



Surrey Business Club NEWS

www.surreybiz.net

APRIL 2005

EVENTS

www.surreybiz.net/events

April 5th Brooklands College, WEYBRIDGE

DEVELOPING MARKET PLANNING

How to make your market plan really work for your business and it's continued success

May 3rd UniSdirect, GUILDFORD

SUCCESSFUL COLD-CALLING

It does what it says on the tin! We all hate doing it, so find out to do it well.

June 7th NESCOL, EWELL

FINANCIAL WORKSHOP

We hope to have one or two people talking about managing your finances.

July 5th Brooklands College, WEYBRIDGE

DEVELOPING YOUR NETWORKS

Joe Gelona is planning a meeting to help us develop our networking skills.

Brooklands College, Heath Road, Weybridge

Travelling by road, the college is close to both the Chertsey and A3 junctions of the M25. Free car parking is provided in the Students' Car Park (marked on right of main drive). By train, the college is next to Weybridge railway station. Our venue is the conference room in the main building to the left of the roundabout - look out for SBC signs. Food & drink provided.

5th APR: Brooklands Coll., WEYBRIDGE

6:00pm NETWORKING

Strengthen your networking abilities, tell us about your business, seek help with your problems & opportunities, and establish new contacts. All are welcome for this hour-long session. Please try to get to this event on time to avoid interruptions.

Paul Cawthorne

7:00pm BUFFET

Informal stand-up networking, chatting & eating.

7:20pm INTRODUCTION TO BROOKLANDS

Dee Coombs will be telling a little about Brooklands College, including the courses her department run for the benefit of businesses like yours.

7:40pm MARKET PLANNING How to write a marketing plan that works

Marketing is essential to your business if you want it to grow. However, many businesses fail to plan their marketing properly, and waste time and money which they should be investing in generating new business opportunities.

Our speaker, Neil Corrigan of Nectar Marketing, will lead us in an interactive session to teach and demonstrate to you the key elements that go into developing

implementing a successful marketing plan, including:

- Marketing audits
- Market direction
- The marketing mix
- Promotional tactics

Neil Corrigan has worked in technology marketing management for all types and sizes of technology companies, both as an employee and a consultant. His biggest successes have been in helping small to medium-sized IT companies utilise available marketing resources to best effect, enabling them to go to market and ultimately sell more and make more money.

This is your chance to find out and experience the many facets of a marketing plan first-hand. Whilst you may not run a technology company, the principles of making a successful marketing plan are the same for us all. Once you have your own plan, you can then measure the effectiveness of your marketing. This is crucial to finding out which areas of your marketing are working best, helping you to fine-tune your target market, and the most cost-effective ways to reach it.

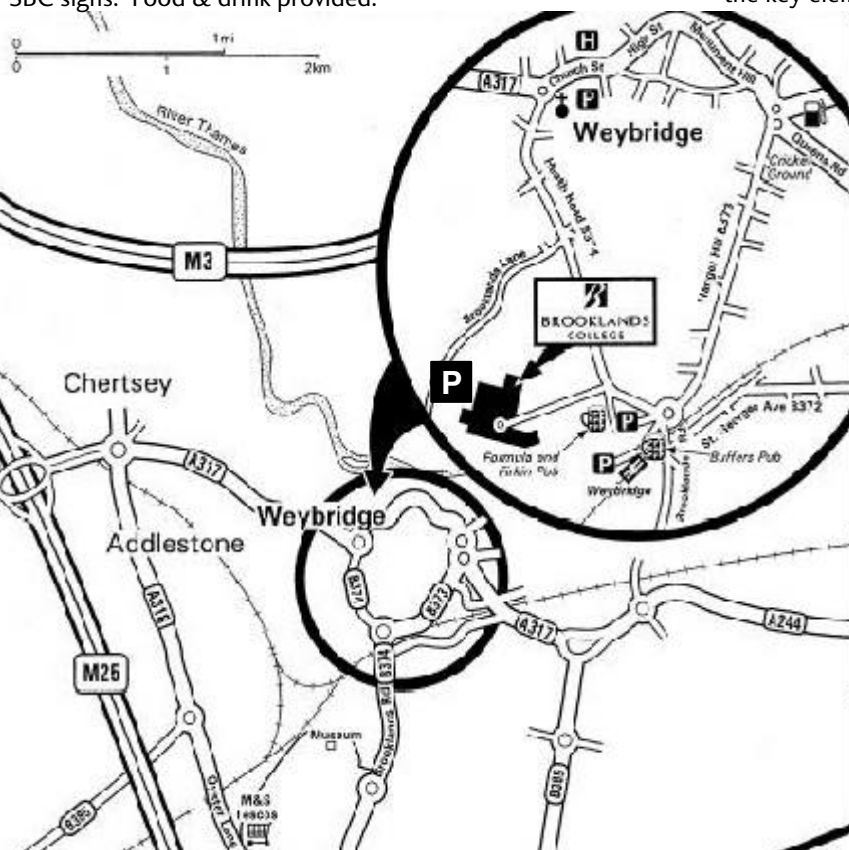
Pre-register by
FRIDAY
1st APRIL

MEMBERS

Free (inclusive)
meeting@surreybiz.net
01372 800820

NON-MEMBERS

Free 1st meeting
£15 thereafter
guest@surreybiz.net
01372 800820



UNPLANNED BILLS

I don't know if any other members have experienced this, but about 18 months ago we sponsored a wallplanner in aid of raising funds for sick children. About nine months later we began to get a series of calls from different companies thanking us for sponsoring their planner. They stated how much the children had benefited and reminded us that their invoice would be landing on our doormat. When we said that we hadn't sponsored their particular planner, they said that they had a record of it. They became very persistent until we stood our ground and pointed out that they were just being downright dishonest. Only then did they go away, having withheld their phone number.

Unfortunately these experiences have had the effect of making us think twice about supporting further legitimate organisations and their good causes. I hope others who read this will take care not to accept unsubstantiated statements from bogus callers.

Deryck Svensson, Webskills UK Ltd.
deryck@webskills.co.uk

2005 BUDGET SNAPSHOT

- Personal allowance increases from £4,745 to £4,895
- Lower rate band increases from £2,020 to £2,090
- Basic rate band increases to give a new higher rate tax threshold of £32,400, (increased from £31,400 for 2004/2005)

The upper and lower limits for National Insurance Contributions also increase in line with retail inflation.

Corporation Tax rates are completely unchanged, whilst elsewhere, there was not a great deal of substance in this Budget for business. Rather than anything concrete, there was a great deal of rhetoric about the future simplification of the tax system for small businesses.

Susan Owen, Business Works Consultancy
info@bizworks.org.uk

A LIMITED COPYCAT!

My company name, registered at Companies House, is Water Environmental Consultants Ltd, which pretty much explains what we do. But it's a bit of a mouthful, so I have also registered WEC Ltd and use this as my company Internet domain for web www.wec.ltd.uk and email address - e.g. engineers@wec.ltd.uk.

One might think that this pretty-well ties things up, so I was surprised to find two other companies trading under the "WEC Ltd" monicker, though neither of them is a registered company. Apparently they can do this provided that they are not passing themselves off as someone else.

The main problem is that attention may be diverted away from any website I set up, and if they become well known, my company may be thought to be part of theirs and thereby share their reputation, good or bad. On the other hand, my registered company name and web domain may be valuable assets which I could sell to someone else who wants to use them officially. The conclusion is that it is worth finding out if someone else is trading under a name which is the same or similar to your own. Advice on what you can do about it can be obtained from Trading Standards.

Philip Jones, Water Environmental Consultants Ltd.
info@wec.ltd.uk

A LAWYER GOT IT RIGHT!

This is an article found by Susan Owen on www.accountingweb.co.uk: I had to consult a lawyer recently; I needed some personal advice. It's sobering to spend one's hard earned cash on getting other people's opinion when you are used to the reverse. The experience was more interesting because the issue was one on which I was unsure of the facts, and because it was outside my usual field of work I did not know the practitioners in the area.

I tried a firm I have used before to see if they could help. They're good, they're local, and their fee-structure felt about right from past experience. But they only had one person who knew about the issue, and I could not have a meeting for three weeks. Having decided to part with a reasonable amount to buy advice I admit my timescale for gratification was quite short. They fell by the wayside.

I decided on a different approach. I tried a large regional firm who I had never used, but had once seen in action on the other side of a deal and had been impressed by. The fee rate was higher, at least 40% higher, but an appointment could be had at the time I wanted. A 15 minute pre-meeting phone call was held and it was obvious the chap had a grasp of the facts and could analyse them. A response by email confirming the appointment followed almost immediately after the call was completed.

I submitted a briefing note which gave rise to a further response to say it would be read before the meeting so that we could concentrate on the issues. At the meeting it was obvious that the paper had been read. Appropriate copies of documents to support the case the lawyer was making were available, pre marked to be referred to, and copies were provided on request to take away to reflect upon. There was no attempt made to provide more service than the brief had asked for, but the offer to develop a continuing relationship was made. I was left in the driving seat. My wishes were respected, and there was a clear willingness to recognise what I had done and could do for myself, with a willingness being offered just to fill the gaps.

At the end of the meeting I was given the chance, in effect, to walk away and say "that was a waste of time". I am sure it has happened. It won't with me. I am aware I spent more than I planned. I came away feeling I had got value for money. So I had to ask why? There were three reasons:

1. Everything about the service, from first call, to email exchanges, to the coffee, was first rate.
2. He knew what he was talking about, but equally was willing to admit when challenged and referred to texts to make sure he was right. I felt confident that he was working within the boundaries of his knowledge, not his bluff.
3. I was respected as a client. I was allowed to buy what I wanted and do what I wanted. It was clear the choices were being left with me, but support to help me achieve my aims was available. No agenda was imposed upon me. This was a constructive relationship of adviser and client.

It was good to meet a professional who had got so much right. I asked him to bill me - he was surprised. He didn't seem to know that the best time to bill is when the client is most satisfied. As such you never know; I might recover my costs by selling him something back with just a bit of luck. I'm always inclined to try.

Richard Murphy (Independent Chartered Accountant)
rmurphy@accountingweb.co.uk

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Are you a Shaper, a Plant, or a Completer-Finisher, as defined by Dr Meredith Belbin (small picture) in the 1970s? And why is it important for the success of your business to understand which team roles you play best? That's what we found out from our guest speaker, Gillian Harvey-Bush, during a busy and productive March meeting at NESCOL.

As usual, the evening began with a formal networking session - a great opportunity for our guests to meet Club Members - followed by the buffet (excellent, as always) and a chance to catch up with everybody's news.

We then had an informative fifteen-minute presentation from Steve Dulmage, Sustainable Business Co-ordinator for Surrey County Council. He explained that both local and national government are committed to ensuring all businesses are 'sustainable' - that they operate in environmentally and socially responsible ways. For example, did you know your old computers and mobile phones are now classed as 'hazardous waste' and you need to dispose of them responsibly? Steve suggested how we can turn the new legislation to our advantage in terms of an improved company image and better public relations. SBC members Acuity Training, who won an award for their proactive approach to sustainability last year, would doubtless confirm that people prefer to do business with environmentally responsible organisations. Find out more by visiting www.egeneration.co.uk

Gillian Harvey-Bush then took the floor, to give us her 'beginners guide' to Belbin. Her career in the airline industry began in the heady days of Sir Freddie Laker, and she progressed to the position of Cabin Crew manager for JMC with a staff of 1,000. Gillian has a psychology degree and is an accredited Belbin Team Role Practitioner - so she certainly knows how teams work.

She explained how Belbin identified certain behaviour patterns within teams, and realised that the success or failure of any collaborative project depends on the character and nature of individual team members. In a well-balanced team the strengths of each member are complementary. If certain skill sets and aptitudes are missing, or if the team has too many members with the same behavioural style and approach, then conflict and confusion are inevitable!

Most large companies now use Belbin analysis to improve efficiency and job satisfaction among their staff. Even as a one-person business, you'll often find yourself working in 'virtual teams' - collaborating with suppliers, advisers (your accountant, marketing consultant, web designer etc) and very often with the in-house staff of your customers when you are acting as a consultant. Understanding exactly how you function in Belbin terms, and therefore what you are best at, will help you play a productive part, and identify which tasks to do yourself, and which to delegate. Belbin analysis works at a personal level within families too, helping everybody to get along better with each other by understanding what makes us all tick!

Gillian's clear explanations and real-world examples (including a fiendish party game with audience participation!) backed up by excellent hand-outs, helped us to understand ourselves and our businesses better, so our thanks go to her for an excellent presentation. If you missed it, you can find out more about Belbin by visiting www.belbin.info

Keith Grover, FreelanceCopy.co.uk



BELBIN



BELBIN Team Role Type	Contributions	Allowable Weaknesses
PLANT PI 	Creative, imaginative, unorthodox. Solves difficult problems	Ignores incidents. Too preoccupied to communicate effectively.
CO-ORDINATOR CO 	Mature, confident, a good chairperson. Clarifies goals, promotes decision-making, delegates well	Can often be seen as manipulative. Offends persons work
MONITOR EVALUATOR ME 	Sincere, strategic and discerning. Sees all options. Judges accurately	Lacks drive and ability to inspire others.
IMPLEMENTER IMP 	Disciplined, reliable, conservative and efficient. Turns ideas into practical actions	Sometimes inflexible. Slow to respond to new possibilities
COMPLETER FINISHER CF 	Detail oriented, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors and omissions. Finishes on time.	Inclined to worry unduly. Reluctant to delegate.
RESOURCE INVESTIGATOR 	Extrovert, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores opportunities. Develops contacts	Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed
SHAPER SH 	Challenging dynamo. Thrives on pressure. The drive and courage to overcome obstacles	Prono to provocation. Offends people's feelings
TEAMWORKER TW 	Co-operative, mild, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens, builds, averts friction	Inclusive in crucial situations.
SPECIALIST SP 	Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated. Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.	Contributes only on a narrow front. Over-reliance on technical skills

SPEED NETWORK 100 TO RETURN!

Yes folks, we have decided to repeat this successful event in October this year. As a club, the event lifted our networking efforts to a new high. Members were able to meet a whole range of new faces from the business community, including past members and people from Trafford Enterprises, UniSdirect and the Institute of Independent Business, to name but a few. We've decided to make it a half-yearly event, keeping it to club meeting nights.

We got a goodly amount of positive feedback about the last event, and we hope to build on this. We hope to institute a few changes, mainly to spread people out more to increase your chances of hearing the person you're talking to! Your Chairman came away from the last event with a very dry throat, and that was only from taking part in the second session. This time we hope to be able to use an additional room in the Oak Suite which will allow us to give a table to each pair of networkers. This will also allow supplies of water to be made more freely available.

Above all, we want both members and non-members alike to benefit from these opportunities to increase business contacts. Remember that it's not just about gaining direct business, it's also about getting your business known by a wider circle of contacts. In other words, you should be trying to educate the people you meet about what you do. If you do it right, it means that when your contact meets someone who needs your services, or finds an opportunity in your field, then they call you first. It sounds simple, but in order for it to work, you need to get your name about, and our Speed Network 100 events are a tool for achieving this.

Full details have yet to be sorted out, but the venue is going to be Surrey University, and the date will be Tuesday 4th October 2005. See you there!

Stephen Lewis, Chairman

FUTURE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES?

Your committee have noticed that the £120 subscription is frightening-off the busy people who perhaps only attend once a year. We are also concerned that currently more people are leaving than joining, mainly for the above reason. Thus, we are currently considering a "pay-per-meet" rate, whereby you pay £60 per year for membership. This would include all the newsletters, E-mails, listing on the website, and the cost of the two social events (August & Christmas). However, we would then charge £10 per meeting for the remaining 10 meetings in the year. I am proposing that new members have to join at the £120 rate for the first year, and if they find that they aren't attending many meetings, then they are free to apply for the "pay-per-meet" rate. If this option interests you, please can you let me know so that we can judge the sort of interest there might be. Please also see the article on the right about our new membership drive...

Stephen Lewis, Chairman



BOWLING

SBC members met for ten-pin bowling at The Spectrum, Guildford as usual last month. Deryck was in good form for March meet - he got 320 for his two games. Brian was second on a mere 273, with Phil on 235. Jenny was unable to play this time owing to a W.I. meeting! We ate at our usual Brewers Fayre restaurant next door.

Join us for the next Bowling evening on **Tuesday 19th April** at Spectrum Leisure Centre in Guildford, costing £9.20 including shoe hire. We'll be playing from 7pm until about 9pm, with a meal out afterwards.



GOLF

As usual a beautiful day at Reigate Hill welcomed SBC golfers for our first outing of the year. Paul Cawthorne of P&G Computers (www.pandg.co.uk), who must have been practising all winter, played the game of his life to score 83 (net 65) on this par 72 course. Guest and potential member Paul Jeanes scored 89 (net 78).

Please join us next time, expected to be at Chobham Golf Club on Friday 22nd April. Remember you don't have to be a Tiger Woods or a Paul Cawthorne, and we also normally get half-price green fees. E-mail Deryck Svensson on golf@surreybiz.net for more information.

NEW MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

At a recent committee meeting, we decided that we are going to introduce a new membership drive. We've tried 'HeadStart', which we intend to continue in the future, but now we're going to try "Member get Member" (MGM for short). It's currently just an idea, so don't forget that you heard it here first!

The 'idea' is that we ask you, the member, to induct new members into the club. In return, we're offering a reduction in your following year's subscription, relative to the number of people you encourage to join. There's a lot of finalising to do to make sure that it is simple to operate and doesn't create too much paperwork. However, the concept is that if you become a star 'inducter', you can actually get a whole year's subscription for nought, year after year. It's not an easy proposition, and it will require that your inducted people join before we credit you. The current idea is that it will take four new members for you to get a complete year's free membership. This will be your well-earned reward for helping your Club to find new members.

So there you have it, yet another fantastic deal from Surrey Business Club (help, I'm beginning to sound a lot like Keith Grover!). You can't say that we're stingy - we're always working hard to give our members value for money, and what better way to do that than offering you reduced or free membership? Good eh!

Stephen Lewis, Chairman

 <p>Surrey Business Club OFFICIAL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER</p>	<p>CLUB SPONSORS</p>   	<p>NEWSLETTER & CHAIRMAN</p> <p>Stephen Lewis, 4 Archery Rise, ALTON, Hampshire. GU34 1PG sbcnews@surreybiz.net 01420 594644</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP: Linda Haynes Upper Lodge, Holmbury Hill Rd Holmbury St. Mary, DORKING, Surrey. RH5 6NR membership@surreybiz.net 01306 730074</p>	<p>SECRETARY: Philip Jones Comrie House, Grange Drive, WOKING, Surrey. GU21 4BU secretary@surreybiz.net 01483 772698</p>
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