



Central Lancashire  
Business Club

bringing local businesses together

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*Impression*



*Newsletter*

Issue 11, September 2008



## THIS MONTHS SPONSOR

**The IT Dept** is a new venture, offering computer support to homes and businesses throughout Central Lancashire. Set up by Michael Donkin, The IT Dept offers a choice of regular site visits, through Contracted Support, or one-off visits at a reasonable hourly rate.

Before setting up The IT Dept, Michael was the Group Head of IT for Parkwood Holdings plc, of Bamber Bridge. Parkwood has a turnover of £100m, and a computer network covering 150 offices, from Penrith to Penzance, with over 1000 desktop PCs and 50 servers. They use state-of-the-art systems such as Citrix and Virtual Servers to support an extremely diverse network.

The systems Michael is now supporting may not be as large or as complex as Parkwood's, but they are equally vital to the businesses they support.

Michael is confident that his knowledge and experience will prove absolutely invaluable when maintaining such computer networks for his new clients. It is his extremely high level of familiarity with different systems which sets The IT Dept apart from some other IT support companies.

In addition, Michael understands that his clients don't want to know what the problem is, they want to know what the answer is. He is proud of his ability to translate complex, technical computer issues into plain English, which can prove priceless when the client is terrified that they may be bombarded with gobbledegook!

The IT Dept should be considered as YOUR IT Dept, and can be contacted on **0845 8388 545**

## THE NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY 7.45 for 8pm

**2nd September 2008**

**Why Do People Drive You Mad At Work**

**Mike Reece** will present a light hearted insight in your own and other people's behavioral styles.

**David Coates**, business reporter at the LEP, will be explaining the proposed increased business coverage by the LEP, particularly aimed at SMEs.

## SEARCH ENGINE SUCCESS FOR BRAS4MUMS



After a disappointing hunt for specialist advice on bras for pregnant and breastfeeding mums, Tracey-Jane Hughes (T-J) aimed to fill the gap in the market by introducing bras4mums – a retail business with a unique fitting service for mums at home in the North West.

With two small children of her own and struggling to find appropriate maternity underwear, T-J came up with the idea for her invaluable retail and advisory service in 2004, just three months after her second son was born. Since then, business has rocketed, and T-J attributes the success of bras4mums to an integrated marketing strategy - which includes Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) through Thomas Cole.

Since December 2007, when T-J first got involved with Thomas Cole with a view to them hosting the website, she has received expert advice on getting to the top in search engine rankings through using targeted key phrases related to the business.

Within 6 months, bras4mums has achieved great success in the search engines and while T-J cites several reasons for the increased business, such as word of mouth and PR exercises, she recognises the value of being found by potential customers on the first page of Google and other search engines.

Since SEO work began, visitor numbers to the site have rocketed, increasing from just 682 a few months ago, to an impressive 21,034 by June this year, and links to the site have also risen significantly. Popular search terms such as 'maternity bras' and 'breastfeeding bras' will find the bras4mums website on the first pages of Google, Yahoo and MSN, and the site is at number 1 in Google results for searches including the phrase 'nursing bras'. Six months ago the site didn't even figure in the top 50 for these keywords!

"I am extremely pleased with the work that Thomas Cole has done for bras4mums," says T-J, "I enjoy working with a team who have such expertise and enthusiasm for what they do. They are true professionals in the SEO field."

T-J now hopes to take her business to the next level and operate a nationwide service.

## HAVE YOU CONSIDERED RADIO ADVERTISING?



It may not cost as much as you think, Chorley FM have designed a package ideal from small businesses! Radio Advertising for less than £12 per week! (no hidden extras) We're putting together our "Chorley FM Business Directory" and this is a limited offer, Strictly first come - First Served.

So what do you get for your £12 per week?

You get an on air radio advert every single day of the week, a directory listing on our website (currently receiving +300 hits per day) and a 1 page website on the back of our site, where you can list any information about your business, with a click through link to your own site!

There are no catches, no hidden extras this price but this is only an introductory offer, and once all slots have gone, there will be no more.

Radio advertising gives better results than other printed medias. So if you want to get ahead of your competitor, and get your message heard by our potential audience of over 100,000 listeners, as well as be listed on our very popular website, call our dedicated sales line, **01257 75 40 30**



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### This month - September

2nd: Why do people drive you mad at work

### Future Events

- Oct 7th **Presentation Skills** with Pat Hastings of **VOICE**
- Nov 4th **Wine Tasting** with Brian Wilding of Chordale Wines
- Dec 2nd **Members Presentations**



## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

### committee 2008-2009

**Chairman** - David Kevill

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**Membership Secretary** - Phil Lancaster

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**Treasurer** - Paul Ainsworth

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## THE CHAIRMAN WRITES

### Be Prepared For The Unexpected

I hope that you have all had a very relaxing and enjoyable summer break and that you are feeling refreshed for the months ahead.

Having had your holiday and want to stay stree-free you will need our main speaker, Mike Reece with a light hearted insight in your own and other people's behavioral styles.

Our second half speaker will be David Coates who is a business reporter with the Lancashire Evening Post. The LEP will be increasing their business coverage in September and would like to concentrate on SMEs. David is keen for the Central Lancashire Business Club and it's members to be involved in this increased business coverage. Make sure that you come along to hear from David just how you can gain some free publicity.

Also in September we will be holding our first satellite meeting in Preston to try and promote our 'Central Lancashire' aspect. The meeting will be held at Preston North End and full details will be issued as soon as they are confirmed.

I wonder what unusual things may have happened to you over the summer. As in business you should always be prepared for the unexpected. So it was in early July when a peacock suddenly took up residence in our garden. No one knows where it came from. The RSPCA said just leave it and it will go away. It was featured on Radio Lancashire but no one has claimed it. After four days it decided to claim the whole estate as it's territory and that's still the case today, strutting around as though it owns the place. It has certainly adopted the position of boss!

I have spent the summer developing my new venture Inspire Business Training. Having taken a basic teaching course I was inspired to pass on the skills I have gained over a long and varied career. Until I completed the course I really did not realise that I had skills worth passing on but now I know I have. Have you any skills worth passing on? If so you may be able to be a part of an expanded Inspire Business Training in the future.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our September meeting. Also can I please ask that as many of you as possible support our satellite meeting in Preston. We hope to gain new members from this meeting so it is important to have a good core of our existing members there.

## PHOTO CUTTERS NOW AVAILABLE FROM BLANKKEYRINGS.CO.UK

If you want to make your marketing spend go further in the current economic climate, why not put together your own DIY printed clear acrylic promotional products, with the help of some new tools now available online.

A new range of photo die cutters is now available at [www.blankkeyrings.co.uk/prod\\_overview.php/c\\_12\\_photo\\_cutters.html](http://www.blankkeyrings.co.uk/prod_overview.php/c_12_photo_cutters.html). The hand help precision die cutters are available in a range of sizes to match the most popular clear acrylic keyrings and fridge magnets, sold by Ad-Options Limited, who also trade as BlankKeyrings.co.uk, for the last twenty years.

Using an accurate cutter greatly speeds up production of inserts for these popular promotional products. Whether cutting photographs for souvenirs and fund raisers, or inserts for advertising or key management schemes, the cutters offer a cost effective increase in productivity and accuracy of finish.

"We are delighted by the initial response from existing customers" said Managing Director, Stephen Ward "everyone seems please with the Photo Cutters and we view them as an important addition to our blank acrylic product portfolio". For further information you can call [Ad-Options Ltd](http://Ad-Options Ltd) on **01772 435010**.



## STRANGER THAN FICTION

A customer came in recently and purchased a chrome toaster. Later he returned it, saying his wife didn't like it because she once won a chrome one at bingo!???

We run a charity in Romania and during one visit I was stopped for speeding. 71km in a 50km limit. Despite there was no speed limit signs, the traffic cop still fined me and apologised for having to charge me double for being 20km over the limit. The total fine was £1. I felt like giving him a tip!

Last month the wife was driving in Romania and she caught the wing mirror of a police car, smashing it to pieces. Thinking she had done no damage she continued on her way with the police car in hot pursuit. Once pulled over, she, through an interpreter, managed to calm the irate gun swinging cop and offered £25 to pay for the damage. He lost his cool again, stating he only wanted £6 for the damage! I guess there is no pleasing some people.

**Martyn @ BBTV LTD**



Above Steve with our speaker Mike Furness. Below this months prize winners.

## HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION

Does making a presentation fill you with fear? Do your presentations not have the desired results?

Inspire Presentations will provide experienced coaching to ensure that your presentation is one to be remembered, for all the right reasons.

Learn the 10 steps to a successful presentation.

Learn the meaning of KISS.

Learn how to use the W approach.

To find out more about how Inspire can help you please use our contact form or telephone **David Kevill** on 07980 972367 or at [training@inspirepresentations.co.uk](mailto:training@inspirepresentations.co.uk)





The **I T**  
Dept.

As a partner you can trust,  
**The IT Dept** provides a full  
range of computer support  
services, to local businesses.

We supply a fully bespoke service, tailored to your specific  
needs, to give you the maximum benefit for your business.

Our Support Contract option gives you regular site visits,  
with a qualified Technician visiting your site each month.

This package has built-in flexibility - allowing you to choose  
how many hours support you require each month. Such  
regular site visits allow you to budget better and ensure  
your computer systems stay up-to-date.

**Call Us Now on 0845 8388 545**

**The IT Dept - *YOUR* IT Dept**