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February / March 2016

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Engineering the future

Wayne Jones OBE, newly appointed board director of MAN Diesel, shares his thoughts on apprenticeships, skills, and International business culture, in an exclusive interview at MAN Diesel's Stockport HQ.

Apprenticeship week

Feature on Trafford College and Salford City College highlighting two apprenticeship success stories.

Breaking records at the speed of sight

Exclusive interview with Mike Newman, co-founder of charity Speed of Sight and blind holder of 7 Guinness speed records on land, sea and air.

The business of convergence

Panel debate hosted at Salford University, Media City on the creative, technical and legal implications of integrated media.

The GM Biz Expo 2016

Preview of one of Manchester's premier business expos on 15 March.



Wayne Jones OBE, Chief Sales Officer for MAN Diesel, pictured outside their Hazel Grove HQ.

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welcome

to the latest edition of **GM Business Connect** and join the fastest growing business to business forum in Greater Manchester.

GM Business Connect is a dynamic business to business bi-monthly magazine that is crammed full of local and regional news, articles, interviews and regular columnists.

The magazine connects businesses across Greater Manchester, and is completely free.

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editorial

Here at GM Business Connect we are on the lookout for both news articles relating to business activity within Greater Manchester, and educational articles that can help businesses at any level. If you regularly send out press releases, or if you are looking for press coverage of a newsworthy event, please get in touch either by phone or send an email to editorial@gmbusinessconnect.co.uk

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news

Manchester Water Taxis awarded licence to operate



L-R Steven Cadwell and Peter Parkinson

Following year long negotiations, the Bridgewater Canal Company Limited (BCCL), which is owned by the Peel Land and Property Group, has recently announced that it had awarded Manchester Water Taxis a licence to operate two boats on the canal starting later this year.

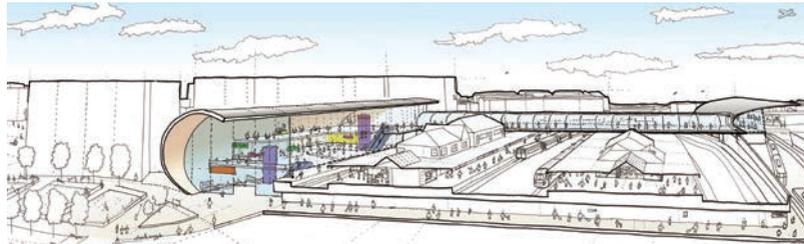
Peter Parkinson, the Bridgewater Canal General Manager said *"We are delighted to have agreed terms to bring this alternative form of public transport onto the Bridgewater Canal, which together with the Bridgewater Way tow path improvements will help to reduce traffic congestion and increase sustainable travel within Manchester."*

Manchester Water Taxis, founded back in February 2009 by entrepreneur Steven Cadwell, initially planned to launch on the Manchester Ship Canal providing public transport services between the city centre and MediaCityUK. Despite securing funding, these plans were put on hold once HS2 was given the green light and the Ordsall Chord began construction (which isn't due to finish until 2017). Rather than mothball the project, Manchester Water Taxis searched for alternative routes to market which now were realised with the signing of the BCCL licence.

Manchester Water Taxis will run a service to the intu Trafford Centre via Old Trafford and Hotel Football as well as a service to Sale, both terminating at Dukes 92 in Castlefield.

Manchester Water Taxis has entered the Entrepreneurial Spark's Accelerator programme (launched in Manchester). This will take the business through a development process lasting 6 months with continued support for up to 18 months.

Stockport unveils vision to transform rail station



A masterplan has been launched by Stockport Council to regenerate the area around Stockport rail station in order to strengthen its connections as a transport hub for the town centre.

Sitting at a key position on the regional and national rail network, Stockport Station has always been important both locally and for Greater Manchester, and welcomes over 3.5 million passengers a year. However, the station and facilities on offer do not reflect this.

Stockport Council wants to ensure the Station and the surrounding area achieves its full potential and commissioned a masterplan to develop its ambitions for the area.

Breathing new life into the Station

and surrounding areas, the vision is to transform the Station into a modern facility that provides a welcoming environment for all passengers and visitors. With redeveloped concourses; better access to platforms via a new footbridge; direct links with car parks and improvements made to the existing subway, the plans would create a Station Stockport could be proud of.

The masterplan also sets out how links between the rail station, Transport Interchange and the town centre will be improved for all, making it easier for passengers to access everything on offer locally.

The Station vision builds on

work already taking place across Stockport through the Council's Investing in Growth projects, such as the development of the neighbouring Stockport Exchange. It is predicted that improving the Station will act as a catalyst to continued growth in the town, with investment and businesses attracted due to the town's connectivity and workforce. Estimates predict that the redevelopment of the Station and the surrounding area could see between 1,800 and 2,000 new jobs created in Stockport.

Work on securing the funding will now begin.

Councillor Martin Candler, Executive Member for Supporting Place at Stockport Council said: *"Stockport deserves a Station it can be proud of, so I am pleased that we are able to launch our vision for this area."*

"The masterplan builds on developments currently taking place and will see the area around the Station transformed creating over 1,800 new jobs for residents. I am excited about what the future holds for this area of our town."

Government announce new generation of mentors to help struggling teens

A new generation of high-flying mentors to help struggling teens improve their life chances has been announced by the government.

Christine Hodgson, Chair of Capgemini UK and the Careers and Enterprise Company, has agreed to lead a major campaign to encourage business people and professionals to volunteer to act as mentors to young teens at risk of dropping out of education or achieving less than they could.

While figures for young people not in education, training or employment (NEET) have fallen since 2010, there are still tens of thousands of teenagers who are at risk of falling through the cracks.

Alongside this, many bright children from disadvantaged backgrounds are not fulfilling their potential.

Around 25,000 pupils about to begin GCSEs risk under-achieving or dropping out. Many of these would benefit from a mentor and the campaign will aim to ensure that they are not denied that support because no suitable mentors are available.

The national mentoring campaign will see schools and businesses encouraged to work together to give these young people the best possible chance to succeed.

Prime Minister David Cameron announced: *"We are going to launch a new national campaign, and it will work with business, charities and the public sector to build a new generation of high-quality mentors."*

"We'll direct £70 million towards careers in this Parliament, primarily to the Careers and Enterprise

Company who will lead this major new effort to recruit mentors for young teenagers with a focus on the 25,000 about to start their GCSEs who we know are underachieving or at risk of dropping out."

Christine Hodgson said: *"The new campaign will be led through the Careers and Enterprise Company, which was set up to give young people better access to high quality careers education, advice and guidance, through more effective employer engagement with schools."*

The campaign will encourage mentors to come forward from businesses, public and charitable sectors, help potential volunteers to identify mentoring organisations operating in their local area, and proactively target schools who need help to offer mentors.

GM businesses debate Apprenticeship levy Northwest businesses save one million tonnes of CO₂

Charlotte Bown, Head of Policy, Apprenticeship Project Team at the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills joined private and public sector organisations from across Greater Manchester to debate the Government's new Apprenticeship levy at an event at The Manchester College.

The Manchester College, along with the GM Chamber of Commerce, the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service, organised the 'Are you ready for the levy' event.

Over 100 public and private sector organisations in Greater Manchester attended, which saw a full and frank debate from everyone involved.

Ian Holborn, Deputy CEO and Managing Director of Work Based Learning at The Manchester College, said: "The announcement by the government on the introduction of the levy has led to questions from training providers and employers.

"People have uncertainties and we wanted to be able to give them the opportunity to voice their concerns and gain further clarity on what to expect in the future."

Charlotte Bown gave an update on the levy. She said the government recognised that employers were thirsty for more information and asked people to "bear with us" as further detail will be announced as soon as is

possible. She spoke about the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS), where employers will have their own online accounts enabling them to direct their funds to pay for apprenticeships training with approved training providers. The DAS is in development currently, and will be tested and piloted, with the fully tested site live by April 2017. Charlotte added: "In terms of funding, the employer will be in the driving seat. There will be no sector ring-fencing, it will be up to individual employers to direct and spend their digital vouchers on the apprenticeships training that best meets employers needs."

The event featured panellists from both the private and public sector in the region. All the panellists fully supported Apprenticeships and agreed that the new trailblazer standards that have been introduced were a big improvement. They also all agreed that there were clearly aspects of the levy that required further clarity.

Simon Nokes, MD of New Economy, said: "In Greater Manchester, Apprenticeships can play a big role in helping to plug the productivity and fiscal gap. The GMCA is looking at how we can help businesses get the most from the levy and how we can encourage more young people to become apprentices."

An internationally-recognised, environmental business service, based in Greater Manchester, is celebrating the landmark achievement of saving one million tonnes of CO₂ through its award-winning support that helps businesses to reduce their use of energy, water and materials in day-to-day operations.

To put that into context, one million tonnes of CO₂ represents:

- More than the total annual emissions from every home in Manchester combined.
- The same as taking all the traffic off Manchester's roads for 20 months
- The carbon absorbed annually by 715 square miles of forest – an area 1.4 times larger than Greater Manchester.

The saving has been achieved by reducing costs – a double win that has saved companies over £270 million. Improved environmental practice has also helped these companies secure £371 million of sales contracts and create or safeguard nearly 8,300 jobs – proving that greening the economy does not have to come at the expense of growth.

The same actions have also created additional environmental benefits – saving 28 million tonnes of materials, 950,000 tonnes of waste destined for landfill and 13 million cubic metres of water. That's the weight of

more than 11,000 Blackpool Towers and enough water to fill 5,200 Olympic swimming pools.

Part of Greater Manchester's Business Growth Hub, the ENWORKS service was launched in 2001 as an independent partnership of business leaders, influencers and policy-makers. To date it has supported over 13,000 North West businesses in making the transition towards a more sustainable, low carbon economy.

The support is delivered through the Business Growth Hub's Green Growth service. The expert service, specifically tailored for SMEs, is a key part of Greater Manchester's plan to be a leading low carbon economy by 2020.

Tony Lloyd, Interim Mayor of Greater Manchester, said: "The support we're delivering to businesses is internationally-recognised as best practice in its field – it's a great example of how Greater Manchester is leading the way in engaging the business community to tackle climate change while supporting local growth in the process."

Cllr Sue Derbyshire, Chair of the Greater Manchester Low Carbon Hub, said: "Greater Manchester's aim for 2020 is to cut carbon emissions by 48 per cent against 1990 levels and set us on the path to becoming the greenest economy in the UK."



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news

New LinkedIn project changes the face of recruitment in Manchester



For the first time in Europe, a new scheme, led by LinkedIn and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, mapped the local skill requirements for the future, and identified potential courses local people could consider to secure them jobs in the region in the next decade.

Using profiles from over 600,000 members and analysing 4 key factors – workforce and skills, hiring, migration, and education – LinkedIn have created a unique digital map of Greater Manchester's economy.

It successfully identifies job trends, business movement and skill requirements within specified areas and sectors in Manchester.

The GMCA will now use this data to deploy its resources effectively and deliver a strong workforce that delivers economic prosperity for both the local area and the UK.

Cabinet Office Minister and Paymaster General, Matt Hancock, said:

"Getting the right skills for the right jobs in the right place is mission critical for a strong economy.

"This is where data maps come into their own - demonstrating for the first time that technology and data can be used in partnership to build a highly-skilled local workforce. The potential is huge and this new project must not be underestimated."

Manchester University, alongside other educational facilities in the area, will use the information to tailor their courses to better tackle the gaps outlined in the research, using a dedicated locally-led education budget funded by Greater Manchester - the first devolution deal of its kind in the UK.

LinkedIn's early findings show how vacancies within Manchester are likely to be in the digital and creative sectors, with 35% of LinkedIn members with social digital marketing skills in the area, having started a new job in the past 12 months.

Six Stockport firms win funding to install green technologies

Six winners of a one-off funding competition in Stockport are set to save nearly £100,000 over the next four years after receiving a share of £41,000 to install green technologies.

The Stockport Sustainable Business Challenge – funded by Stockport Council and supported by Stockport Economic Alliance and the Business Growth Hub, part of MGC – saw winners receive grants of between £3,000 and £10,000 to cover up to 50% of the costs of purchasing and installing technology that will reduce their impact on the environment whilst delivering real economic benefits.

The competition reflects a growing understanding amongst the business community that improving resource efficiency not only reduces environmental impacts but also increases resilience and delivers a lasting cost benefit to the bottom line.

The competition attracted a diverse range of applications, but six projects were ultimately selected by the judges to receive funding. Between them the winning projects have invested over £80,000 in low carbon technologies. Over the next four years, these technologies will deliver nearly £100,000 in savings and cut carbon emissions by 250 tonnes – equivalent to driving from Manchester to the moon and back in a Hummer.

The winners include Creative Apparel Ltd, a manufacturer of branded workwear and promotional clothing, who received £10,000 for new automated cleaning equipment that improves both energy and water efficiency and is expected to save £6,800 a year.

Castrads Ltd, a producer of bespoke cast iron radiators, secured a £9,100 grant to replace 91 inefficient light fixings with high efficiency LEDs, which will save over £4,400 and 17 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) a year.

Other local winners were Cheshire Specialist Engineering, County Car and Van Rental, Red Rose Packaging and the charity,

Disability Stockport.

Phil Millar, Managing Director at Creative Apparel, said: *"The new machine is a great addition to our production facility and one that we would not have been able to invest in without funding from the Stockport Sustainable Business Challenge. By introducing an automated system we have cut manual labour needed for cleaning and de-coating by 95 per cent, reduced health and safety risks and improved our resource efficiency."*

Samantha Nicholson, Low Carbon Manager at the Business Growth Hub, part of MGC, commented: *"The Stockport Sustainable Business Challenge is a great example of how we can work with Local Authorities to boost business growth and save carbon. It's also a great way to raise awareness of the strengths of our low carbon technology supply chain in Greater Manchester, as all of the project's contracts were won by local suppliers."*

Councillor Patrick McAuley, Executive Member for Thriving Economy at Stockport Council said: *"I am pleased that we have had the opportunity to support local businesses through the Challenge. The ideas they identified have the potential to deliver significant environmental benefits, which will help improve the local environment for all residents, as well as reduce costs for each of the winners."*

Wayne Jones, Chair of Stockport Economic Alliance and Senior Vice President - Business Unit After Sales at MAN Diesel & Turbo said: *"The competition shows how a relatively small investment in green technology can make a big difference for companies. I would encourage other businesses to explore changes they could make to positively affect the environment and ultimately reduce their operating costs."*

To find out more about the Business Growth Hub's specialist Green Growth support, visit www.green-growth.org.uk



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news

Community urged to get involved in massive Hulme 'Sweet' Hulme Project

Hulme's rich heritage will be in the spotlight with a major film documentary, touring photography exhibition and commemorative poem, as part of a partnership project between placemaking organisation One Manchester and community media company REELmcr.

One Manchester has been awarded grand funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to work with Hulme residents in a unique project documenting Hulme life throughout the area's various transformations from slums to the Crescents and beyond.

The Hulme 'Sweet' Hulme film documentary will be made with the community and residents of Hulme, past or present, particularly families who moved into the original Hulme houses in the 1970s and 1980s, are being urged to get involved to tell their stories and share old photos of

one of Manchester's most vibrant and socially important areas. The project will provide opportunities to go on heritage visits and walks, train to be part of the documentary film crew, or take part in photography and poetry workshops.

Filmmaker Paul Sapin, who has won a string of international awards for his TV work capturing social issues everywhere from Mexico to South Africa, will join the award-winning REELmcr to lead the documentary production. Poetry workshops will be led by popular Manchester wordsmith Tony Walsh, aka Longfella.

Hulme 'Sweet' Hulme will culminate in a film documentary and a commemorative poem, which will be premiered at HOME at the end of the year-long project. New archive footage and photos discovered or made during the project will be exhibited at both Z-arts and The

People's History Museum with a view to an international exhibition.

Tracie Daly, Project Manager said: "Hulme is the community I grew up in and the place I will always refer to as home. Much has been written about Hulme as a place, none of it recognisable to the original families that were housed there. Strong communities were forged amidst the social housing disaster; lifelong friends and many fond memories were made.

"Hulme is a very important part of social history and what better way to document it than through the original families who lived it. Hulme was not about punk picnics and squats, that came much later. Hulme was home to many thousands of families excited and full of hope for the future in their brand new shiny flats. This project will provide the platform for the families who lived through this period

to finally have their say, share their stories and tell it how it really was."

One Manchester's Group Cultural Lead Phil Lukes said: "We're really proud to be supporting this project. It's a great example of One Manchester's commitment to working in partnership with the community to increase access to cultural opportunities in the city. This is a fascinating period, which saw two regenerations of Hulme and a transformation from a failed housing experiment to a diverse and thriving area. Now, with the city centre creeping closer via First Street and the new MMU building, it feels like the right time to get these stories told and REELmcr are the right people to help us tell them."

To find out more contact REELmcr on 0793 1234 890 or info@reelmcr.co.uk

Alex Hulme 
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On Friday 4 March over 100 local business leaders will meet once again for a relaxed afternoon of networking and entertainment at Sale FC Rugby Club in support of the Alex Hulme Foundation and A Helping Hand Foundation.

The afternoon will feature a delicious two course lunch, including charity raffles and auctions, speeches, celebrity rugby guests and a top class after-dinner presentation from International rugby league star Jamie Peacock MBE.

Hosting the event will be the notable stand-up comedian, journalist and PR professional John Warburton.

For more information please contact either:
Dave Hulme on **07811 510311 / 0161 973 1343 /**
info@alexhulmefoundation.co.uk
or **Mike Jefferson** on **07867 128463 / mjeffo100@gmail.com**

All profits and fundraising from the event will go to the Alex Hulme Foundation and A Helping Hand Foundation.



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Unipart Rail buys Park Signalling

Unipart Group's rail division has added to its range of services by acquiring Stockport-based Park Signalling for an undisclosed sum.

The deal sees Park Signalling, which has 20 staff, become part of Unipart Rail but it will continue to trade under its existing name.

Unipart Rail supplies products and services to the UK and international rail industry, including infrastructure maintenance, technical support, equipment repairs, research and development, technology and manufacturing.

It has operations in Crewe, Southport, Doncaster and York.

Park Signalling, which is based at Houldsworth Mill, Reddish, was created in 2000 following a buyout from Alstom.

The consultancy has gained international acclaim for its wide range of design and build expertise for signalling, telecoms, control and monitoring equipment on rail networks worldwide.

Park Signalling works on projects as far afield as Indonesia and Australia.

Following the company's sale, founder and managing director John Slinn becomes Technical Director and Anthony Isaacs becomes General Manager with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the business. The other directors remain in their roles.

Ian Dawson and Liz Gallagher,

Ian Dawson,
Manager,
Corporate
Finance,
Hurst



of HURST's corporate finance and tax teams respectively, and Llyr Williams, of north Wales and Chester law firm Swayne Johnson Solicitors, advised Park Signalling on the deal.

Ian Dawson said Park Signalling's highly-technical and skilled workforce enjoys a strong global reputation. He added: "Becoming part of the Unipart Group provides the team with a great opportunity to develop the business. Exciting growth prospects lie ahead."

Graham Jackson, managing director of Unipart Rail, said: "This acquisition perfectly complements the Unipart Rail product and service portfolio and the synergies, along with our combined skills and expertise, will enable both businesses to access new markets and to continue to develop and expand our offering."

John Slinn added: "I am very pleased that the management team will be remaining in place at Park Signalling's Stockport facility as we further develop together with Unipart Rail."

Local charities benefit from hotel demolition

Local charities have benefitted from the impending demolition of Lancashire County Cricket Club's on-site hotel, the Old Trafford Lodge, by receiving beds, linen and furniture to help support their work.

The bulldozers are set to visit Emirates Old Trafford in February to knock down the Lodge which will make way for the brand new 150-bedroom Hilton Garden Inn that is due to open in 2017 and will complement the venue's renowned conference and events facilities.

Staff at Lancashire County Cricket Club have worked tirelessly over recent days to clear the Lodge of bedding, furniture and appliances in readiness for the work, and charities including Stretford-based Hope Direct, Manchester Dogs' Home and other local charities have benefitted from the clear out.

Hope Direct's mission is to increase opportunities and transform lives of suffering and vulnerable children in developing countries including Sierra Leone and Cameroon by providing the access to education and normal living standards as well as supplying healthy food, clothes and other essentials.

Simultaneously, they help to improve the natural environment in North West England by recycling and reselling household goods

to supply people with essential merchandise at affordable prices.

LCCC's Operations Director Anthony Mundy said:

"We are moving quickly with our new hotel and we are now ready to commence demolition.

"The Lodge has lots of good quality pieces of furniture that won't be required for the new Hilton Garden Inn hotel, so rather than seeing them go to waste we are delighted that these local charities can make use of them for the fantastic work they do.

"Other items have been sold to staff with proceeds going to the LCCC Foundation."

Martin Sidebottom of Hope Direct added:

"The generous donation of furniture, bedding and furnishings from Lancashire County Cricket Club has given the charity a great boost.

"Following the recent Ebola epidemic furniture in our orphanages had to be destroyed. We can now replace some of this thanks to the Club's donation.

"The remainder will be sold to the local community enabling them to have good quality items at low cost. We are very grateful for the support from Lancashire County Cricket Club."

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news

The fun police come to Manchester

Psychologists claim offices in Manchester need to adopt a more fun culture to have a productive workforce

Manchester-based wellbeing at work psychologists Robertson Cooper have warned the city's employers they need to boost fun and play in the office if they wish to drive a productive and creative workforce.

Teaming up with BrightHR, the leading specialists claimed while Manchester may lead the way in the Northern Powerhouse it appears to have come at a price - as more than 45 percent of employees in Manchester claim to have no fun at work.

The UK-wide research found the shift in attitudes to play at work came from the drive of millennials in the workforce. Workers born from early 1980s to early 2000 are set to make up 75 per cent of the workforce by 2025,

and it's something businesses cannot ignore.

'It Pays to Play', a study commissioned by BrightHR, revealed school leavers and graduates believe fun at work is important, believing having play time in the office encourages them to work harder.

But in Manchester it appears workers aren't in a rush to embrace this new office influence, as four in 10 people working in city claimed they wouldn't want play-time at work even if it was allocated - opting for a traditional work structure.

Interestingly, a quarter of those working in the North West as a whole believed morale at work could be improved, as 42 percent were reported to have felt stressed all the time.

But it isn't all doom and gloom, as the research showed many companies in Manchester were

seen to be trying to boost morale. In the last six months, more than a third claimed to have enjoyed celebrating a colleagues birthday in the office or had a company day out as a form of fun team bonding.

And more than a third believed having fun activity, such as office bake offs and Xboxes at work, would definitely motivate employees to work harder.

The top five activities Mancunian employees claimed would brighten their work day and make them more productive in the office were:

1. Dress down Friday (28 percent)
2. Wellbeing days with massages (18 percent)
3. Pool Table (16 percent)
4. Work bake-off (16 percent)
5. Office Parties and nights out (15 percent)

The research comes from Manchester people management software company, BrightHR which teamed up with Manchester-based wellbeing at work physiologists Robertson Cooper.

BrightHR is headed up by co-founder and chief executive officer Paul Tooth and co-founder and chief marketing officer Paul Harris - both formerly of Sage.

Speaking about the findings Paul Tooth, said: "Trust is key. If people are trusted to do their work and feel empowered to play and have fun in the workplace, businesses will benefit hugely. Fun doesn't have to cost a lot. It could simply be laughing with colleagues, celebrating office birthdays or enjoying work related tasks."

The UK-wide study showed young employees are more motivated by workplace fun than the older workforce and those who enjoy a good belly laugh at work are less likely to skip work with a sickie.

Wellbeing at work expert, Professor Sir Cary Cooper claimed the shift in attitudes towards fun at work is triggered by graduates and school leavers working longer hours than ever before and seeking fun in their office to ensure they get the most out of their time.

Commenting on the study, he said: "It's a shame employees in Manchester don't care as much about fun at work, as it can really improve their wellbeing. Businesses would still be wise to inject more playtime into the workplace as they will benefit from a harder working and more motivated and productive workforce."

"Work is no longer about getting the job done and then going home for your fun - younger generations want to enjoy their work too. It could be because we work longer hours, have to wait longer for retirement and have less financial security from work, meaning we need to get some other return for our time investment."

BrightHR launched in November 2015 with the support of Peninsula's Peter Done. The people management software has been developed to help small to medium sized businesses effortlessly implement HR admin processes, and get specialist knowledge on topics ranging from employment law to happiness.

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CEO's helping to fight Manchester's homelessness problem

On 16 May 2016 executives from across the North West are joining together at Lancashire County Cricket Club to help fight poverty and homelessness in Manchester.

They will all give up a night of comfort to sleep out on the pitch and in the stands at Emirates Old Trafford to help raise funds for projects in Manchester and also to raise awareness of a growing problem in the city.

CEO Sleepout Manchester is being organised by the LCCC Foundation in partnership with national charity CEO Sleepout UK and will build on the huge success of CEO Sleepout UK's recent London event at The Kia Oval when £170,000 was raised for

charities which fight the effects and causes of homelessness.

The event will start at 8pm and finishes the following morning at Emirates Old Trafford, the home of Lancashire County Cricket Club.

CEO Sleepout UK is a new and lean charity which has already worked with partners to hold events at prestigious venues like Wembley Stadium, Cardiff Castle and St James' Park Newcastle.

Around 500 executives have taken part in the sleepouts and together have raised over £680,000 to fight homelessness and poverty in the UK.

Andy Preston from CEO Sleepout UK said: "CEO Sleepout UK is

delighted to be working with the LCCC Foundation to host an event at such a prestigious venue. By engaging the executive community across the North West we aim to raise funds to help fight poverty and homelessness in Manchester."

Sandy Mitchell from the LCCC Foundation said: "This is a great opportunity to raise people's awareness of homelessness in Manchester and by partnering up with CEO Sleepout UK we believe

we can help to raise significant funds for charities that support those in need day in and day out."

Theresa Grant, CEO of Trafford Council, said: "Homelessness is an issue that cannot be ignored; by signing up to take part in the sleepout on the 16th May I hope I can play a small part in an event that aims to make a big difference."

For more information or to book your place email Dianne Gould at info@ceosleepoutuk.com



Strategic business leader chooses Manchester



Richard Clark, berg's new Managing Director

Irwin Mitchell Operations Director, Richard Clark, has joined independent campaigning firm, berg, as Managing Director.

A strategic business leader specialising in developing client focused businesses from the ground up, Richard has been building and leading businesses for a number of years, most recently at Irwin Mitchell LLP, and turned down another offer from the capital to make the move across the Pennines.

He is a specialist in operations management, business strategy and organisational development, along with programme management. His academic achievements include an MBA from the Bradford University School of Management,

a post-graduate Diploma and Certificate in Management from the Henley Business School. Richard is also a member of the Chartered Management Institute.

Richard said: "I know I am joining a Firm which has serious ambition for significant growth.

The senior team at berg have made the Firm renowned for its championing and campaigning for the interests of independent business.

"I want to now contribute to being part of a truly modern professional services law firm recognised for sound and imaginative advice."

berg's Senior Partner, Reuben Berg commented: "This appointment is a clear demonstration of our intent to be a leading professional services Firm looking after the interests of independent business.

"Our way of doing business, like many successful industries in the past which came from the North West is founded on integrity, resolve, hard work and the constant desire to get the best for our clients."

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news

Better rail journeys as new Northern and TransPennine Express franchises confirmed

The Department for Transport confirmed at the end of December that it has officially signed the Northern franchise 9-year contract with Arriva Rail North Ltd and the TransPennine Express franchise 7-year contract with First Trans Pennine Express Limited.

The deals provide an unprecedented package of improvements, bringing about the biggest transformation to rail journeys in the north of England and Scotland in decades.

Together, the operators will oversee a massive £1.2 billion boost to rail services with 500 brand-new modern carriages, room for 40,000 more passengers, 2,000 extra services a week and a host of improvements to deliver a modern, 21st Century passenger experience.

Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin said: "We promised

passengers a world class rail service that would make the Northern Powerhouse a reality – and I'm delighted that we have found 2 operators that will deliver exactly that. As a one nation government we are committed to closing the economic gap between north and south. These deals, which have been confirmed today, and the joint management of the franchises, will bring the Northern Powerhouse to life."

The franchises will be jointly managed from Leeds by the Department for Transport and Rail North Limited - which represents 29 local authorities across the north.

Sir Richard Leese, chair of the Association of Rail North Partner Authorities said: "Passengers were clear that they wanted to see a transformation including a lot more newer, better, trains running

more regularly with a step change in services provided off-peak and on Sundays. They also wanted improvements to stations and changes to make ticketing easier - and thanks to all the partnership work by Rail North and the Department for Transport, that's exactly what we are able to announce.

"This is another crucial move towards devolution for the north. Rail North will now play a major role in the management and development of both new franchises, providing an excellent platform for further development and full devolution in the future. Rail North will work very closely with Transport for the North to drive forward economic growth by developing visionary proposals to deliver radically improved connectivity across the North. Customers and community groups will have a real stake in the future of their intercity rail travel. The new TransPennine Express will connect the North and keep people moving and communities prospering across the region."

Local photographer achieves worldwide recognition

Altrincham photographer Martin Hambleton has recently been recognised at the 10th Annual Black and White Spider Awards based in Beverley Hills, - a leading international award honoring excellence in black and white photography.

Martin submitted two photographs from a bridal fashion shoot in the Portrait category. Just 11 photographers from the UK were shortlisted as nominees. Almost 8,000 entries were received from 74 countries.

Basil O'Brien, the awards Creative Director, said, "The images that Martin submitted were exceptional in the portrait category representing black and white photography at its finest, and we are pleased to present him with the title of Nominee".





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Triple appointments for Blackstone

Litigation and Property Law Firm Blackstone Solicitors in Hale, Cheshire has expanded their team further, appointing three new staff members. Nick Jackson joins as Commercial Property Partner, Usman Anwar as a Solicitor and Hannah Kuller as a paralegal.

A further accolade for the team is the title of Vice President of Trafford Law Society for 2016, which has been given to Litigation Solicitor Geraldine Stephens. Geraldine joined

Blackstone last year.

Commenting on the above appointments Managing Director, Emma Nawaz said: "When I set up the practice in 2010 my ambition was to build a strong team around me.

"A professional, passionate team with a tenacious approach. Each new employee brings a range of experience and professionalism with them, and will allow the firm to continue to expand as we work with an increasing number of clients to win cases."



Businesses still fiercely opposed to congestion charging

Research carried out on the eve of the seventh anniversary of Manchester's congestion charge referendum in 2008 has shown attitudes towards the concept in the region have not softened.

In 2008, a majority of voters in all of the region's 10 boroughs voted against the plans in the December 12 vote, with 79% no, and 21% in favour of the charge. However, in a recent Federation of Small Businesses' poll, 91% of its members said they would vote against congestion charging if another vote was held today. Just 9% would vote yes.

The same poll asked respondents whether they thought congestion charging would be damaging to their business. In total, 66% said yes, 21% said no, with 13% unsure.

However, despite the widespread opposition to congestion charging, 58% of respondents were resigned to

the fact congestion charging would happen in Greater Manchester in their lifetime. An optimistic minority of 42% thought otherwise.

FSB Regional Chairman for Manchester & North Cheshire, Simon Edmondson, said: "It won't surprise anyone that attitudes to congestion charging haven't softened one iota. Our research shows two thirds of our members believe it will damage their business, and it's hard to see how these attitudes will change until public transport makes a quantum leap in quality, choice and price.

"Back in 2008 many small businesses said they saw congestion charging as a regressive form of taxation which would hit hard. There were also concerns such a scheme would see a decline in customer footfall, and would make recruiting staff more difficult. It seems those are still valid concerns today."

New home announced for Greater Manchester Marathon



Organisers of the ASICS Greater Manchester Marathon have confirmed that the race will move to a new venue, Emirates Old Trafford, for the 2016 race on Sunday 10 April.

The original Marathon was based at Stretford's Longford Park when Xtra Mile Events first brought the race back in 2012 after a decade's absence. In 2013, 2014 and 2015 the finish and race village were outside MUFC's Old Trafford stadium.

The finish as well as the charity and race village will be located outside Emirates Old Trafford, which provides great facilities for runners and supporters and, just ten minutes from Manchester city centre, features fantastic transport links. The new venue will also allow the finish line to double in width to 8 metres.

The start of the ASICS Greater Manchester Marathon remains close to the Trafford Arch on the A56, which

is just a short walk away from the race village.

Race Director Simon Hill commented: "I am delighted to announce the move to Emirates Old Trafford.

"This move has been part of our long-term plans for the development and growth of the race, and due to changes in the football security environment put in place we have brought the plans forward to 2016.

"This is a positive move for the Marathon as it joins the Manchester Half Marathon at this fantastic venue, and we are looking forward to delivering a great event at the race's new home this April."

This is the UK's flattest, fastest and friendliest marathon, and the British-only prize fund attracts a top quality British elite field as well as many international runners. It's also the perfect race for first time marathoners, charity runners and those seeking a PB or qualifying time, whilst being renowned for its huge crowd and community support and the unique entertainment around the course.

15,000 places are available, and it was voted the UK's Best Marathon by runners at The 2015 Running Awards for the 2nd consecutive year.

Cancer Research UK is the official charity and the Christie charity and Royal Manchester Children's Hospital Charity are the official local charities for Marathon this year.

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Former apprentice is new operations director

Jim Lang has been appointed UK commercial goods operations director for tissue makers SCA including responsibility as site manager of its Manchester mill, where he started his career as an apprentice in 1990.

Jim was based at the Trafford Park mill until 2012 and since 2014 has been the company's European performance director.

The Manchester mill is the home of SCA's premium household brands Cushelle toilet tissue and Plenty kitchen towel, as well as manufacturing 'own brand' products for leading

supermarket chains.

"As a local lad, I'm delighted to be back in Manchester," said Jim. "The mill has a fantastic workforce, excellent products and a safety record that's second to none within the industry – and we're determined to maintain that alongside a commitment to increase performance and provide the highest quality service to our customers."

As well as his role as site manager at Manchester, Jim is also taking overall lead for SCA paper mills in North Wales and Northumberland.



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Orbit walks the fitness talk in new collaboration with Life Leisure

A team from Orbit Developments in Stockport is putting its best foot forward on a new fitness and wellbeing initiative in collaboration with Life Leisure.

Life Leisure is a not-for-profit social enterprise company focused on promoting the benefits of a healthy, active lifestyle via its 15 health and fitness centres and other sports and leisure products and initiatives across Stockport.

The tie up with Orbits' Stockport team will see 15 employees adopt Life Leisure's actiLIFE

technology programme, which uses a combination of an 'accelerometer' plus web-based monitoring and remote coaching to stimulate greater physical activity.

actiLIFE is aimed at people who would describe themselves as 'inactive'. The aim is to encourage participants to be more active by making them more aware of their activity levels.

Rachael Maddox, Marketing Assistant for Orbit Developments, said the idea had gone down well with colleagues. "It's a great time of year to be talking about getting fit, and the prospect

of trialling out some new wearable technology is really exciting. Our team has a variety of roles from building management to leasing surveyors and it will be interesting to see where they start out and how far they can get with the 'pebble'."

According to research by Price Waterhouse Coopers, the annual cost of sickness absence has climbed to £29 billion for UK organisations.

Keen to drive a positive culture of health and wellbeing at work, Orbit have invited Life Leisure to present the actiLIFE initiative to their customers at their next networking morning at Regent House.

Rachael Maddox again: "We have hundreds of people working on our 12 offices across Stockport who might benefit from a more active lifestyle. By trialling actiLIFE ourselves we are in a better position to talk about it to



our customers in due course."

Michelle Childs, Senior Physical Activity Development Officer at Life Leisure, said, "We are thrilled that Orbit Developments are taking part in actiLIFE. We hope that the programme will have many benefits for everyone who is taking part and through providing motivating group and individual challenges and online support, participants will see improvements in their overall health and wellbeing."

Orbit Developments' actiLIFE trial will run for 12 weeks, with participants' progress being measured at the half way and end stages by the Life Leisure team.

Challenge 4 Change links up with university's 'united in manchester' summer school



Activity centre Challenge 4 Change has become an official partner of a University of Manchester summer school for students from around the world.

The indoor teambuilding venue at Trafford Park will host participants in the first week of the United in Manchester programme, which will run from July 4 to August 4 this year.

They will spend a day at Challenge 4 Change undertaking activities designed to foster a team spirit and trust in others, as well as building self-confidence and self-esteem.

United in Manchester was conceived by Paul Cowell, lecturer at University of Manchester's School of Materials.

The summer school will bring together students from Europe, the Americas and the Far East to work on concepts for new products that have the potential for commercialisation.

Last year's inaugural event attracted participants from 11 countries and the 2016 event is expected to be even bigger.

Paul said: "We have been greatly impressed with the team-building activities at Challenge 4 Change and are delighted that the organisation has now become an official partner of United in Manchester.

"It will make a big contribution to the course by encouraging people from different disciplines and cultures to work together, which is something that modern employers require in this global industrialised world."

Dave Djordjevic, chief executive of Challenge 4 Change, said:

"We are delighted to become the official team pursuits partner for United in Manchester.

"The programme is a great initiative to promote collaboration and innovation among participants from across the globe.

"Our involvement will increase awareness of Challenge 4 Change in the higher education sector, both in the UK and overseas.

"We look forward to hosting the students participating in the 2016 United in Manchester summer school and to helping them to bond and learn the benefits of working together."



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news

Dragons start young with pocket money pitch

Budding young entrepreneurs from across the UK pitch their business ideas in this brand new CBBC series, presented by Steph McGovern and filmed at Media City UK.

Vying for a year's worth of pocket money to invest in their idea, the 8 - 14 year olds who come up with the winning pitch will also secure the priceless help of an industry guru to kick-start their business.

From fashion to social media, toys and games to products and inventions, each episode is themed and features six pitchers or pitching teams. The 'business gurus' appearing are:

Michael Acton Smith, creator of *Moshi Monsters*.

Jamal Edwards, founder of *SBTV*.

Claire Gavin, head of innovation at *Pets at Home*.

John Graham, founder of *Go Outdoors*.

Myleene Klass, fashion designer and businesswoman.

Hussein Lalani, co-founder *99p Stores*.

Rob Law, inventor of the *Trunki suitcase*.

Levi Roots, *Reggae Reggae Sauce* founder and chef.

Sarah Jane Thomson, founder of children's national newspaper *First News*.



This series started with a theme of food. The young entrepreneurs sought to impress 'business guru' Levi Roots. Ideas range from 'Real Meal Pizzas' to DIY lunch boxes

for kids and 'Sludge' homemade spreadable fudge.

The pitchers first have to secure the support of business buddy from a panel of top young entrepreneurs. The pitcher with the most votes can choose one buddy who voted for them to help them to shape their plans.

Of the six ideas put forward only three can make it through to be pitched to Levi Roots. Once they're face to face with Levi, they have one chance to call for help from their buddy by pressing the 'Pause My Pitch' button.

Only one idea can come out on top, securing a year's worth of pocket money - £322.40 - to invest in their idea and the chance to learn the recipe for success from Levi himself.

Host Steph McGovern described the concept in more detail:

What are you hoping the Pocket Money Pitch team will find in the nationwide search for young businesses?

"Kids have some of the best ideas - bringing new eyes to old problems. The potential of the young people in this country is unlimited and this new show will encourage them to believe in themselves and have a go at taking on the business world."

Were you impressed by the ideas on Pocket Money Pitch?

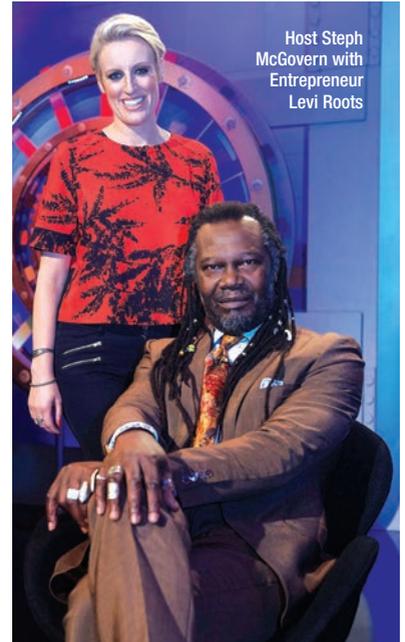
"I was more than impressed, I was blown away by them because they were just so original. They were so well thought through and professional. They thought about every element. They hadn't just said I really want to sell something - they thought about the name, the branding, the drawings, the marketing, and that was really impressive. It felt like they were well ahead of their years."

Were there any ideas which stood out for you?

"There were two lads from Wales who'd come up with an idea to make dens from small squares of material that you can Velcro together. It was such a simple but great idea. They were so young but the way they presented it was unbelievable."

Is there a new business idea which you wish you'd come up with?

"As I stood there and I heard the ideas for the first time, I thought



that's a really good idea, how come no-one else has thought of this? For example, there were two young girls who came up with studs for wellies in order to not slip in mud and I just thought that was genius, that it must already be out there and it isn't. I did look at several of the young people and thought, you're going to be millionaires one day."

Which entrepreneurs do you admire?

"Ben Towers, who is one of the Pocket Money Pitch 'business buddies', is 17 years old, and set up his business when he was 11. He's overcome so many hurdles to get his business out there because he's under 18 - he had to do various different things to get around the bureaucracy of setting up a business, he's amazing. I'm convinced one day he's going to be the next Branson and in fact, Branson recently tweeted about him to say he's one of the UK's most exciting entrepreneurs."

Why do we need to encourage young people to be entrepreneurs?

"Business leaders regularly complain that young people don't leave school with the right skills. Encouraging young people to be entrepreneurs makes the connection between school and the world of work, teaching them about practical thinking, team-work, communication and financial literacy. This is vital if we are to fill the skills gap and get the economy moving more."

Pocket Money Pitch airs on the CBBC channel on Mondays at 5.30pm.

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Detailed planning submitted for Altair



Nikal has submitted a detailed planning application for the first phase of 'Altair'; it's highly anticipated £70 million, 4.5 acre mixed-use scheme in Altrincham Town Centre.

Plans for phase one include the construction of an iconic contemporary building marking

the gateway to Altair and the town centre on Moss Lane, opposite the Tesco superstore. The building will provide 59 high quality one and two bedroom apartments with leisure retail space on the lower floors.

Integrated into the scheme is a new grand entrance for the ice rink and new landscaped public realm to include outside seating for a new café.

Work is scheduled to start in Spring 2016, and further phases of construction are planned for Altair, which will bring additional new homes plus bars, restaurants, retail outlets and Grade A office accommodation.

The development will be linked directly to the new tram, bus and train Transport Interchange via a new public walkway.



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interview

Engineering the



interval became MD in September. The re-structuring was difficult, but it allowed us to keep the business going, and also to invest in the new warehouse, academy and offices. And also to expand. We're back up to over 250 people employed throughout the UK."

Are there any specific cultural changes you have brought to the business?

"I tried to make connections with the introduction of works forums and works councils. The existing culture was very old fashioned, for example, the managers ate in a different canteen to the workforce. So, we made changes from a very inward-

GM Business Connect recently caught up with Wayne Jones, newly appointed Chief Sales Officer for MAN Diesel & Turbo SE which has its UK headquarters in Stockport, and this year's President of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

MAN Diesel & Turbo SE is the oldest industrial company in Germany. The business has a true Global reach, and acquired UK engineering business Mirrlees Blackstone, Ruston and Paxman in 2000, taking over both the existing business and extensive site occupying a large area of Hazel Grove in Stockport. As an established business Mirrlees had long been supporting the local community in Stockport through large scale employment of the local workforce, with roots going back to the original site established at the beginning of the 20th century.

When MAN Diesel took over in 2000, it was the introduction of Wayne Jones as Managing Director in 2005 that took the struggling business through a serious re-evaluation, re-aligning the core business away from manufacturing to support and servicing.

2009 saw work begin on a brand new multi-million pound site in Hazel Grove, which included a purpose-built training academy plus a 90,000 sq ft warehouse facility.

It was the development of this training academy, along with support for the North West region and, in particular, the engagement of young people, that brought Wayne the news in October 2015 that he was going to be awarded an OBE. In a year that also saw a promotion to the German Board of MAN Diesel & Turbo SE (the first by a Britain), as well as a move to President of the GM Chamber, it seems that Wayne will certainly have a busy 2016 coming up. We caught up with him at MAN Diesel UK HQ in Hazel Grove to find out more:

How much autonomy did you get from Germany during your time as MD, also, what have you added to the business in terms of culture?

"When I was appointed MD in 2005 I enjoyed a huge amount of autonomy. We enjoyed a very de-centralised approach as long as our figures were on track. We had a difficult start. We were still manufacturing then but our cost base was too high for the global market. However, we had a very strong after-sales business. Unfortunately, we had to do a lot of re-structuring so we had to downsize, especially as we were haemorrhaging money at the time. From there we have been profitable since 2006."

Were you brought in specifically for that re-structuring?

"I was brought in to run the after-sales in May, then made deputy MD in June, and after a short



future

looking production-orientated direction to a service-based customer-focused outward looking business, and we broke a lot of barriers achieving that. It wasn't done overnight though. We changed the management team, we changed our relationships with the unions and re-defined the relationship with our own people. This was a great success, and created a new culture within the terms of a Global German conglomerate which in turn had its own culture. In fact, we brought a new attitude towards being far more customer-focused to bear on the original German attitudes."

How much of an impact did you have on the German board?

"MAN bought the company in 2000, then endured losses for the next four years. Once we made our changes it must have been noted as the board asked me to lead the Global after-sales business in 2010."

What cultural differences do you note between the German and UK sides of the business?

"The Germans have kept a very strong hold on their industrial heritage, particularly their manufacturing base. There is a huge



Joshua Schofield

Craft Apprentice Field Service
 In 2nd year of 4 year apprenticeship, studying HNC Mechanical Engineering at Stockport College.
 Spent 8 months off site at local engineering school for practical engineering training.

amount of talent coming through as a lot of young Germans want to be engineers which is very different to the UK at the moment. In Germany, competition is high, so capability is far better than the UK. This drives quality. Saying that, they are more inward-looking. British culture and heritage give us an International bias. As well as enjoying being the International language of choice, we tend to be more Internationally 'compatible' than maybe the French or the Germans."



Are you re-locating to Augsburg, Germany in your new role as board member?

"I will have an office there, however, in my role in sales and after-sales, a significant amount of my time will be spent with customers around the world - the shipping industry, power markets, for example - these are located not just in Europe but Globally."

How many apprentices are working with the business?

"In 2005, the business under various owners hadn't taken on an apprentice for about 20 years. After our re-structure, we took on our first apprentice in 2007. Then at least three every year following that, and last year the number had grown to 10. It's absolutely crucial the business recruits apprentices. I currently do a lot of work on this with the Chamber. In a workforce of 14,000 around the Globe, MAN currently have 1,200 apprentices - most of which are in Germany."

"The situation in Germany is that they don't have problems in recruiting - many young people want to be engineers. In the UK, France, and the US for example we have real difficulty recruiting. There

are far more graduates seeking positions than apprentices, and we need to address this imbalance.

"The reason apprentices are so important is that when you bring in a young person who is 16-18 years old you can guide them through how your business works far easier than an older person. For us they learn the right work ethic, and they can be trained to a much higher degree. Our programme is extremely strong. They spend time in every department - not just a few days but many months. This means that if someone has become a salesperson, they have been in the warehouse, engineering, they've been in finance - so they understand cashflow. They understand delivery expectations and design issues for example. This creates a well-rounded individual at a younger age. With graduates we go through a similar process, however, as they are older the mindset is noticeably different. This can make it harder in terms of work readiness. The other aspect to the apprenticeship scheme is that if the skillsets are there, along with a requirement for further education, then we'll sponsor them through a degree programme. The reason we'd be happy to do this would be because that in the first instance they would need to be extremely



Photography by Martin Hambleton

 Article continues on next page

interview

Engineering the future



competent, and through connecting in this way we'd hope they would have a loyalty to the business.

"I feel that by working with young apprentices we can build core skills, human skills. The old values of timekeeping, working hard, being able to operate in a team, accepting both good and bad feedback."

Do you think the lack of interest in engineering as a vocation in the UK is a problem that starts in early education?

"It's difficult for many education resources to give advice on careers unless they have experience themselves. There is still a stigma of the engineering industry being just about fixing cars in grubby overalls, which is far from the truth. The digitalisation in our industry is massive. So, rather than complaining about this the answer is for industry to connect more with the education system. This can be in the form of industry giving lectures, doing mentoring, work experience for example. In Stockport we have got together a website called gandercareers.com bringing together schools, colleges

and universities into a menu that can connect into businesses. So far we've got four education facilities tying into 20 local businesses. This will help to give young people a better choice in what they would like to do from an early age.

"In my position as Chamber President I see skills as the absolute top priority. My Presidential themes will have apprenticeships at the top with International trade and of course the manufacturing sector in general as strong issues. In my mind the skills gap will mean this industry in the UK will really struggle in the next 10-15 years if we don't act now. The skills gap is huge. It's not just about convincing the young people either, it's actually the parents. They are saying there's no real opportunities in engineering as the perception is that the UK is not really manufacturing anymore. Actually, the facts are quite different. Our GDP across Greater Manchester has actually gone up, which tells us things about efficiency and innovation. This trend is upwards, and the thing that will restrict us in the future will be the age profile. The average age profile across the

engineering sector is 55!

"We are forgetting though that there are a lot of SME's out there which are doing extremely well. They may not be the large conglomerates of the past but a thriving industry is still there."

Some businesses would say taking on apprentices cost too much in time and resources, what are your views on this?

"It's easy for a large business like ourselves to devote internal training facilities and HR resources to taking on apprentices, but the average size of an SME workforce in this sector is 19 or 20. Help is available through the Council and Chamber, however, this is sporadic. All I can suggest is that an apprentice is an investment for a business, not for next year but for years into the future. What I can say is from my experience of apprentices is that if you train them in the right way, and you make the right connection with them, then they become a fantastic asset to your workforce."

Can you describe your training academy in more detail, also, if someone wanted to apply to the

academy, how would they go about it?

"Basically our academy does three things. Firstly, our customers get training on the product. They invest in risk-free training on the actual engines we provide. Secondly, we use it to train our own people, and thirdly, we don't just train our apprentices on those engines, we have opened the facility out in terms of our corporate social responsibility. We've had over 500 young people through the academy giving them experience from an hour or two up to a few weeks' work experience. This not just working on the engines but we offer theory as well as other skills – CVs, presentation skills. We offer this service free of charge to schools, academies, colleges and universities.

"If you wanted to join MAN Diesel as an apprentice then you would need to apply when we are selecting people. The role of the academy is then crucial to our apprentices, and they would spend a prolonged time working there as part of their training."



focus

The business of community



Local success story focuses on giving back

The LifeCentre in Sale is Trafford's newest and brightest centre for conference, community and events. Built on Washway Road, with striking glass features and fresh, lively colours, the LifeCentre has caught the imagination of local people since opening as a social enterprise in 2013. The facility has quickly grown its reach welcoming hundreds of

Trafford based businesses, charities and public-sector bodies who hire the various rooms in the building with thousands of people visiting each month.

As well as hosting top-class conferences and meetings, the centre and its staff regularly put on successful community events like a recent Christmas dinner for local senior citizens, run in partnership with Sale Lions and sponsored by Trafford Business Club. 80 local seniors were given a warm welcome, a fantastic free lunch and a lovely Christmas present.

Organiser Helen Allen said *"We're so proud of being a place which connects local businesses to each other and to the community. Everyone here has had a really fun and rewarding day getting into the true spirit of Christmas - showing love and generosity to people!"*

The story behind the LifeCentre is fascinating. A £3.5m investment from a collective of local people

made at the height of the recession, the LifeCentre is wholly owned by LifeChurch Manchester who have met on the Washway Road site since the 1960s. After over a decade of fundraising, they made the bold move to commission the new building in 2011. The focus has always been people - a place for the people of the South Manchester to meet, connect and grow and the staff there see visitors as far more than customers resulting in the vast majority of their business being repeat bookings and referrals.

If you haven't been to an event at the LifeCentre before, there is an Open Day on Wednesday 23 March.

It's a chance to look round, network with other Trafford businesses over canapes, prosecco and soft drinks and hear a few stories from the LifeCentre's Chair of Directors, Sean Sankey about how this interesting new organisation has become a local success story over the last few years.

Why not call in anytime from 3.30pm and 5.30pm on Wednesday 23 March and pick up a tour of the building, a glass of bubbly and meet some other local businesses.

For any enquiries or questions, please contact Andy, Jane or Helen at the LifeCentre on **0161 850 0770** or **enquiries@lifecentremcr.com**



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Register at EventBrite - LifeCentre, or just turn up on the day. For further information call **0161 850 0770**.

interview

Breaking records



When we get invited to interview a 7 times Guinness world record holder for land and water speed records there was a moment that we wondered what could we discuss? When that person turns out to be Mike Newman, founder of charity 'Speed of Sight', it's even more astonishing, especially the fact that Mike has been blind for most of his life.

GM Business Connect dropped into Speed of Sight's offices in Swinton to meet with Mike and his team, and chatted with Mike and fellow founder John Galloway about what the charity was all about, and also how local businesses were engaging with them:

Mike, let's start at the beginning. How did a blind bank manager become a world record holding charity entrepreneur?

"My journey started in 2001 when I realised I wanted to experience some of the things that I would have done if I could see. I wanted to know what it was like to ride motorcycles and drive cars as fast as I could, as if I was sighted. I achieved my first land speed record on a bike in 2001. Then moved on to a car a few years later. In 2003 I achieved my first land speed record in a car. This meant that I was meeting a lot of other disabled people, with different disabilities, the nature of which meant they had lost their licences, or they had never had one. I was finding they wanted to achieve the same sense of exhilaration and excitement that I was experiencing.

"This started me to think about how to offer that to them. It was quite simple really. The idea was to create cars with dual controls and steering

wheels. Nothing hi-tech. They would be open to the elements to make the experience exciting, yet safe enough to keep anyone from getting hurt.

"This idea kept on going round and round with me, and it wasn't until a trip to London with John that I mentioned this – how it would work, how it would impact people's lives, and I asked him if he would help me pull it together.

"This came at a crossroads in my professional life as manager in a bank. I realised that if I was serious about managing this project I had to commit to it full time. We both quit our day jobs and started what was then an organisation called 'Speed of Sight'. We then had a stroke of luck in meeting the owner of the industrial estate we are currently located on,

and we got our offices. Not just that, but the owner funded our first car.

"Being located here means we could lay down some roots, establishing a small team around us. From there we realised in a corporate environment that we needed to create and work as a registered charity. We've got a great set of trustees and things are going well. We have three vehicles at the moment, with another two currently being built.

"The idea is to eventually have 20 cars – 10 for the track and 10 buggies. The buggies would cover two tasks – off road and track.

Why both buggies and track cars?

"The buggies are taller and offer more room which is better for some people. We recently went to Lockerbie with our buggy where we enjoyed the use of a farmer's land. This was wonderful for our teenage disabled people who took part. We try to





Mike Newman



John Galloway

at the speed of sight

go all over the country using a mix of race tracks, overflow car parks for example."

Where in Manchester do you go?

"Typically we use the Intu Trafford Centre. They donate their overflow car park to us once a month mostly and a great time is had by not just the drivers but people come down to enjoy watching us too."

John then suggested "It's fine watching a video of the action, but to experience it live adds a whole new appreciation to what we achieve and the real difference we make to people's lives."

Where else does the charity visit?

"We have a couple of days booked at the Three Sisters Race Track in Wigan, we're going back to South Wales, Bedford, Birmingham and Scotland. We want to be a national event. There are people wanting to do it all over the country. So, a big challenge for us is breaking out of the Northwest. Saying that, we will always be committed to our roots and its an aim for us to have our own track. This would not just offer driving experiences but would provide real opportunities for disabled people to get involved with maintenance of the cars, looking after the venue, basically making the whole experience as inclusive as possible."

We notice there are no windows or windscreens in the vehicles. Is this important?

"Yes, that's deliberate. I wanted people to experience the speed they are doing, even if it's only 20 miles an hour" John then added "It's a sensory overload, a brand new experience. Even as they are wearing a helmet they can still feel

the force of the wind and rain, smell the fuel, hear and feel the roar of the engine, and experience lots of mud when offroading!"

What is your relationship as a charity with local and national businesses?

"We try and work with a lot of businesses. John does most of the corporate networking while I'm more admin based, plus of course working with the vehicles at and between events. Most of our connections are with businesses, and at least 90 per cent of our income comes from businesses and direct from business owners. But we desperately need to increase that revenue. Without that income we can't build any more cars or deliver more experiences."

"We aim to offer the experiences free for disabled people, so we get companies and individuals to sponsor or fund a day. When we were at the Trafford Centre last year we had a massive donation from a Birmingham businessman of £10,000 which funded 100 free experiences. That made a massive difference to us. We're happy to follow a similar process this year, and John has developed an offer called 'Buy one, give one'. This involves a business buying a day – bringing customers or their teams along. They get to drive the car, and the cost of that experience covers them plus also covers a disabled person driving on that day as well. This gives them a unique opportunity to meet with the

people they have funded, interact with them, even the opportunity to drive blindfolded to feel exactly what it's like for disabled people."

Are you looking at any more speed records, and what are your motivations now for racing?

"My ambition was originally to break the 200mph land speed record which we did in 2014. The record attempts now are there to raise money for the charity. In October 2015 we set a new record of 120mph for driving an HGV blind. We're aiming to get over 100mph in a boat later this year too."

"My motivation is to now get money into the charity, get cars built, and to get people behind the wheel. We need to get space as soon as possible for the 5 vehicles that will soon be in use. At the moment any work done on vehicles is outside, and we need some



Chris

sort of garage or industrial space to work on them indoors."

We then met Chris who lost his vision 7 years ago to a virus.

It's heartening to think that Chris has been inspired by Mike and his achievements, and along with his ongoing associations with the charity doesn't simply want the opportunity to ride a motorbike again (Chris was a keen biker before he lost his vision), but seriously wants to challenge Mike to drag race!

Our last question was answered initially by John: **What would define your view of success?**

"Success for us would be to own somewhere that we would call our centre of change. This would provide off-road and on-road experience for disabled people. We'd look to offer conference facilities, have a small museum for the vehicles Mike has driven,"

Mike then added: "If this dream comes to fruition then we'd look at a workforce of at least 50 percent disabled people. People doing real and relevant work."

THE RECORDS

- 2001** He rode an Aprilia Falco 1000cc V twin motorbike and reached 89mph after only 3 days practice.
- 2003** Land speed record 144mph. Mike drove a supercharged XJR Jaguar at Elvington Airfield, York. He did it to raise money for Guide Dogs for the Blind and Vision 2020.
- 2005** Mike broke his own record when he drove a BMW M5 to a top speed of 178mph and averaging a speed of 167mph. It was filmed for Channel Five's Fifth Gear Programme.
- 2011** Gained as part of a team record with The Blades Aerobatic Team - Mike achieved the World blind aerial aerobatic record; flying the most consecutive loops in formation.
- 2013** Mike sets the first Blind Water Speed Record with an average of 93.58mph.
- 2013** Mike took back his Blind Land Speed Record with an average speed of 186mph.
- 2014** Land speed record - Mike broke his own record by driving at a landmark speed of 200mph.
- 2015** Land speed record - Mike drove a 5.5 tonne race truck at a speed of 120mph.



FIND OUT MORE
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apprenticeships

National Apprenticeship Week 2016 will run from 14 to 18 March this year, celebrating apprenticeships and the positive impact they have on individuals, businesses and the wider economy. Events will be held all around the country to showcase apprentices and apprentice employers.

Government grants for apprentices are available, and smaller companies with 50 employees or less may be eligible for grants for each apprentice they recruit. See www.apprenticeships.org.uk for further details. Also contact Salford City College or Trafford College for more information - details below.

Salford City College announces outstanding 82% Apprentice pass rate



Apprentice Dale Mitchell, who has just completed his Level 2 Business Admin qualification at Salford City College.

It was recently announced that those completing Apprenticeship qualifications at Salford City College have achieved an outstanding 82% pass rate.

This figure represents the number of students who completed and passed their framework in the 2014/15 academic year, and is over 13% above the previous year's national pass rate for Apprenticeships.

Debbie Ward, Director of Work Based Learning & Adult Funding, said: "Salford City College

currently has over 800 apprentices working with employers in a variety of industry sectors across Greater Manchester.

"We believe that our outstanding pass rate is down to the employers being paired with the right apprentice, and the fantastic support that our apprentices get from both their employer and the College."

The impressive announcement was made by Salford City College's Deputy Principal, Michael J Walsh, at a celebration event held for

those employers who are either currently working, or looking to work, with the College to deliver Apprenticeship frameworks. Employers in attendance included representatives from The Lowry, Salford City Council and ISG Construction.

In his welcome speech to the event's attendees, Michael said: "Tonight is our way of giving thanks to you, the employer, because without you, Apprenticeships

simply could not exist. It is with your support and guidance that our apprentices enter into the competitive world of work, to learn who they are and what they want to achieve."

The celebration event was held at Salford City College's student training restaurant The Glass House, where guests were served an exquisite two-course meal by students from the Hospitality and Culinary Arts department.

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SALFORD CITY COLLEGE

Science students reign supreme for second year running

A Science student from Trafford College is celebrating scooping a coveted Sir William Siemens Certificate, the second year running that a Trafford College student has won the award.

Muna Omar (20) from Manchester joined some of the UK's top STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) students at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester for the awards, which were first launched in 2014.

She was one of just ten young College students recognised by their teachers and Siemens as being the most outstanding students in their year.

Winners received the Sir William

Siemens Certificate and a cheque for £100, with their college being awarded £200 to invest in STEM activities.

Muna, a second year student on a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Applied Science course, was nominated for the award by Curriculum Leader for Science, Andrew Mould.

She began her studies at Trafford College in September 2014, sailing through the first year of her course with Distinction grades in every module. Currently studying the final modules of the programme including subjects such as Disease and Infections and Energy Changes, she is on target to achieve high marks in all of her subjects and



is likely to be awarded a final grade of 'Distinction* Distinction* Distinction*'. Muna plans to read Diagnostic Radiography at either the University of Liverpool or Bradford.

Tutor Andy Mould, commented, "Muna's work ethic has gained the respect of her tutors and peers alike and she can be relied upon to produce well researched work which reflects current cutting edge applications."

"Her tenacious attitude and appetite to her studies reflects a rare level of professionalism which will undoubtedly provide sound foundations for her future career."

"She is a wonderful ambassador for

the department and is a positive role model for other students studying a STEM subject."

Siemens UK College partnering programme represents a major part of its commitment to the UK engineering skills agenda.

Collaboration ranges from contributing to the teaching curriculum, to providing funding for equipment, to recognising and rewarding student excellence as the Sir William Siemens Certificate Award does.

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review

The business of conve

As part of pro-manchester's diary of sector-driven events, members from Manchester's creative and business sectors met on a rainy Friday morning at the end of January to discuss the business of convergence. This was an exploration of the creative, technical and legal implications of integrated media.

The venue was Salford University's MediaCity site, and the event was introduced by Dr Gordon Fletcher, Acting Dean of Salford Business School. After a warm welcome from Gordon, Dan Nolan, MD of theEword, took the chair and introduced a panel comprising Steve Kunczewicz, Head of IP and Media at Bermans, Ric Brooks, Commercial Director of Tunafish Media, Paul Gosling, Commercial Director of We Are Empire, and Chris Marsh, Director of Partner Development, UKFast.

Dan started by looking at what the subject meant. "Smart phones are the perfect demonstration of convergence. If you remember the 80's, you'd remember everyone carrying round large rucksacks. If you were a young professional of the time you'd carry pens, pads, calculator, Filofax, the day's post, newspapers, walkman, cassettes, camera, dictaphone, bankbooks, timetables. Nowadays all this is replaced by a smartphone. The point I'm making is that the delivery of media and technology has changed,



Dan Nolan, MD of theEword, introduces the panel.

converged, on a smaller group of devices. Convergence has brought media together into singular locations, and our behavior, our consumption has changed accordingly."

The panel was then asked what convergence meant to them?

Steve: "To lawyers, it probably means more detail in the T's and C's. From a professional services perspective it means the end of relying on the phrase 'We've always done things this way', and the fact you can't think along one line of thought anymore. People say that change is either a good thing or bad thing. I disagree, change is just a thing that you have to keep pace with."

Ric: "For me there are three key areas - innovation, customer trends and evolution, and it's all about the relationship between those three areas. If you look at something like 'Fitbit', where they offer wearable

technology to track fitness, they show innovation having an effect on customer trends. From the innovation of Fitbit's technology other companies are evolving with the technology, like PruHealth offering incentives in the form of vitality points where you can sync all the data to gain those points."

Paul: "From a media perspective it's about the integration of channels for us, which I guess is presenting a world of opportunity. Lots of different platforms converging not just physically but digitally. From a strategy perspective it's about identifying the grey areas. To see where markets have already been maximised, and then to find the lateral moves around them."

Chris: "For me it's just the notion of change. The sense that things will be out of date unless you keep up, and the risk associated with that. It's very exciting. I used to think convergence was using your telephone line to also hook up with the internet. The change is using things in more than one way."

Dan: "To summarise, convergence is both inevitable and a fact of life. It's going to happen, is happening, and change is at the centre of it. My next question is what has the past 12 months brought us in new developments from convergence?"

Chris: "Speaking from a technical perspective, there has been moves away from a phone to more use of

tablets and smart watches. Also, the ability to pay for things with my phone, without rooting for cards in wallets for instance."

Paul: "To mix things up a little we've got influencer marketing as a convergence channel within a media perspective. You've got a change in the last year - originally you had the brands trying to act as influencers, with convergence this is flipping around with brands going to influencers to see how they need to engage with their following".

Ric: "I'd use drones as an example. The cost of creating quality aerial shots has now tumbled from over a thousand pounds, and the drones themselves are perfect examples of converging technologies."

Steve: "The influencer point is really well made. The biggest thing I have seen over the past year is that once were fringe has now become mainstream. You're getting original series being created by Amazon, stars like Adam Sandler doing six-film deals with Netflix. The way Star Wars has been re-launched as a multi-platform event. However, this all ties in with a potential issue with influencers. The public can't necessarily see if an influencer genuinely loves a product or is being paid to love that product. I think the challenge over the next 12 months will be to enable the law to outpace tech and address this."

Dan: "We've looked at many areas of convergence from a positive viewpoint, but what are the problems, the threats, from convergence?"

Steve: "Personal privacy. Lawyers have



L-R Steve Kunczewicz, Head of IP and Media at Bermans, Ric Brooks, Commercial Director of Tunafish Media, Paul Gosling, Commercial Director of We Are Empire, Chris Marsh, Director of Partner Development, UKFast



urgence

been talking a lot about this. We've seen a lot of hacks and attacks recently. The PlayStation network, Talk Talk, Marks and Spencer, Morrisons. I think people are really starting to get a grip with how much personal data they share, and the law is changing around that now. People are starting to object to how much of their lives big business has a window into. You then get the European Union trying to make law around that and coming up with the right to be forgotten.

"The new data protection legislation going through Europe will make that feel like a constitutional right. It's all down to how it's regulated, how we deal with it, and I see this as a big thing over the next year or so."

Ric: "As far as business recruitment goes, if you're converging a lot of different skills together - it will make recruitment much more difficult. You'll need more multi-skilled staff, more all-rounders. I see this

as a real problem going forward."

Paul: "Convergence will bring a plethora of opportunity. Basically, stepping away from the angle of launching a website, then saying 'I need a Pinterest account, YouTube account, Twitter account, Facebook'. This is a scattergun approach. It's too easy to get distracted by the sheer amount of different channels available. It's all about looking at the concentrated opportunity that's available."

Chris: "It's a kind of apathy that 'It's not going to happen to me'. Steve gave some good examples of the bigger companies that have been hacked, however, there are many small businesses that lose data and simply don't know how to properly secure their information. With the emergence of different technologies and people storing more and more

data, the risk is getting higher."

Dan finished on the subject of risks: "The risks are quite ironic around convergence. As data and storage technology converge and becomes more convenient for us all, that lends itself to becoming a single point of failure. Businesses like UKFast can help companies keep their data safe in the cloud, but the businesses themselves need to identify the risks. There's also an irony in Ric's point. With a convergence of things, ironically, the convergence is lending itself more to multi-channeling, and discipline is getting spread quite thinly. The risk is that you end up with professionals who can do a lot of things but aren't experts in any of them, and also companies who try and do a lot of things, and risk looking like they aren't good at any one particular thing."

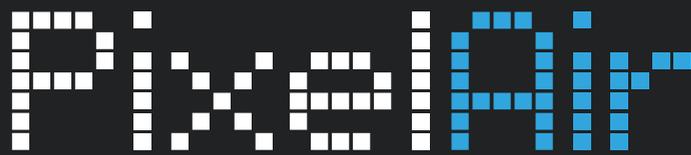
The flip side to this discussion was opportunities as a result of convergence. Steve nicely observed the rise of democratisation of opportunity – the ability for any individual or business to reach new



Dr Gordon Fletcher, Acting Dean of Salford Business School

and massive marketplaces if their message was valid or interesting, something that can only be possible due to the opportunities that convergence brings.

pro-manchester is a corporate membership organisation representing the 240,000 employed in the financial and professional service community in and around Greater Manchester. Boasting more than 300 corporate member firms, pro-manchester engages with over 5,000 individuals. For more details call **0161 833 0964** or email: **admin@pro-manchester.co.uk**



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preview

The GM Business



It's not too long now until the first major business expo rolls into Manchester and by all accounts it's looking to be bigger, better and bolder than the 2015 event.

Hosted by Manchester based organisers Grant Erskine Architects, the event will take place on the 15 March again in the heart of the city centre at the Deansgate Hilton.

GM Business Connect are once again media sponsors of the expo, and will be pleased to join the busy event along with a vibrant, eclectic mix of businesses on the day.

We caught up with Grant Erskine and asked for a comment:

"How awesome is it that we are back for our fifth year? It blows my mind that what started as a simple PR stunt for my Architect's practice has turned into an annual sell-out event. In fact we've sold out every year, with a

capacity crowd of 120 exhibitors at The Hilton Hotel on Deansgate.

"Last year we shattered our own records with over 1,200 people through the door. This means we had over 1,500 of the Northwest's (and beyond) finest in the room and this year we are going for more!

"I've got to say a massive thank you to our friends and supporters. Without you, this wouldn't be



possible. In fact, it's your support that has given us the confidence to host eight of these events across the nation (soon to be ten).

"GMBizExpo 2016 will have the same great feel as the previous years, buzzing and vibrant, with many of the great features such as our visitor bump table and two massive speed networking sessions, but we are also going to try a few new things.

"We've noticed that the days of the traditional seminar seem to have passed, so we're going to try out some smaller workshops as a real added value to our visitors.

"In fact, I am pleased to announce that we have just secured twice award winning global entrepreneur Jay

Allen to host a workshop of "Supercharging your Effectiveness in Business".

"We've also got Shaun Adams on the roster, an international sales guru, NLP master and Network Marketing Legend.

"Both these guys' stories are absolutely unbelievable and having personally worked with them both they are definitely not to be missed! We are also in final talks with a few more industry leaders, which we'll be announcing over coming weeks.

"Also this year for the first time, we've



Jay Allen



Shaun Adams



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Expo 2016



decided to host a launch party, a sort of warm up networking session. We've never done it before, but as I write this, we have nearly 400 people signed up to attend.

"If I don't see you before, I'll see you

on the 15 March at The Hilton. At our last count, we already have 81 stands gone and 600+ visitor passes snapped up - so it's promising to be a good one.

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social media

Social Media 2016: the world is changing

How do you confidently predict something in an industry that changes every day?

It's the dilemma I'm facing as I'm trying to break down the "what is bubbling under list" to a confident list of what WILL happen in 2016 vs what might happen in 2016 in the world of Social Media.

So as I write this - Snapchat gaining more adult users, Peach - the hot new app on the block (think Facebook meets Snapchat and Tumblr), Facebook for work - have been left off the list for the time being, but still keep an eye on them.

So what will happen in the changing world of Social Media 2016?

Live Streaming

You've heard us talk a lot in previous issues of GM Business Connect about the live streaming app Periscope.

Well, as we enter 2016, it may not have taken over the world, but it's still going strong and recent Twitter integration has seen the live streams playing directly in the Twitter Feed which is helping to build audiences.

The big change for live streaming is Facebook. They have been entering the streaming market over the past few months, initially starting with celebrities and influencers with verified accounts.

Here's the real biggie. As we read this, Facebook is rolling out the live streaming function to all personal profiles.

Business pages will not have this functionality just yet - but it means every single employee in your organisation will be exposed to live streaming and start to see the importance of live streaming for business.

So what do you need to prepare for?

Firstly - just as getting over the thought of taking selfies was a leap, now you have to get prepared to be filmed.

Then you need to have a Live Streaming strategy in place similar to your blogging strategy - what are you streaming, when are you streaming, who will be the presenter if you are having someone in shot?

Importantly what time will you allocate? Whatever air time you have - each stream takes at least the same amount of time in advance on the prep and then time after streaming for extra distribution. It's more time you need to allocate to your social media manager.

Twitter 10k

The biggest change in Twitter's history and it's most controversial.

Twitter's USP is that it's built around 140 characters - it's the brevity of the message that really makes it stand out in the market place.

Well, Twitter is currently testing a version which will allow 10,000 characters for a tweet to make it more appealing to the wider public (aka the mass appeal of facebook).

According to reports, the look of twitter will remain relatively unchanged, so the newsfeed will look the same with short traditional twitter messages in the feed - with an extra call to action to expand the content to it's larger form.

It's a risky move as it could make or break Twitter depending on whether it loses more hardcore users than it gains newbies.

The worry for us as marketers is that it will lead to lazy cut and paste marketing where the same posts are copied from LinkedIn or Facebook - with the 140 character count, people had to craft new messages in innovative ways to get attention.

When it happens, we'll have to roll with it - but I haven't met a Twitter user yet who has been keen on the changes.

Paid Social Increases

Organic Reach is far from dead, but on certain platforms (particularly

Facebook) it is getting much harder to be heard through the noise.

As more and more people join the various Social Media channels there is less attention on your posts and all the channels are pushing for more users.

Twitter is aiming for Facebook's audience. Facebook is aiming for the whole world. LinkedIn has allowed 13 year olds to join to build their college network pre-career...

So what happens when organic gets saturated? It goes back to the traditional model of paying for advertising to get seen.

The choice will be whether you start moving money from Traditional Advertising over to Social Advertising... or you expand your marketing budget to hit on both fronts.

With Facebook adverts you can start from as little as £3 per day and target page admins (i.e business owners) in a certain geographical area.

It's a low stake to start with - but just like Traditional you need to get the demographics, the copywriting and imagery right for it really to work.

Video Testimonials Increase

The number one way to build trust by testimonials in 2016 is Video Testimonials.

The number two way to build trust by testimonials in 2016 is LinkedIn Recommendations (and that's because the recommendation is attached to someone's account).

Both of those methods are hugely effective because we all know that many are sceptical about vague testimonials on a website without a full name.

2016 will see more and more businesses having video testimonials as part of their marketing campaign to help build trust and stand apart from the competition.

It's worth writing down a list right now from your LinkedIn

recommendations who could speak on camera about your business.

Social Media Training

In Media terms - Social Media is now getting old.

TV Shows, radio shows, magazines have all launched and gone in the time that Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter have been around - think about it - both Facebook and LinkedIn are over 10 years old and Twitter's breakthrough moment was back in 2007 so it's nearly a decade old in the public's eye.

Whilst companies have been dabbling around with Social Media for the past few years, 2016 will be the year where more corporates and more professional services firms start seeking Social Media training for all staff so that they can benefit from the online revolution.

It's worth thinking about the fact that a large percentage of people running Social Media for organisations have had no formal training and often little marketing experience.

We've seen a shift happening over the past few years from solopreneurs being adaptable and forward thinking to corporates wanting to be more agile and exposed in the market place.

Social Media Training will start to become part of the induction week for new employees and long term employees will need to be upskilled to the required level.



Alex McCann

Altrincham HQ

www.altrinchamhq.co.uk

finance

R&D Tax relief the Facts

2016 is now in full-swing, and as we approach the end of the financial year, we wanted to bring something different into the spotlight; Research and Development Tax Relief (R&D tax relief).

With so many businesses being completely unaware of the government backed scheme, it is likely that a large percentage of them could have up to hundreds of thousands of pounds available to claim back which could be used to fund further growth, amongst other benefits - an opportunity that shouldn't be missed.

This scheme was designed by the government in 2010 as an incentive to encourage companies to invest into the research and development of their field, in addition to rewarding innovative thinking from UK SMEs exploring new products and niche markets.

A common misconception is that R&D tax relief is only relevant and applicable to the manufacturing industry, when in fact there are a plethora of sectors whose research and development projects would qualify.

With this in mind, in this issue, we highlight some of the key points to take into consideration when it comes to R&D tax claims, and look at how this scheme has the potential to offer

a multitude of benefits for your business.

What qualifies for R&D tax relief?

To qualify for R&D tax relief, the project being carried out must look to achieve progression in a field of technology or science, whilst relating to your businesses current trade or a trade intended to start following the conclusion and result of the research and development that is carried out.

Small and medium sized businesses can benefit from an enhanced rate of R&D tax credits in comparison to larger businesses, providing that the business has:

- Fewer than 500 employees
- An annual turnover lower than €100 million
- A balance sheet total not exceeding €86 million

If these criteria are met, they are eligible to apply for the Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) Scheme and reap further benefits.

What costs are applicable to the R&D tax relief scheme?

There are a number of costs that if incurred throughout the duration of the research and development, can qualify as part of your claim.

- Employee costs: Any staff employed to be actively engaged in carrying out research and development that is under a direct contract, rather than a consultant or agency worker, is eligible to be included within the cost reclaimed.

In addition to this, paying a staff provider who is also involved with sourcing staff to have direct input with research and development can also be included within the claim.

- Materials, utilities and software: Physically consumable or transformable materials, in addition to power, water and fuel used directly in conjunction with carrying out a research and development project are all eligible to claim through R&D tax relief.

Not only this, but any computer software used to directly carry out R&D can be included. The only costs excluded from these claims are telecommunication and data costs.

When and how should you apply for R&D tax relief?

When submitting your corporation tax return, simply put an 'X' in box 99 (SME), and the enhanced expenditure in box 101 – as simple as an 'X' and a number!

However, we would recommend speaking to your accountant or a HMRC approved R&D specialist for advice and guidance when making your claim, to ensure that each section of criteria is correctly met, and that you claim back every penny from your research and development project.

You may also need to inform HMRC of why you feel your business is

eligible for R&D tax relief, in addition to a summary of the costs occurred.

There is normally a time limit of ensuring you make your claim within 2 years following the end of the tax return accounting period, and hopefully, after reading this article, you are still within this time frame!

If you do feel as though your business is eligible to make an R&D tax claim, it is important to remember to keep sufficient records of your project should HMRC request to see them, that way you can ensure that once you have applied, it is likely your claim will be successful.

What are the benefits?

As a result of a successful R&D tax claim, there are a myriad of benefits to your business. The relief can be utilised as a credit offset against a PAYE outstanding liability or used as a current year credit against Corporation Tax.

Should all liabilities be up to date then a repayable credit can assist any cash flow pressures within the business or to fund the launch of a new product or service, or the all-important investment into new equipment essential to the growth and service delivered by a business.

Ultimately, the championing result of the Research & Development Tax Relief Scheme is allowing businesses to grow and develop - something of great importance to SME's.



Les Leavitt

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www.lwaltd.com

R&D TAX RELIEF STATISTICS

Latest statistics show that over
33,000 businesses
have made claims under the SME scheme since it began.

Each year more than
£6 billion
of R&D tax relief savings is unclaimed by UK SME's.

The most common way for SMEs to claim R&D tax credits
is by deduction from Corporation Tax liability, with

10,470 claims
for this in the last recorded year.

wellbeing

When you've got something to say, say it well

There are times in every relationship when it's important to communicate how we're feeling to the other person. We may have issues, annoyances, be upset, or there may be something of special significance that needs a little time set aside in order to discuss fully.

It can be tempting to second-guess how our words will be received and what the reaction will be. This can be compounded if we're feeling uneasy or apprehensive at voicing how we feel. It can escalate in our minds into a stressful conversation.

Feeling this way can put us at a disadvantage before we even open our mouths. It can cause tension and awkwardness to occur in our relationship. If we anticipate problems, setbacks and disapproval before anything has even been said it can cause us to regard the other person in a negative light.

This view may have no bearing on reality, and yet over time can seriously influence the way we feel about the other person, potentially damaging the relationship.

So, let's look at those times when we really need to speak our mind in an effective way:

When we anticipate trouble we prepare mentally in order to protect ourselves. We can become defensive and that mindset will influence how we behave, the words we use, our tone of voice and our body language.

When we're feeling a little nervous it's far better to try to remain calm, ask questions and uncover all the facts, rather than jump to conclusions and

pre-empt what happens next.

Focus on a good outcome and think positively about what it is that you want. When we say 'I don't suppose', 'I know I'm wasting my time asking' or 'you won't like this, but' we're setting the scene for a negative outcome.

Many people don't realise how their words sound, what type of message they're unconsciously communicating or how they influence other people's perceptions. Gradually a positive or negative way of thinking becomes a habit. It's important to ensure that we develop good habits in our communication skills.

From the outset determine to scatter positive suggestions and assumptions into your conversations. It sews the seeds for your success.

Subtlety is the key.

Referring to something that you want to receive/achieve/or expect to happen in a positive way can smooth the pathway to your desired outcome and remove the possibility of any other result.

Be sure to present yourself well through your choice of words, your body language and tone of voice. You reinforce your message by nodding, smiling and accentuating all the positive benefits. Pause when you say something of particular significance and let your words take effect.

Don't rush when speaking as that can indicate discomfort, embarrassment, uncertainty or a lack of confidence in what you're saying. By speaking slower, you indicate that you're feeling calm, in control and happy to take your time.

Be aware of any areas of dissent or controversy and be ready to appreciate the other person's point of view; be prepared to acknowledge those concerns. Have considered responses ready in case you're challenged, or you might even choose to deal with some of those points before they're raised. By doing this you demonstrate that you've given serious thought to what you want to say.

Be prepared to give ground on things that are less important to you. Good negotiations include a readiness to compromise. If, for example, a young person wanted to go to a late night party a compromise might involve them agreeing to be dropped off or picked up afterwards at a particular time.

This could result in their parents agreeing to transport them, the young person is allowed to attend the party and the parents are happy at knowing the address and their child's travel arrangements.

Letting the other person claim credit for your good ideas can sometimes be a useful negotiation tactic. Guiding a discussion and interspersing ideas, hints or suggestions can sometimes result in those ideas being claimed by another person, as if they'd thought of them. You can smile, whilst getting what you want and allow them to feel good about their 'inspired' thinking. Being

generous about the outcome allows everyone to enjoy a win/win result.

When we're clear about our wishes and are projecting ourselves in a positive way we show others that we feel confident and are taking responsibility for our own happiness and decisions. Everyone around us benefits when we're calm and assertive. We can overcome objections, sometimes in advance of them being raised.

When we clarify our thoughts, overcome negative thinking and present ourselves as valuable, deserving and positive we're able to say what we've got to say in a constructive way.



Susan Leigh MNCH (ACC)

Susan runs Altrincham based **Lifestyle Therapy** offering a tailor made combination of counselling and hypnotherapy on a one-to-one or group basis.

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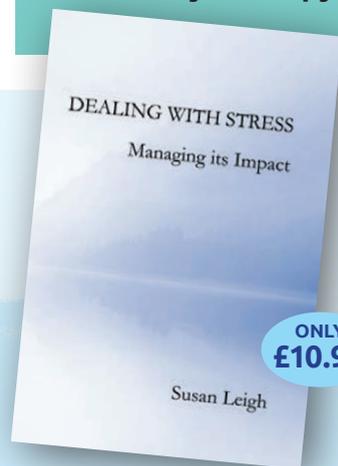
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ISBN: 9781910275092

For more information please call **0161 928 7880** or visit **www.lifestyletherapy.net**



digital marketing

Google search results 2015

Crucial data to adopt and use to help your business grow.

2015 confirms market leadership. Google and YouTube are the giants in the internet search field. With over 100 billion Google searches every month and hundreds of millions of daily views on YouTube, these giants dwarf the competition.

When Google speaks, as business owners we need to sit up and listen. The stats for 2015 give vital clues for effective search marketing and predict the future trends.

Not just 'what?' but more importantly 'what with?'

In 2015 Google reports that mobile searches now outnumber desktop searches. This immediately poses a number of problems and opportunities in equal measure.

Mobile searching relies on speed and accuracy. People are far less inclined to idly surf whilst on a mobile whereas they happily will browse for hours on a PC. This has massive implications for site content, ease of navigation and load speed which we will cover later.

Search strings give important insights into our mentality and priorities.

Obviously natural disasters draw billions of enquiries from people looking for information while expressing concern, outrage and shock. The European refugee crisis and the ongoing Syrian conflict being two prime examples.

The passing of celebrities again draws major search traffic for those wanting to express loss, concern and love. The deaths of David Bowie and Alan Rickman two cases in point.

Google has also noticed a rising trend which they are labelling 'micro moments'. This is where the searcher is displaying clear lines of intent with phrases such as 'I want' or 'I need'

'Micro Moments' should redefine our marketing approach.

We can perform all the demographic research, customer profiling and previous spend analysis we want but ultimately a consumer 'ready to act' is the perfect prospect.

'Micro moments' isolate these prospects perfectly. By tailoring our content, message and adverts

directly to them we can dramatically reduce ad spend and vastly improve ROI. Some key facts:

- 51% of mobile users discovered a new company to purchase from through Google search.
- 40% of online shoppers will wait only 4 seconds for a web page to load before moving on to a competitor when on a retail or travel site.
- 29% of mobile users will immediately switch to another app if they are dissatisfied with performance or content.
- 73% of searchers said consistent quality information and content was a major factor when selecting a website to purchase from.
- 61% of mobile users will be more likely to buy from companies who customise mobile information to their location.
- 33% of mobile users have purchased from a competitor not their normal outlet because the information was available immediately they needed it.

(Source: Google Insights)

These are startling insights and below you will find 3 key strategies you can use to tailor your marketing and take full advantage of these trends.

The three key strategies:

Be front and centre.

What do your customers search for? What keywords do they use? Do you appear consistently when prospects are searching?

Search yourself to see your presence and how effective it is. Do the same exercise with mobile and with YouTube. Make sure your message appears in as many different formats as possible and focus on the 'micro moment' phrases 'I want' and 'I need' to position yourself to gain maximum returns.

Be useful and to the point.

Our current era is all about speed. Give your consumers what they want exactly when they want it.

For prospects who 'need to know or learn', offer bite-sized information that is easily understandable and digestible to build brand.

For those who 'want to go or experience', show them you are nearby and ready to help.

For everyone who 'needs to do or experience', create mini guides and even branded videos which are informative and easy to follow. Short "Explainer Videos" of no more than 60 seconds can be very effective for getting your message across. These can often increase website conversion rates by 65%.

For customers 'who want to buy', give them easy navigation. Place one click purchase buttons in your store, on your app or through their phone.

Be quick.

Customers want their needs fulfilled NOW. Reduce any barriers to fast customer completion and make instant gratification as painless as possible.

Have your site mobile optimised not just enabled. Check and make sure everything loads at lightning speed. Add click to call buttons for immediate contact, one click payment buttons and one click

upsell buttons for instant sales, also include drop down menus to reduce load speed and typing.

Knowledge is power.

Use all the information from Google services to sharpen your marketing message, build your brand and attract new business more efficiently than ever. 2016 is going to be a great year for those who understand and implement these simple strategies.



Howard Jones

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diary dates

4 Networking

City Centre - Fridays Fortnightly
- 19 Feb, 4 Mar, 18 Mar... 12noon - 2.00pm
Venue Red Hot World Buffet,
48 Deansgate,
Manchester M3 2EG
Cost £15
Contact Brian Morrison 07719 782459

Cheadle - Fridays Fortnightly
- 19 Feb, 4 Mar, 18 Mar... 8.00am - 10.00am
Venue De Vere Hotel Cheadle,
Cheadle Royal Business Park,
Cheadle SK8 3FS
Cost £13
Contact Ian Lavin 07731 837936

Didsbury - Thursdays Fortnightly
- 11 Feb, 25 Feb, 10 Mar... 8.00am - 10.00am
Venue Grosvenor Casino Didsbury,
Wilmslow Road,
Didsbury M20 5PG
Cost £13
Contact Jim Frayne 07773 967757

Stockport - Fridays Fortnightly
- 12 Feb, 26 Feb, 11 Mar... 8.00am - 10.00am
Venue Bamford Arms, Buxton Road,
Stockport SK2 6NB
Cost £13
Contact Rachael Chiverton 07756 772950

Sale - Tuesdays Fortnightly
- 23 Feb, 8 Mar, 22 Mar... 8.00am - 10.00am
Venue Sale Golf Club, Sale Lodge,
Golf Road, Sale M33 2XU
Cost £13
Contact Paul Bercik 07816 282816
www.4networking.biz

Altrincham & Sale Chamber of Commerce
Breakfast Matters - Networking and breakfast
Thursdays 3 Mar, 7 Apr 8.30 - 10.00am
Venue Cresta Court Hotel, Church Street,
Altrincham WA14 4DP
Cost £10
Contact Anne Jardine 0161 941 3250
anne@altrinchamchamber.co.uk

Bowdon Business Club
Weekly every Friday - early networking
includes full breakfast 6.45am - 8.30am
Venue Mercure Bowdon Hotel,
Langham Road, Bowdon WA14 2HT
Cost £10
Contact Members@BowdonBusinessClub.co.uk

Business over Breakfast
Networking - Fridays fortnightly 12 Feb, 26
Feb, 11 Mar... 7.00 - 9.00am
Venue La Vina, 105/107 Deansgate,
Manchester M3 2BQ
Cost £15
Contact Tracy Heatley 07812 076946

Carrington Business Park
Networking
Mondays 15 Feb, 14 Mar 9.30am - 11.30am
Venue Carrington Business Park,
Carrington, Manchester, M31 4DD
Cost Free
Contact Susan Renshaw 0161 776 4000
susan.renshaw@cbpl.co.uk

Dynamic Networking
Free Business Networking
Sale - 3rd Tuesday monthly - 16 Feb, 15 Mar,
19 Apr 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Venue The Boathouse, Sale Water Park,
Rifle Road, Sale M33 2LX

**Stockport - 2nd Tuesday monthly - 8 Mar,
12 Apr 6.00pm - 8.00pm**
Venue The Old Rectory, 48 Churchgate,
Stockport SK1 1YG

**Wilmslow - 1st Wednesday monthly -
2 Mar, 6 Apr 5.30pm - 7.30pm**
Venue Hallmark Hotel, Stanley Drive,
Wilmslow SK9 3LD
Contact Natalie Lewis
natalie@dynamictnetworking.biz
www.dynamictnetworking.biz

Federation of Small Businesses

Bring a buddy networking
1st Monday - 7 Mar, 4 Apr 6.00pm - 8.00pm
Venue Orega Serviced Offices, Blue Tower,
MediaCity M50 2ST
Cost Free
3rd Monday - 15 Feb, 21 Mar
6.00pm - 8.00pm

Venue Stretford Hall, Chester Rd M32 0LG
Cost Free
FSB Pension Roadshow - 15 Feb
9.30am - 11.00am
Venue Lancashire County Cricket Club,
Emirates Old Trafford, Talbot Rd,
Manchester M16 0PX
Cost Free for members
Contact Simon Edmondson 07766 493 428
Simon.Edmondson@fsb.org.uk

First Friday Club
Networking - 4 Mar, 1 Apr, 6 May
1.00pm - 4.00pm
Venue Pall Mall Medical, 61-67 King Street
Manchester M2 4PD
Cost £15
Contact Stephen Iacovou 07872 463690
stephen.iacovou@cottsonsp.com

Forward Ladies
Women's Networking Power Business
Breakfast Club - 1st Wednesday Monthly
2 Mar, 6 Apr 9.30am - 11.00am
Venue Albert Schloss, 27 Peter Street,
Manchester M2 5QR
Cost £12
Contact 0845 6434 940
enquiries@forwardladies.com

GM Biz Expo 2016
Greater Manchester Business Expo
15 March 2016 10.00am - 4.00pm
Venue Hilton Hotel Deansgate,
303 Deansgate,
Manchester M3 4LQ
Cost Free (pre-registration required)
Contact team@thebixexpos.com
www.gmbizexhibition.co.uk

Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce
Action for Business Manchester
17 Feb, 13 Apr 7.30am - 9.30am
Venue Cloud 23, Hilton Deansgate,
Manchester M3 4LQ
Cost £15 (members free)

Action for Business Rochdale
1 Mar 12noon - 2.00pm
Venue Norton Grange
Manchester Road, Rochdale
OL11 2XZ
Cost £15 (members free)

Action for Business Oldham
19 Apr 7.30am - 9.30am
Venue Oldham Event Centre
SPORTSDIRECT.COM Park
Furtherwood Road, Oldham
OL1 2PA
Cost £15 (members free)

Quarterley Economic Breakfast
24 Mar 8.00am-10.00am
Venue Elliot House, 151 Deansgate,
Manchester M3 3WD
Cost Free

Stockport Breakfast Club
18 Feb, 14 Apr 7.15 - 9.00am
Venue Alma Lodge Hotel, 149 Buxton Road
Stockport SK2 6EL
Cost £30+VAT (Members £15+VAT)
Contact events@gmchamber.co.uk
0161 393 4343

Handbags & Briefcases
Women's networking
PR with Defero Consultancy
22 Mar 10.00am - 12noon
Venue The Parrswood, 356 Parrs Wood
Road, Didsbury M20 6JD
Cost £5.00

AGM & The Sounding Board
20 Apr 12.15 pm - 3.00pm
Venue Bowdon Parish Centre,
Stamford Road WA14 2TR
Cost £5.00
Contact Jenny Matthews 07984 872325
info@handbagsandbriefcases.co.uk

IP Expo Manchester 2016
Greater Manchester Business Expo
18-19 May 2016 10.00am - 4.00pm
Venue Manchester Central Convention
Complex Ltd., Petersfield
M2 3GX
Cost Free (pre-registration required)
Contact www.ipexpomanchester.com

K-Club Manchester
Entrepreneur's networking breakfast
21 Apr 7.30am - 10.00am
Venue AJ Bell Stadium, Barton-Upon-Irwell,
Salford M30 7EY
Cost £30.00

Women's Business Lunch
10 Mar 12noon - 2.00pm
Venue HSBC, 4 Hardman Square,
Spinningfields, Manchester M3 3EB
Cost £20.00+VAT
Contact Amanda Manson 07754 069829
amanda.manson@k-club.co.uk

LifeCentre Open Day
Business Networking. Tour of facilities.
23 Mar 3.30pm - 5.30pm
Venue LifeCentre, 235 Washway Road,
Sale, Cheshire M33 4BP
Cost Free (pre-register on eventbrite -
lifecentre, or turn up on day)
Contact Andy, Jane, Helen
0161 850 0770

M62 Connections
PAYG Networking Wednesdays Fortnightly
17 Feb, 3 Mar... 9.30am - 11.30am
Venue The Coach House, Wilderspool
Wood, Trafford Centre M17 8WW
Cost £10

24 Feb, 9 Mar... 8.30am - 10.30am
Venue The Garden Restaurant, The Centre,
Birchwood Park, Warrington WA3 6YN
Cost £10
Contact Bill Dove 07932 044 743
www.m62connections.co.uk

North West Business Expo 2015
26 Nov 9.00am - 3.00pm
Venue The Point, Emirates Old Trafford
Talbot Road, Old Trafford M16 0PX
Cost Free (pre-registration required)
Contact Alec Jones-hall 0161 207 2087
www.northwestexpo.co.uk

On the 7th Networking
Evening Networking
23 Feb 5.00pm - 7.00pm
Venue On the 7th, The Landing, Blue Tower
MediaCityUk, Salford M50 2ST
Cost £10
Contact Alisha 0161 686 5500
hello@onthe7th.co.uk

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Full-day planning workshop - Lunch,
refreshments & planning materials provided
27 Apr 10.00am - 4.00pm
Venue The LifeCentre, 235 Washway Road,
Sale M33 4BP
Cost £145+VAT
Contact Mark Dyble 07565 948 943
www.markdyble.eventbrite.co.uk

Rotary Club Sale
Networking, Dinner - Every Tuesday 7.00pm
Venue The Belmore, Brooklands Road,
Sale M33 3QN
Contact Peter Munday 0161 969 1391
Mari Griffin 0161 962 6078

Sale Business Group
1st Weds monthly - 4 Mar, 1 Apr
4.00pm - 5.30pm
Venue Bianco's, 1 Hereford Street,
Sale, M33 7XN
Cost £5
Contact Alex McCann 07806 774279
alex@altrinchamhq.co.uk

The Business Network Manchester
Business Lunch 24 Feb 10.00am - 2.00pm
Venue The Midland Hotel, Peter Street,
Manchester M60 2DS
Cost £39.95
Contact Helen Bennett 0870 751 7523
helen@business-network.co.uk

The Office Next Door
Business Networking at Regus
- Last Thursday every month
25 Feb 12noon - 2.00pm
Venue Regus Cheadle Royal,
5300 Lakeside, Cheadle SK8 3GP
Cost Free for guests

31 Mar 8.30am - 10.15am
Venue Regus Manchester Business Park,
3000 Aviator Way, Manchester M22 5TG
Cost Free for guests

31 Mar 4.00pm - 6.00pm
Venue Regus Manchester, Peter House,
Oxford St, Manchester M1 5AN
Cost Free for guests

28 Apr 12noon - 2.00pm
Venue Regus Cheadle Royal,
5300 Lakeside, Cheadle SK8 3GP
Cost Free for guests
chris@theindependentratingscompany.co.uk

Timperley & Sale Business Club
Weekly Networking every Friday - early
networking includes breakfast 6.30 - 8.30am
Venue Bean and Brush Café, The Old Sorting
Office, 12 Hayfield Walk, Sale M33 7XW
Cost £5 for guests
Contact Jon Cheatham 07971 575977
Laura Evans 07976 894419

Trafford Business Expo 2016
7 June 2016 10.00am - 4.00pm
Venue The Point, Emirates Old Trafford
Talbot Road, Old Trafford M16 0PX
Cost Free (pre-registration required)
Contact James Caldwell 0844 887 1550
james@innov8-conferences.co.uk

Trafford Park Business Network B2B Networking
- Trafford Park businesses only
18 Feb 8.00am - 10.30am
Venue Imperial War Museum North,
Trafford Wharf Road, Trafford Park
M17 1TZ
Cost Free (pre-registration required)
Contact To register visit: www.trafford-park
-network.eventbrite.com

Women's 20/20
Women's networking - second Wednesday
each month - 10 Feb, 10 Mar, 13 Apr
12.15 - 2.30pm
Venue Mercure Bowdon Hotel,
Langham Road, Bowdon WA14 2HT
Cost £20 for non-members
Contact Julie Gray
enquiries@2020network.co.uk

Don't forget your Business Cards!

Please note If you plan to visit any of the above events please ensure all details are correct in advance. Whilst every effort has been made to confirm accuracy some details may be subject to change.

places to meet

Albert Square Chop House

Address Memorial Hall, 14 Albert Square, Manchester M2 5PF
Contact 0161 834 1866
Facilities Function Room, Restaurant, Pub

Bean and Brush Art Café

Address 12 Hayfield Walk, Sale M33 7XW
Contact 0161 973 2140
Facilities Café, Food, Drink

Bizspace Atlantic Business Centre

Address Atlantic Street, Altrincham WA14 5NQ
Contact 0161 926 3600
Facilities Conference Rooms, Café

Bizspace Empress Business Centre

Address 380 Chester Road, Manchester M16 9EA
Contact 0161 877 5579
Facilities Meeting Rooms, Offices

Bossc Business Design Store

Address 13 Stonepail Road, Gatley SK8 4EZ
Contact 0161 282 0011
Facilities Tea/Coffee, Web Design, Print, Business Support

Bowdon Rooms The Cinnamon Club

Address The Firs, Bowdon, Altrincham WA14 2TQ
Contact 0161 282 0011
Facilities Conferences, Boardroom, Live Music

Café Gourmand

Address 221 Ashley Road, Hale WA15 9SZ
Contact 0161 929 6050
Facilities Coffee and Patisserie Shop

Carrington Business Park

Address Carrington Lane, Carrington, Manchester M31 4DD
Contact 0161 776 4000
Facilities Café, Conference Rooms

Costa Coffee

Address 75 School Road, Sale M33 7YF
Contact 0161 973 2259

Address 33-35 George Street, Altrincham WA14 1RN
Contact 0161 929 0382

Address Century House, Ashley Road, Hale WA15 9SF
Contact 0161 926 9913

Address Golden Way, Urmston, Manchester M41 0NA
Contact 0161 926 7707

Facilities Coffee, Snacks

Cresta Court Hotel

Address Church Street, Altrincham WA14 4DP
Contact 0161 927 7272
Facilities Snack, Rest, Hotel, Free Parking

DeVere Venues

Address Cheadle House, Cheadle Royal Business Park, Cheadle SK8 3FS
Contact 0161 492 100
Facilities Conference, Leisure, Restaurant

Eaton Place Business Park

Address 114 Washway Road, Sale M33 7RF
Contact 0161 905 1424
Facilities Meeting Rooms, Offices

Elliot House

Address 151 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3WD
Contact 0161 393 4352
Facilities Meeting Rooms, Private Dining

Emirates Old Trafford

Home of LCCC - Event Space
Address Talbot Road, Manchester M16 0PX
Contact 0161 282 4020
Facilities Conference, Meeting Rooms, Leisure

Friends' Meeting House

Address 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS
Contact 0161 834 5797
Facilities Meeting Rooms, Conference Venue

Gastronomy

Address 191 Ashley Road, Hale WA15 9SQ
Contact 0161 928 7870
Facilities Deli, Coffee Shop

McGregors

Address 29 Stamford New Road, Altrincham WA14 1EB
Contact 0161 928 1487
Facilities Natural Organic Food Served

Manchester Airport Marriott Hotel

Address Hale Road, Hale Barns, Cheshire WA15 8XW
Contact 0161 904 0301
Facilities Leisure Club, Spa, Conference Centre, Restaurant

Manchester Escalator

Address 233 Deansgate, Manchester M3 4EN
Contact 07711 556913
Facilities Coffee, Food, Meeting Room

Mercure Bowdon Hotel

Address Langham Road, Bowdon WA14 2HT
Contact 0161 928 7121
Facilities Hotel and Leisure, Free Parking

Mersey Farm

Address Carrington Lane, Ashton On Mersey, Sale M33 5BL
Contact 0161 962 8113
Facilities Restaurant, Hotel, Free Parking

Midland Hotel

Address 16 Peter St, Manchester M60 2DS
Contact 0161 236 3333
Facilities Function Rooms, Hotel

Mr Thomas's Chop House

Address 52 Cross Street, Manchester M2 7AR
Contact 0161 832 2245
Facilities Restaurant, Pub

On The 7th The Landing

Address The Blue Tower, MediaCityUK, Salford Quays M50 2ST
Contact 0161 686 5500
Facilities Bar, Restaurant, Conference Room

Red Rooms

Meeting rooms for hire across a range of Bruntwood properties

Address Station House, Stamford New Road, Altrincham WA14 1EP

Booths Hall, Chelford Road, Knutsford WA16 8QZ

Landmark House, Station Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK8 7BS

111 Piccadilly, Manchester M1 2HY

Centurion House, 129 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3WR

City Tower, Piccadilly Plaza, Manchester M1 4BT

Lowry House, 17 Marble Street, Manchester, M2 3AW

Manchester One, 53 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 3LD

St James, 61-95 Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6FQ

Contact 0843 504 4753

Facilities Offices, Meeting Rooms

Regus

Meeting rooms for hire across a range of Regus properties

Address 82 King St, Manchester M2 4WQ

Pall Mall Court, 61-67 King St, Manchester M2 4PD

Peter House, Oxford Street, Manchester M1 5AN

10th Floor, 3 Hardman St, Spinningfields, Manchester M3 3HF

Digital World Centre, 1 Lowry Plaza, Salford Quays M50 3UB

Adamson House, Towers Business Park, Wilmslow Road, Didsbury, Manchester M20 2YY

Holdsworth Mill, Reddish, Stockport SK5 6DA

5300 Lakeside, Cheadle Royal Business Park, Cheadle SK8 3GP

Manchester Business Park, 3000 Aviator Way, Manchester M22 5TG

Hilton Hotel, Manchester Airport, Outwood Lane, Manchester M90 4WP

Contact 0845 300 3585

Facilities Offices, Meeting Rooms

Runway Visitor Park

Address Sunbank Lane, Altrincham WA15 8XQ

Contact 0161 489 3932

Facilities Conference Room, Conference area underneath Concorde, Restaurant, Concorde Experience and Tours, Meeting Rooms

Sam's Chop House

Address Back Pool Fold (off Cross Street), Manchester M2 1HN

Contact 0161 834 3210

Facilities Restaurant, Pub

St Anthony's Centre

Address Eleventh Street, Trafford Park, Manchester M17 1JF

Contact 0161 848 9173

Facilities Conference Rooms

San Carlo Fiorentina

Address Manchester Airport, Marriott Hotel, Hale Road, Hale Barns, Cheshire WA15 8XW

Contact 0161 904 5043

Facilities Bar & Restaurant

The Coffee House

Address Warburton House, 14 Eagle Brow, Lymm WA13 0LJ also at 102 School Road, Sale M33 7XB

Contact 01925 551797

Facilities Coffee, Snacks

The LifeCentre

Address 235 Washway Road, Sale M33 4BP

Contact 0161 850 0770

Facilities Meeting Rooms, Café

The Little Deli Company

Address 42 Stamford Park Road, Hale WA15 9EP

Contact 07921 717548

Facilities Meeting Rooms, Café

The Mere Golf Resort & Spa

Address Chester Road, Mere, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6LJ

Contact 01565 830 155

Facilities Meeting Rooms, Conferences

Victoria Warehouse

Event Space and Hotel

Address Trafford Wharf Rd, Stretford, Manchester M17 1AB

Contact 0161 660 7000

Facilities Conference, Leisure, Hotel

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