you have got to make them feel important – both by being friendly in welcoming them and enthusiastic in terms of how they are treated during their stay. You can't expect anyone to be keen to join, if they've been largely ignored after being specifically invited to your meeting. In order to ensure that every visitor is made to feel special, it is crucial not to invite more guests than your members can comfortably handle. We once made the mistake of hosting over 30 visitors at a single breakfast when there were only 20-odd members present – and the result was that few of our guests joined the chapter.

"The other key aspect to inviting visitors, is following up their visit with personal phone calls and even letters. We always make sure that every visitor is followed up, and the leadership team encourages all members of the chapter to do the same, because visitors represent potential business to each and every member – regardless of whether they join the group.

I always tell members that it doesn't matter if a visitor receives numerous follow-up calls from members, because it shows we are interested in them – and it gives members the opportunity to identify new business."

• Terry Calder is an engineer and partner with Carwrights Motor Engineers (tel: 0208 863 1689).

*Keep your members happy, says Neil Williamson (Chapter Director, Harrow)*

"No chapter likes to lose a long-standing member, especially when everyone has taken the time and effort to get to know him or her, and trusts their business abilities.

In Harrow Chapter, we believe that as well as focusing on new business, we need to invest time in building strong relationships with our members and their families, encouraging them to participate in a number of free chapter social events – such as bowling, go-karting or parties – throughout the year.

"By making BNI more family orientated, and showing husbands, wives and partners how we work, it becomes more acceptable when our members have to get out of bed at 5.30 in the morning to attend meetings.

Members also feel a stronger bond with their chapter and with each other, knowing that they and their families are valued. We are sure this philosophy works because in all my time with the chapter, we have lost only one member."

• Neil Williamson is managing director of the St James Security Group (tel: 0208 428 8991).

• If you are a chapter director with something to say, e-mail your views to us at:

successnet@write-angle.co.uk or fax us on 020 8546 1611.

## The value of substituting

WHEN GEORGINA Frank attended London's Hammersmith Chapter as a substitute last month, she was pleasantly surprised at the outcome – ending up with a valuable contract from the person for whom she was substituting!

Georgina has been a member of neighbouring Chelsea Chapter for just over six months and, as membership co-ordinator, is keen to promote the values of BNI's substitutes programme.

"I was asked to substitute for Kate Davies, owner of the Eco-Shop, and

when I received the brief to go along in her place, I noticed it said she was looking for someone with contacts in the horticultural, gardening and DIY press," said PR Consultant, Georgina.

She added: "I realised I could satisfy her requirements. After the meeting I sent her an e-mail and we agreed to meet. Barely a week later I had a contract from her. I'm sure the fact that we both belong to BNI helped secure the agreement so quickly."

• Contact Georgina on 020 7751 0005



• Georgina, third from left, at a recent Chelsea Chapter social event.



## He was born to be in BNI



• Sally and baby James

**I**f it's true what they say about babies being able to learn through the womb, then six-month-old James Latimer-Boyce is well on his way to becoming BNI's best ambassador!

James had attended more than 20 chapter meetings before he was even born, and now – after being properly introduced to everyone in the Wellingborough Chapter – he's been made an honorary member, making him BNI's youngest by a considerable margin!

James's mum, Sally Latimer-Boyce, discovered she was pregnant only a week after being appointed chapter director last year – having only planned to start a family six weeks earlier – but she was determined the pregnancy wouldn't prevent her from fulfilling her demanding new role.

"I had a fantastic pregnancy," she said. "I was determined not to give up any of the things I'd been used to doing. Running my own IT business and having to be on top form at 7am for the BNI meetings wasn't always easy, especially since there was no

chilli con carne – my pregnancy eating fetish – on the breakfast menu, but I enjoy our weekly chapter sessions so much, it was worth it. The biggest problem came later in my pregnancy when it was hard going, having to stand for most of the time."

"I applied for leave of absence from my Chapter membership committee, and, with the help and support of my mother and my husband David, I was back at the BNI breakfast table in March, just two months after James was born. My colleagues were very understanding," Sally added.

Eager to meet their new 'honorary' member in the flesh, Sally's colleagues invited her to bring James along to a chapter meeting as soon as she felt he could listen attentively, without interrupting.

Clearly, all those pre-birth referrals and 60-second presentations must have created a lasting impression since James made a faultless first attendance last month, listening attentively before concluding an impeccable performance by picking the winner of the door prize, tugging Gordon Bett's slip from the bunch of referrals like a BNI veteran.

"BNI is sometimes regarded as being male dominated," said Sally, "so perhaps this will inspire other female members to realise it is possible to be a mum-in-waiting – and then a nursing mother – as well as run a demanding business and lead a networking group all at the same time.

"I'm sure there are a lot of working mothers who tell themselves they couldn't possibly get along to BNI breakfasts at seven in the morning but, with a little advance planning and the understanding and support of chapter colleagues, it is perfectly feasible.

"I'm certainly glad I joined BNI and, while I'm the only female in my chapter, I am determined we will attract more women in the months to come."

• **You can contact Sally on 01933 229133**

## Victorious Glasgow Victoria

GLASGOW'S **Victoria Chapter** has lost its claim to being one of the few all-male BNI groups in Scotland thanks to two new members of the fairer sex who joined after we reported in the last *SuccessNet* that the chapter would welcome the female touch.

That article led to Lynne McGilvery, a management consultant, joining only a few weeks later.

"A friend in Scotland whose sister is a member of a BNI chapter in the south read the article. She mentioned it to her sister, who told me about BNI. I have high expectations, mainly because BNI members have high expectations of themselves," said Lynne.

"What impresses me most is the level of commitment to referrals. Other networking organisations I have attended just assume that referrals will happen automatically by putting business people together in a sociable setting, but the BNI philosophy recognises that members need to put in more effort to make it work."

Ironically, Lynne was pipped to becoming the chapter's first female by Alison Sinclair, who is Deputy Chief Executive with a local enterprise organisation called Govan Initiative. "She's a real asset to the team," said retiring Chapter



• **Victoria first – Alison Sinclair.**

Director Don Spence.

"We can't say that she joined because of the article, but I'm happy to think of it as a little bit of *SuccessNet* magic. Get a story published and look what happens. We are now hoping to recruit a lot more women" he added.

• **Contact Don Spence on 0141 332 4445**



# Around the Chapters



## Well versed in...

MEMBERS of South Cheshire Chapter responded enthusiastically to Chapter Director John Sims's request to deliver their 60-second 'commercial' in rhyme!

"I thought that everyone would give their presentations some extra thought and gain a better understanding of the business they were going to talk about," said John.

"In the event, members made a marvellous effort to be original. Their hard work was repaid by everyone listening very attentively."

One presentation stood head and shoulders above the rest; Fraser Stamps (above), of Powerline Graphics, decided to make his mark by 'rapping' his way through his 60-seconds.

Fraser's talents can be found online by visiting his website at [www.powerlinegraphics.co.uk](http://www.powerlinegraphics.co.uk)

## taking the mickey!

WE ALL KNOW what a lasting impression a good one-minute presentation can make – encouraging us to be creative and different...

Which is how Anthony Rigby, of Choice Hotels, came to be pictured (below) with his head framed by a makeshift TV set at a recent meeting of Loughborough Chapter when every member was asked to give the 60-second commercial on behalf of a colleague's business.

While individual impersonations produced the usual mirth, the most memorable was Anthony's presentation on behalf of Brian Beedy of Switherland Spring Water, whose permanent memory hook is 'As seen on TV'.

"I thought colleagues would remember the presentation if I delivered it from behind the TV screen," said Anthony.



# Cricket website bowls 'em over

**B**ritain's estimated 250,000 amateur cricketers have a BNI member to thank for being given their own highly praised website – described by the 'The Cricketer' magazine as 'a leading website for the game, providing players and supporters with a one-stop shop'.

Despite being 'the Englishman's game', cricket has trailed behind in terms of its promotion on the world wide web, nowhere more so than the hugely popular amateur game which, until **Corby Chapter** website designer Andrew Watson took matters into his own hands, was sadly neglected.

Andrew said: "There are just 400 professional cricketers in Britain, but more than 250,000 playing the game at amateur level in clubs the length and breadth of the country.

"My business colleagues and I started to look at developing a new website that could become the definitive source of information for amateur players and others interested in the game.

"It was only when I began talking about our idea to BNI colleagues, that I realised just what a gap there was in the market place.

"Everyone kept telling me it was a great idea and gave me so much sup-



port that we transformed what had been a small fun website into the major site it is today."

In fact [www.clikcricket.com](http://www.clikcricket.com) is one of cricket's top websites, visited by 100,000 people every month, containing news, results, tables and statistics about hundreds of amateur clubs.

"More than 10,000 amateur players are regular visitors to the site and it has become so successful that we are now in discussions with rugby and basketball authorities about doing the same thing for their sports," Andrew added.

"It seems strange that had it not been for networking with BNI, we might never have got this far."

When Andrew's company, Active Progression Ltd, is not designing websites for fun, it creates award-winning sites and provides Internet services for local and national companies, including a new website for the Corby Chapter!

• **Andrew Watson can be contacted on 01536 460011**

# Pedal power raises £300

SADDLE-SORE Linden Cole has raised over £300 for the British Heart Foundation, thanks to the combined generosity of members from four South Essex chapters.

**Chelmsford Chapter** member, Linden, who is also an Assistant Director in South Essex, recently pedalled the 57 miles from Clapham Common to Brighton, spurred on by members from Chelmsford, **Southend, Basildon and Brentwood chapters**. "It took me just over four hours to complete the course," said Linden.

"With more than 27,000 cyclists taking part, it was a bit congested at times and quite tiring, but I really appreciate the support I received from so many BNI members."

A glutton for punishment, Linden hopes to take part in a far tougher charity ride in November in aid of the Marie Curie organisation – this time across Vietnam!

However he needs to raise over £2,000 in sponsorship to register.

• **Call Linden on 01702 475350 or 07779 710252 if you wish to offer your support.**



## Kappa that for a night out!

WHEN YOU'RE driving hard for new members, where better to go than the local go-kart track!

Members of Kilmarnock Kappa Chapter certainly found it did the business when they visited the town's 'Garage' leisure complex last month on a combined team-building and recruitment exercise, supported by 20 members, visitors and substitutes.

Chapter Director Robert Morton

said: "The night was a huge success and our visitors have all since joined the Kappa group, while potential substitutes will feel much more at ease having got to know more about their colleague's businesses."

Last month alone, Kilmarnock Kappa signed up eight new members and the chapter is already 32 strong, less than a year after its launch.

For the record, Kappa's computer

genius, Neale Lawson of Compu-Data won the go-karting final, while in the ten-pin bowling stakes, Peter Herbert of Perm-A-Clad Roofline came out on top.

Anyone interested in being a part of Kilmarnock's success story – or joining the core group of the new Ayr Chapter, can contact Robert Morton on 07979 648221 or Graeme Murray (BNI Assistant Director) on 01563 550750/1.



## Resources pooled for direct action

THE BENEFIT of networking within BNI was recently promoted to hundreds of business entrepreneurs at the International Direct Marketing Fair (IDMF), held at Excel in London's Docklands.

The event saw representatives (pictured above) from five chapters in the South-East pooling skills and resources to promote BNI's strengths – as well as their own services – to a responsive business community.

Representing BNI chapters at the IDMF were Imperatec Ltd (with members in both **Godalming and Midhurst Chapters**), Virtuale (**Worthing Chapter**), and Codestorm plc., whose senior team belong to the **Horsham and Chichester chapters**.

Andy Robinson of Imperatec said: "It doesn't take a genius to work out the advantages of uniting with fellow BNI members to promote our collective knowledge and the value of BNI, especially when marketing costs have a tendency to leave a gaping hole in your budget.

"I believe that every time a BNI member gazes at fellow BNI members across the breakfast table, he or she should ask themselves: 'Am I really making the most of this golden opportunity to boost my business?' " he added.

If you'd like to know more about the BNI businesses which took the IDMF by storm, you should visit the following web sites: [www.SpeedWebMail.com](http://www.SpeedWebMail.com), [www.virtuale.com](http://www.virtuale.com), [www.DMWeek.net](http://www.DMWeek.net), and [www.imperatec.com](http://www.imperatec.com)

## BNI team to tackle Everest

**B**NI's only husband and wife team of chapter directors, Amanda and Paul Clarke, are preparing for one of the toughest challenges of their life – a 15-day sponsored trek to the Mount Everest Base Camp, some 18,000 feet above sea level.

Our dynamic duo – Paul is Chapter Director at **Knutsford**, Cheshire and Amanda is in the hot seat of nearby **Ellesmere Port Chapter** – aim to raise at least £10,000 for the charity 'Hope and Homes for Children' when they set off for Nepal in November.

The charity helps children worldwide whose lives have been devastated by war or disaster, and it already provides 123 small 'family' homes for over 1,200 children in ten different countries from Sierra Leone and Mozambique to Bosnia and the Ukraine.

Amanda and Paul, pictured right, will join up to 40 other fund-raisers – including BNI Regional Director for Wolverhampton and South Derbyshire, Martin Bailey.

The couple, in their early 30s, met in Gibraltar while on exercise with the Territorial Army. Both of them served in the Royal Logistics Corps for a number of years before BNI came into – and started to take over – their lives.

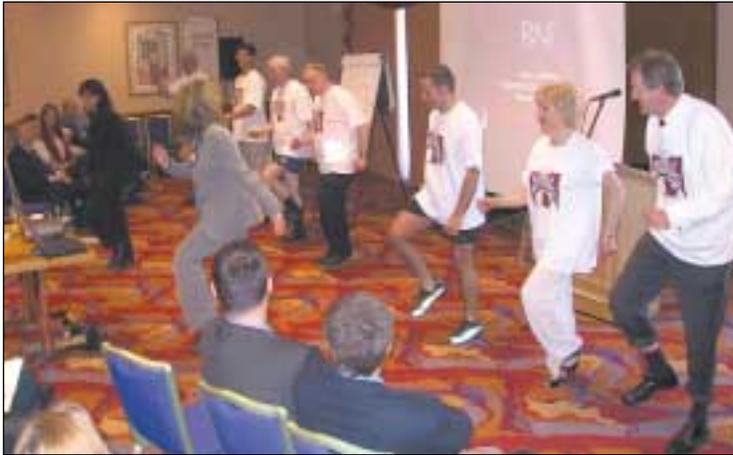
Paul, who is Managing Director of design and marketing company, Promote Corporate Communication,

based in Chester, said: "Obviously you need to be fairly fit to undertake a 20-day trek through tough terrain at high altitude, so I'm hoping our TA training will stand us in good stead. I'm sure it will be a tough assignment – but if we can raise at least £10,000 it will all be worth while."

Gordon Steer of organisers World Expeditions said: "This is definitely not a walk in the park. Participants will be walking for up to eight hours a day across glaciers, and torrential rivers, climbing steep ravines and dealing with temperatures as low as -15C."

**Readers willing to sponsor our intrepid duo can contact them on 01244 342133 or 401811, or get an update on their Everest trip by visiting their web site: [www.paulandamanda.co.uk](http://www.paulandamanda.co.uk)**





**DOING THE BNI BOP:** Directors show how team building can be fun.

## First regional conferences are a big hit

**Wow! Why didn't you tell us it was going to be this good!? Next time, we'll make sure the whole chapter comes.**

That reaction to the recent BNI Northern Members Conference, from **Knutsford Chapter** membership co-ordinator Jane Kenyon, summed up the huge enthusiasm generated by both the Northern and South-East events, together supported by some 600 delegates and both deemed overwhelming successes.

Both events featured a galaxy of top-line speakers, interspersed with breakaway training workshops and group discussions, but an equally valuable element was the opportunity for one-to-one networking between delegates.

Tony Coxhill, Executive Director for Cheshire and North Wales, and one of the northern event organisers told *SuccessNet*: "Most of the delegates had not attended a BNI conference before, and were taken aback by the energy and quality of the speakers. They were also clearly delighted to be able to network freely among so many other businesses, and I have no doubt many

new long-term relationships were forged during the day."

Meanwhile, in the unique ambience of Brands Hatch's new track-side conference centre, over 300 delegates from London and the Home Counties drew similar conclusions from their first regional gathering. Executive Director and Co-Organiser Robert French said: "When one considers that this regional event attracted more members than attended BNI's first national conference in London just four years ago, it's easy to see just how far BNI has come."

**The next regional conference takes place at the Royal Armouries in Leeds on Friday 27th July (from lunchtime onwards) when the 'BNI Team Yorkshire' expects up to 300 members to listen to award-winning keynote speakers, participate in training workshops and enjoy a waterfront barbecue.**

**There were a few tickets left (at £10 each) as *SuccessNet* went to press. Anyone interested should contact Executive Director Niri Patel on 01484 684041 for more details.**

## Networking in fast lane

SCOTTISH MEMBERS are being primed for life in the fast lane when they attend the first ever 'Members Conference and Fast Track Fun Day' to be held north of the border.

Titled 'Let BNI put your business in the fast lane', the Scottish member's event takes place at the Knockhill Racing Circuit, Fife on Friday 7th September, comprising three key elements:

- **Put Your Business in the Fast Lane:** three break-out sessions, each with two national speakers, covering topics such as 'High performance presentations' and 'Revving up your referrals'.

- **Want to be a racing driver?** Delegates will be invited to try their hand – under expert instructors – in 4x4 off road vehicles, rally car and MGF sessions on the circuit, before the afternoon's highlight: "The BNI Inter Region Grand Prix Go-Karting Race."

- **An evening awards ceremony** with presentations to the winners of various events during the day and regional networkers of the year.

Ron Hain, Scotland North's Regional Director, said: "Scottish directors feel the choice of venue is ideal in setting the scene for what should be a dynamic and fast moving conference programme."

Conference tickets will be available shortly through all Scottish chapters, and further details can be obtained from Ron Hain on 01577 861415.

## Big plans for a day in Dublin

PLANS ARE WELL advanced for the first Dublin region Members' Day, taking place at Gresham Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire on Thursday 4th October.

The afternoon event, which starts at 1pm, will be followed by the BNI Awards Dinner for Ireland North East Region, and end with a charity auction and dancing until the early hours.

Assistant Director Larry Shannon said: "We would love to see members from the other side of the Atlantic, who might be in Ireland at the time. It will provide an excellent chance to network as well as the opportunity to appreciate some great scenery."

Dun Laoghaire, 12 miles south of Dublin, boasts excellent shopping, restaurants, night-clubs and several golf courses. Accommodation is available at the Gresham and a golf outing and sight-seeing trip to North Wicklow (The Garden of Ireland) are just two of the extra attractions on offer.

Anyone wanting to attend the members' day and/or the awards dinner should contact Larry on +353 1 272 0058 or e-mail him at: [laurence@bni.com](mailto:laurence@bni.com)



## 50 new staff in eight weeks



• Julie Aitkenhead – growing fast

### Wet, Wet, Wet in Northants

MEMBERS OF **Meadows Chapter**, Chelmsford have made a big splash – and raised a cool £1,800 for their local hospice – by taking part in white water rafting in Northampton.

Jane Harbour, Corporate Fundraiser for Farleigh Hospice, introduced the whacky money-raising idea to her chapter colleagues who greeted it with great enthusiasm.

“They’ve always been very supportive of the hospice and ready to help. I thought rafting would be fun and it turned out to be a great team building exercise,” she said.

The BNI team comprised Neil Caton (Dunmow Electrical Contractors Ltd), Alan Doleman (FJF Builders), James Wheeler (TV and Video Engineers), Les Gray (Spectrum), Frank Oxberry (Complete Consulting) and Chapter Director, Richard Palmer (Classic Nomad Disco Music).

Meanwhile, Jane joined a Farleigh team that included Jody Chapman of Channel Four’s ‘Shipwreck’ team.

“The BNI team won,” said Jane, “but I won’t mention that they may have engaged in a little cheating. We had a great time. It was much better and far safer than we had expected.”

• You can contact Jane on 01245 358130.

### Quietly-spoken Julie Aitkenhead is not one to boast about her unprecedented success.

But she is more than happy to wax lyrical about the wonders of BNI – membership of which has transformed her business in barely two months.

Julie joined **Cheltenham Spa Chapter** at the end of April, hoping it would help her find new clients for her business. The Outsourcing Bureau, set up last August to provide secretarial, telemarketing and data capture services to small and medium-sized companies.

“When I arrived in BNI I had only a few significant clients and used the services of one other part-time secretary, but from my first chapter meeting the business just took off. Our rate of growth has been phenomenal, with some 70 per cent of new business coming through BNI referrals,” she said.

“I now have eight people working for me on a regular basis with another 31 freelance staff on my books, whose services I can tap into depending on our workload, and I am about to train another 42 people,” Julie added.

Julie’s core business services include ‘real-time dictation’ which,

she says, gives her clients a clear advantage in terms of professionalism and efficiency. “Typically, a busy executive will leave a client meeting, call us and dictate his contact report or client correspondence while he is driving.

“Our staff can type at speeds of up to 95 words a minute so, by the time he gets back to his office, we’ll either have the finished documents waiting in his e-mail inbox for approval, or delivered to his client often within the hour.”

Now, as a direct result of her BNI membership, Julie’s company is about to expand into remote call-answering services. “We already have ten clients wanting us to provide telephone answering services and at least half of these have come through my chapter colleagues,” she said.

“Sometimes I can’t believe how far we’ve come in so little time thanks to BNI. Without doubt, joining BNI is the best thing I have done for my business – and I’ve only been part of the organisation for a few weeks!”

• BNI members interested in using Julie’s outsourcing services can contact her on 01242 255633 or by e-mail at: [julie@outsourcingbureau.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:julie@outsourcingbureau.fsnet.co.uk)

## Who you gonna call? Stress-Busters!



• Stress-busters Kevin and Patricia.

FANCY A RELAXING weekend in bonnie Scotland, where all you have to think about is getting rid of the pressures and stresses of life that have built up over the past months? And all for under £100!

Well here’s your chance to take advantage of an exciting offer – the result of a joint venture between two members of Glasgow’s **Strathkelvin Chapter**, stress consultant Patricia Elliott and Kevin Roach, Manager of the Moodiesburn Hotel, where a series of unique stress-busting weekends is about to start aimed primarily at BNI members throughout the UK.

Having already successfully tested her anti-stress training on many members of her own chapter, Patricia is now offering other BNI members the chance to discover techniques for negating stress through learning forums and practical therapy courses which comprise a major part of the programme for the monthly weekend sessions.

For a discounted £89 per person, BNI members can enjoy full board from dinner on Friday night through to Sunday lunch, a dinner dance on Saturday night, access to leisure facilities including indoor heated swimming pool and all workshops.

• Kevin can be contacted on 01236 873172.

# Why it's worth going that last ten metres!

**N**inety per cent of your financial reward comes from the last ten per cent of your effort – while I am not sure to whom that old-established statement should be attributed, I do know that, as a farmer, it used to annoy me intensely! It was all an effort, and I could not see the logic behind the saying.

However, in all my subsequent business and personal endeavours it has held true, and it is especially applicable to BNI members. Some members really get it, some nearly do.

One of the best things BNI has done is to measure the results achieved by its chapters. After all, most of the members measure results in their businesses too.

While the practice can be uncomfortable – whether in one's own business or in your BNI chapter, it can also be rewarding, even exhilarating. In both cases, however, no improvements can be effected until measurements are made.

Most good chapters produce monthly league tables of individual member performance.

Being at the bottom of a league table in a three-year-old chapter of 40 members, would however automatically put an individual in the top seven or eight places of a newer chapter.

So, there is no shame being at the foot of the league table, depending on the size, stability and success of your chapter. What matters is that league tables have created a consistent focus which has produced strong results.

I recently introduced league tables into BNI's first Malaysia chapters, which caused some pain! Yes, measuring can be painful; the truth becomes public property, albeit giving us reliable statistics to work from.

The last ten per cent of effort separates those members getting HUGE business from those getting "quite a bit" within the same trades. Preparation is often at fault. I am constantly amazed when I put the question to the 10-minute speaker: "Which company are you currently trying to get on your order books?" Incredibly, nine out of ten members don't even have a 'target' client of any sort!

*He is one of BNI's most experienced Executive Directors in the UK, and recently was awarded one of the organisation's top accolades when he received the UK and Ireland Director of the Year award. Yet four and a half years ago, ROBERT FRENCH had not heard of BNI.*

*Now, together with his business partner Andrew Hall, and a team of Area Directors and Assistant Directors, Robert is responsible for more than 80 chapters in the UK, and he and Andrew have also introduced the BNI concept into Malaysia.*

*In this article, Robert explains why he has become an ardent supporter of an old business philosophy that he once rejected ...*

If *you* don't know who you want as a customer, how can any of your colleagues refer you to anyone worthwhile?

This brings me to the area where the real gold lies for BNI members. I offer this as the amazingly simple 'one-shot' answer to getting into Mega Business: Simply meet on a one-to-one basis.

I see red hot chapters, hot chapters and not-so-hot chapters. All the best chapters INVEST time in their fellow members. This is through planned one-to-one meetings, and also through planned social functions.

These members are doing the last ten per cent. They know each others businesses thoroughly, and do one-to-ones regularly, re-visiting the same members over and over again, as a solid time investment.

As a consequence of this, some members in my Kent region have developed joint ventures, requiring a high degree of mutual confidence. Such business partnerships all needs constant work and attention – which brings me back to the importance of open, honest one-to-one sessions. If this is not happening in your chapter, YOU can change that! One terrier in a group of 30 can get the ball rolling. Three members doing it can reach 30 per cent of the chapter in one week. So get going!

The last three per cent of your effort takes no more time at all, because it is all about attitude. Good attitude takes no more time than bad attitude, and this is particularly so in the area of preparation. Luck has been defined as the moment when opportunity meets preparation. The best members have well thought out 60-second commercials, which they prepared in advance rather than risk winging it.

Similarly, they prepare the texts of their 'testimonials', some even writing them out on letterhead and handing these around.

Some members completely lose the value of their ten-minute presentations just because they are poorly prepared. In my view, apart from being absent from your chapter meetings, this is the single most damaging thing a member can do.

Will they be poorly prepared in front of the big referral? I am afraid so!

But, the real prize to be won by "doing the last ten per cent" as a BNI member is the very positive effect it will have on your attitude towards how you handle your own business.

The weekly focus and attention to detail developed by good BNI members, directly impacts upon their broader business vision and management.

I hear this constantly, and would like to recognise Peter Gardiner, the accountant in **Colchester Chapter**, Barry Williams our IFA at Canterbury, Peter Drummond the insurance expert (also at Canterbury), and recently, Aryl Au, the IFA in our **KL Chapter** in Malaysia for sharing their observations on this topic.

So, will you go that last ten metres, to make the difference between being just okay with BNI, or being very successful?

If you have the resolve, the enthusiasm, but above all, the commitment to succeed, then you will do. And, if you succeed through BNI, you will certainly be successful in your business. Think about it – and the rewards awaiting you.



## A tasty carnival breakfast

**E**ver fancied yourself as a sausage or possibly even a mushroom? Well now's your chance to look tasty on a nicely prepared BNI float!

Southend Chapter Director, Susan Marks who saw the potential to publicise BNI, along with the chance for some networking fun, dreamt up the idea of a BNI float for the town's annual Carnival.

Having had their float donated by fellow member Barry Farr, of B J

Farr, Courier and Delivery Service, the key decision was to choose an eye-catching theme for their Carnival presence.

"Since we're known for being early starters, the breakfast theme seemed most appropriate," said Susan, "and it should raise a few laughs.

"It's a good opportunity for members to promote their own company as well as BNI, and for no more than the cost of a banner displaying their name."

The Chapter's 'human' eggs, bacon and sausages already include a creative decorator, electrician, an events management consultant, a writing and marketing expert, mortgage advisor, a florist and a mould toolmaker – each of whom has volunteered their services for the unusual breakfast spread.

• If you want a place on the plate on Saturday 18th August and your profession is not already represented, contact Susan on: 01268 569400 or 07798 687439 or e-mail Susan@premierwillwriting.co.uk

## Ooops, sorry Mark!

SHAME on us! We don't often get it wrong, but in the last issue of SuccessNet we wrongly welcomed hair stylist Gill Carrie (from Dunfermline Chapter) as Scotland's first BNI member to be appointed to the International Board of Advisers.

In fact Gill's was the second such appointment, following the election of Mark Thirgood as the first Scottish member to the International Board some six months earlier.

Mark, who is the new Chapter Director of Edinburgh West capped a remarkable 12 months of membership last year when he also won the BNI Scotland South and East Notable Networker of the Year 2000 Award.

So, our apologies to Mark and our best wishes to both he and Gill in their international duties.

## Let your chapter do the talking

**T**HERE'S A LOT to be said for being in the right place at the right time, as Stewart Wilson, a member of Glasgow's Giffnock Chapter, discovered recently as he was leaving a routine breakfast meeting.

On the way out of the hotel where his chapter meets, Stewart overheard what seemed to be a very frustrated phone

call and saw a man thumbing through the Yellow Pages, apparently looking in vain for a locksmith for an immediate and sizeable job.

Quick on the uptake, Stewart approached the man and mentioned that one of his new BNI colleagues was a good locksmith whom he felt sure would be able to help.

"I then discovered that the man with the Yellow Pages was the hotel's maintenance manager, who had been unable to find anyone in the area able to respond to his need for many of the hotel's locks to be replaced without delay," said Stewart.

"When I told him about our locksmith, George Smith of D G Smith Locksmiths Ltd he was delighted, and he was even happier when I was able to contact George there and then, who promptly offered to help.

"My overhearing this telephone conversation resulted in George installing 23 new locks for the hotel."

And the moral of the story? When you see someone with Yellow Pages, let your contacts do the talking!

• Contact Stewart at: elitevaleting@dial.pipex.com

## Pool pro Steve gets traffic cued up!

ESSEX POOL professional Steve Daking celebrated a new sponsorship deal with fellow Colchester Chapter member Jim Fern, by staging a pool exhibition challenge on Jim's business forecourt – and promptly bringing traffic to a standstill!

Steve, who plays in world ranking tournaments as well as performing in over 200 exhibition matches a year, has been sponsored by Jim's firm, Impact Sign Services of Stanway, Colchester – as a result of which Impact's logo will be shown at every exhibition roadshow event and on the vehicles of Steve's backing company, CueAction Pool



Promotions also based in the city.

Jim told SuccessNet: "With Steve playing in so many exhibitions and world tourna-

ments, we feel this is a great way to raise our company profile and support a local sportsman."



# Around the Chapters

## When two heads are

## better than one...



• Mark Guyatt (left) and Philip Singleton

Picture: Mike Sewell Images

**T**wo Midlands architects who met while substituting for each other at their respective chapters, have teamed up to offer a new vision in architectural services – using the latest communications technology to run a new ‘virtual office.’

Mark Guyatt, of Circa Design and a member of Coventry Central Chapter, and Philip Singleton of Metropolis, who belongs to Solihull Chapter, have formed a new company, Circa Metropolis, with the aim of close collaboration on appropriate projects.

Mark told *SuccessNet*: “I came across Philip while I was looking for a substitute in BNI to stand in for me occasionally at my Coventry Chapter.

“In due course I substituted for him at Solihull and in getting to know each other’s business, we found we had complementary expertise so it made sense to look at joint new business opportunities.”

He added: “Through the new company we are able to maximise the potential of

each other’s expertise while continuing to grow our individual businesses.

“The benefits of collaboration mean we can offer a full range of RIBA architectural and design services, while each staying relatively compact and flexible.”

Among their current joint ventures are city centre regeneration projects, an £8m luxury riverside apartment scheme and a £4m arts centre.

With over 20 years experience between them, one of their specialties is ‘architectural visualisation’, enabling them to supply clients and property developers with the highest quality photo-realistic visuals, and animations of traditional model making.

While continuing to operate from separate offices 20 miles apart, Mark and Philip utilise the latest Internet technology to maintain a virtual office.

“It means our practices could virtually be in the same room” said Mark. “Together with networking through BNI, this is the perfect answer to the challenges of the construction industry.

You can contact Mark on 02476 305514

## Work hard and play hard with BNI

NEW CHAPTER Director at Ilford, John Pettit, has a favourite catch phrase – “Work hard, play hard.” And he should know – because he devotes two or three days each week to BNI referrals. He believes that allocating half the normal working week to BNI activities is the key to success in business, as well as helping him project positive energy into chapter meetings.

John, who runs JMP Plumbing and Heating, joined BNI two years ago, and has held the posts of visitor host and educational co-ordinator. “The key to success,” he says, “is to work hard and play hard. If you play hard, the resulting energy will reflect back into your business life and it’s amazing what goals you can achieve once you get the balance right.” Contact John on 07976 765161.

## From east coast

# Too many referrals!

IT COMES to something when you have to change your occupation because you’re getting too many new business referrals from BNI!

But that’s exactly what happened to Larry Shannon, Assistant Director for North East Ireland and a member of the **Dun Laoghaire Chapter** who received so many referrals for his painting and decorating business that he was unable to find the staff to complete the work.

“I was constantly letting people down, and became very unhappy about it,” he said. So earlier this year Larry decided to give up painting to set up a new business, Shannon Health and Safety – but not before he’d recruited a new painter and decorator to the chapter.

“He now gets all my referrals plus those I still get from the old business,” Larry added.

“But at least he has the staff and a larger organisation to cope with it, and I’m finding BNI is great for my new business – training and consulting in health and safety.”

Larry takes BNI very seriously and he has been responsible for introducing its Mentor Programme to Ireland.

“I understand it originated in the USA but it is very successful in Ireland,” he said.

“It provides new members with a ‘jump start’ to success in their BNI chapter, by giving them the support and information that might otherwise take months to acquire.

“The programme gives them the tools to start networking immediately they join BNI, followed by a realistic programme of education under the guidance of an experienced member who will usually have been on the leadership team.”

• You can contact Larry on +353 1 272 0058



• Larry Shannon, happy in his new role.



## to west, Ireland feels the benefits of BNI

# The house that BNI built

**W**hen Jukka Kovero and his wife Melanie moved to Dalkey in Dun Laoghaire, they found themselves in Ireland's equivalent to Hollywood, living alongside world-famous celebrities like the rock band U2.

Unfortunately, their house didn't sit comfortably among the grander piles of their newly acquired neighbours. It was dilapidated and run down and, even though it had potential, Jukka and Melanie did not have the time to undertake the major job needed.

"We moved from Drogheda, north of Dublin three years ago, and this meant we also had to move our business, IBC Computer and Internet Co. There was no time to search for new offices so we started to work



## If the baseball cap fits...

DO YOU know what colour baseball cap fits your personality? This group of BNI members (pictured above) learned the answer during one of the memorable workshops that comprised the recent Irish Members' Conference held in Galway.

The session, called 'Insights into Communication' used identification of personality types to enhance the individual's ability to communicate effectively, and was led by Johnny Miller together with Margaret Hartigan of The Prosper Group, who is

also a member of Cork Central Chapter.

Held at Clarin Bridge, world famous for its oysters, the conference was attended by nearly 50 delegates from 17 chapters.

Mort Murphy, Executive Director (Ireland South West) said: "Had it not been for foot and mouth disease I think we could have expected well over 100 members, but we were delighted to have representatives from Northern Ireland for the first time."

from home while we waited for planning permission to go ahead with renovations.

"We were living in terrible conditions," said Jukka. Fortunately, that was when they discovered BNI, 15 months ago. We decided to join the local **Dun Laoghaire Chapter** and found it had everyone we needed to sort out the house. People were so willing to help," he added.

Work started last autumn and today, thanks to the efforts of more than half a dozen chapter colleagues, Jukka and Melanie now live in the house of their dreams – the house that BNI built!

Architect Pat Buckley from the Buckley Partnership translated the couple's ideas into formal plans, while Ciaran Hammil from Goldstar Technical Services looked after the building, painting and decorating work.

Ciaran Keane from South Park Plumbing Contractors re-plumbed the property and updated the heating system, craftsman Stephen Murphy made and fitted metal railings for the new balcony, and James McGuire took charge of the garden design.

Finally, photographer Dermot Byrne captured 'the BNI House' on film while Sigrun Massman from The Wine Seller provided all the drinks for the house-warming party.

Jukka added: "We were impressed with the quality and value our colleagues provided. We were living in the house all the time, and they were so considerate of that fact. All we can say is "Thank God for BNI!"

• **Contact Jukka on +353 1 286 6081**

## Ken is European champion

A MEMBER OF the An Gaillimh Chapter, Galway for the past two years, crash repair specialist Ken Horan has won the recently staged European WKN Amateur Kickboxing Championship.

Ken (pictured right) and his Corsican opponent both fought technical fights in the first and second rounds, but in the third Horan floored Alexander Fenot with a great right hand over the top, to gain his richly deserved title as European champion.

Mort Murphy, BNI's South-West Ireland Executive Director, said: "Ken is an excellent chapter member and his dedication to his work shows in both his vehicle repair business and his sport. We are delighted for him."



## New ways of training

**D**are to be different and the chances are you will be rewarded for your enterprise.

At least, that was the outcome when BNI's most northern territory – Scotland North – concluded the first ever BNI 'mega training week' which saw members blitzed with new business and skills training opportunities.

In the course of seven days, the event saw the region's seven chapter leadership teams given intensive training, members offered one-to-one business counselling with senior BNI directors, joint chapter meetings, special presentations and birthday celebrations.

Among the week's highlights were:

- Daily clinics for any BNI member wanting to discuss specific business problems with experts;
- A leadership team dinner held at



• Members of the new Original Links Chapter at St Andrews.

Knockhill, where dinner was prepared by BNI member Susan Karim of Scottish Executive Catering;

- Joint chapter sessions between **Perth** and **Kirkcaldy**, and **Dunfermline** and **Balgeddie** (Glenrothes), together attended by 140 members and visitors. Kirkcaldy members also passed their 1,000th referral during the meeting;

- Networker of the Year presentations to Steve Crozier (Perth), Susan Karim (Kirkcaldy) and Gwen Buist (Tayside), and blue badge presentations for outstanding all-round contributions to Audrey Fenton (Perth), Evelyn Hardie (Tayside) and Stuart Webb (Kirkcaldy);

- A first birthday celebration for **Tayside Chapter** and a successful immediate post-launch meeting of the new **Original Links Chapter** at St Andrews attended by 30 members and visitors.

The 'mega week' was the brainchild of Regional Director Ron Hain who told *SuccessNet*: "We wanted to do something different and while the mega training week was exhausting, it was also hugely enjoyable and rewarding, especially seeing so many members from different chapters establish new strategic alliances and developing joint business opportunities.

"Application forms were flying thick and fast throughout the week and I will be surprised if we don't add more than 20 new members as a result," he added.

• Contact Ron Hain on 01577 861415



• Audrey Fenton, Perth Chapter Director, receives her special award from Ron Hain for driving the chapter forward.

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