



SuccessNet

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EDUCATION *and* INFORMATION BULLETIN *for* BNI MEMBERS



WHAT MAKES THESE PEOPLE SO SPECIAL?

To find out, turn to pages 2 & 3

THIS IS WHAT MAKES OUR FRONT COVER QUARTET SO SPECIAL...

Meet four of BNI's brightest 'stars' - some of our highest achieving men and women whom we are delighted to announce are the first recipients of the new "Member of the Quarter" awards - giving deserved recognition to those who consistently demonstrate great chapter performances and an unstinting commitment to the organisation's philosophy. In each issue of SuccessNet, we will announce four more Members of the Quarter, nominated by their individual chapters, short-listed by their BNI director and finally chosen by a national panel of directors from 39 hopefuls - comprising one member from every BNI region in the UK and Ireland. But for now, give a bow to our inaugural superstars, each of whose success is highlighted here...



WINNER: SOUTH EAST Playing the game produces winners

A founder member of Bromley's four-year old Churchill Chapter in South London, independent financial adviser Brian Davies is everything a BNI chapter could possibly want in its Membership Co-ordinator. He took on the always challenging role last October, since when the group has gone from strength to strength, consolidating its numbers around the 30-mark.

Working closely with Chapter Director Edith Maskell, Brian joined the leadership team at a time when Bromley had lost several members and was struggling to regain the dynamics that had previously made it a strong performer - and in just six months the chapter's fortunes have been turned around.

Brian said: "We decided to have a sustained membership push, and that has been reflected in three successful visitors' days, a very good team effort by all members during the recent national chapter building drive - which saw one of our members, Steve Evans, win a luxury cruise on the QM2 - and a great response to our staging 'The BNI Game' to make our members more focused."

But it's not just the big events and one-off initiatives that have made Brian's tenure of the Co-ordinator's role so effective. BNI Director Charlie Lawson commented: "He is the ideal person to take charge of membership issues. Every week, Brian motivates his colleagues to strive harder by giving them excellent

membership reports, including feedback from visitors and general updates. The result is that everyone knows where the group is going, its priorities and its successes."

Ironically, despite having overseen Churchill's regeneration, Brian is disappointed the leadership team did not achieve its goal of a 40-strong membership by the end of its term. "But we are heading in the right direction and, with business levels improving it shouldn't take long," he added.

Contact Brian at the Millfield Partnership on 01959 560215 or 07956 253728

WINNER: THE MIDLANDS Perfect flight path for Birmingham's Apollo

"BNI? I love every minute of it...." So says Halesowen builder David Bergin who, in barely a year, has become one of the most popular and prolific members of Birmingham's Apollo Chapter.

Nominated by his chapter because "he is living proof of Givers Gain - someone who has totally embraced BNI's ethos," David was already the boss of a thriving construction company when a friend recommended BNI to him 15 months ago. "Like a lot of people I had some reservations, but I'm happy to admit that from my first meeting I was hooked. It's been marvellous for me."

Not only has 50% of David's business come from BNI referrals in the past year, but he acknowledges the value of gaining new presentational skills. "I am amazed how much I've learnt through BNI and the effect this has had on my business. A year ago I couldn't deliver a 60-second speech to anyone, but now I'm so confident that I could address large audiences. In fact, I've just done so at a major expo where, dressed as a Red Indian, I talked to an audience of more than 4,000 business-suited delegates!"

In return, David has contributed hugely to Apollo Chapter's success. As an experienced visitor host he has led by example, bringing many quality visitors

and passing an impressive number of referrals, including 15 at one recent meeting. Meanwhile, he attends every possible training event, and constantly motivates his colleagues with his infectious enthusiasm, good humour and positive attitude.

Director Laura Hurren commented: "From the moment he became a member, David has been a pleasure to work with. At training workshops he spends time helping other members, and many chapter colleagues have benefited from his top quality referrals. He is the first to arrive at meetings and the last to leave, and he's always ready to step into any role without question. No wonder everyone loves him!"

Contact David at DLB Building Ltd on 0121 501 3036 or visit: www.dlbbuilding.co.uk



Nominate your BNI star!

Every chapter is allowed to nominate ONE member for 'Member of the Quarter' recognition. There are no hard and fast parameters, but the awards seek to recognise individual sustained effort, service, support and commitment; members who set the gold standards for performance both in their weekly chapter meetings and throughout the rest of the working week - in other words, the best of the best.

Chapter nominations for July's awards should be notified by Friday, 2nd June to your BNI director who will also be able to provide you with any further information. So, don't waste the chance to bring recognition and reward to one of your colleagues. Get thinking about your nomination now!

MEET OUR FIRST EVER MEMBERS OF THE QUARTER!



WINNER: WEST & SOUTH WEST Married to the 'firm'? You'd better believe it...

South Wales businessman John Wray is thankful for having an understanding wife, because he also has two rivals for his attention: a fast-expanding company, and BNI - for whom he has been Chapter Director of Cardiff's Quinnell Chapter during the past six months.

Whenever John takes a holiday or jets off on a business trip, one of his first tasks is to locate BNI chapters and arrange to attend their breakfast meetings! So much so that during one recent North American trip he breakfasted 'out' at different chapters no fewer than 10 times. On a separate occasion, while visiting a Las Vegas chapter, he helped the group 're-focus' on the need to attract new members - by bringing two guests with him! "I think they got the message," he quipped.

Closer to home, John is an equally strong advocate of BNI. Nominating him for an award, chapter colleagues described him as "providing inspirational leadership, excelling in every chapter role he has held, and being remarkably supportive of fellow members." Over the last six months, he has led the Chapter's growth by example, bringing 28 visitors, and passing dozens of strong referrals.

John brings the same enterprise to his business, as head of Sunbase Promotional Products, a pioneering company that is re-defining the promotional sector's image and moving it upmarket.

He said: "When people think of this industry, they think of pens and T-shirts. Although we offer over one million products, our business emphasis is on providing professional consultancy services to high-spending corporate companies, showing them how our products fit into the broader marketing, advertising and PR mix. In this context, BNI has provided some excellent introductions to some big companies."

Director Guy Griffiths said: "John is the sort of member you dream of having as a chapter director. He has led Quinnell's dramatic development and created a strong team spirit."

Contact John at Sunbase on 029 2046 5353 or visit www.promotional-product.co.uk

WINNER: SCOTLAND & THE NORTH Wherever Sue goes, BNI goes too...

Sue Harris, the outgoing Beverley Chapter Director, just can't leave BNI alone! Not content with juggling two fast-growing family businesses and her dynamic leadership of the East Yorkshire chapter, she is so passionate about the organisation that, even when she's socialising with family or friends, she has the reputation for always looking to generate more referrals...

"I believe that if something is worth doing, then it's worth giving it 100%, so people who know me well, know I'm constantly on the go, cross-matching people, ideas, services and opportunities. I think BNI is fantastic, not just because of any extra business it may have brought us, but for everything else it provides, from great training and character building to a brilliant contact base through which we can get any help we want," said Sue, a director of her son's Hull-based company dealing with all aspects of IT for business.

Sue became a founder member of the

new Beverley Chapter just under a year ago, while son Mark joined Hull's Wilberforce Chapter just over two years ago, gaining £18,000 worth of business in his first few months. The pair have now expanded the original company, ITS Secured Ltd to create a new venture - Home PC Support - enabling home users to get a quick 'online' fix for common problems like viruses or software conflicts. Meanwhile, she is also a director of the family's residential care and nursing homes company.

Despite these commitments, Sue accepted the position of Chapter Director last October, since when she's introduced 23 visitors, passed even more referrals and attended six training courses. BNI Director Emma Fairhall said: "Sue's leadership qualities stand out. From the moment she joined BNI, she took the whole philosophy on board and made it work to everyone's benefit. She thoroughly deserves to be one of the first winners of this new award."

Contact Sue at ITS Secured Ltd on 01482 221980 or visit www.itssecured.co.uk



LAWSON'S LORE

IT IS our very pleasant duty in this column, to pay a warm tribute to our first 'Members of the Quarter' - a quartet of BNI's best and most consistent performers who have been nominated for this new honour, initially by their own chapters, shortlisted within their respective regions and finally chosen by a panel of our leading directors.

After such detailed scrutiny, you can be certain that while each has made different positive contributions to their own chapters (see story on pages 2 & 3), each of them will have demonstrated outstanding personal and business qualities - attributes that have directly benefited their BNI colleagues, and will continue to do so.

Like the fortunate winners of our fabulous chapter building drive prize draw (see back page) who will shortly be sailing across the Atlantic to New York aboard Cunard's QM2 flagship, they have shown remarkable effort and commitment to ensure their chapters not only continue to be shining examples of our Givers Gain philosophy, but also have the means to grow stronger in the months ahead.

While these individuals have deservedly been rewarded, either with their 'Big Apple' trip or publicity in SuccessNet for themselves and their businesses, the fact is that within BNI there are many more members whose ongoing contributions merit recognition because, collectively, they have made BNI the tremendous success it is today. Moreover, by their sustained high referral rates, their unselfish desire to help even the weakest chapter colleagues, and unstinting energy to keep their groups buoyant and focused, it is these members to whom we all owe a big debt of gratitude.

Meanwhile, the most obvious reward we can each give to our top performers is to try even harder to emulate the standards they set, aiming to improve our personal commitment and make even greater efforts to boost our chapter's overall performance. In this way, every member of every successful chapter can be confident of a bright future. ●

Mark Gillman



MEMBERS TOLD: GO EAST!

It is being billed as BNI's first-ever worldwide members' conference and, when the three-day event draws to a close in Malaysia, organisers aim to have convinced every one of its hundreds of delegates that the emerging Asian markets hold the key to their future business success.

All members are invited to apply for a place at the most prestigious networking event ever staged by BNI, taking place from the 20th to 23rd June in Kuala Lumpur's five-star Mandarin Oriental Hotel at the heart of the capital's famous 'golden triangle'.

The "Right Place - Right Time - Right People" Conference is the culmination of a year's planning by BNI directors Robert French and Andrew Hall who, three years after launching BNI's first chapters in the Far East, say Malaysia offers European members the perfect gateway to do business in the fastest growing Asian economies, including China and India.

Robert told SuccessNet: "With BNI now opening in Taiwan, China and Thailand this is the right time to develop new alliances and trade routes. Malaysian members have many links to these markets and can play a vital role in helping their European BNI colleagues to understand the business culture and get a crucial foothold into these booming economies. This event will give our European members a unique chance to expand their businesses."

Among the main Conference highlights will be:

- Two days of powerful presentations by BNI's most dynamic directors including Founder Dr Ivan Misner.
- A day of 'master class' business workshops led by BNI's top business gurus.
- A glittering Awards Dinner with traditional Malay cuisine, music and dance.
- A major business exhibition.
- The first-ever Worldwide BNI Golf Tournament on the renowned Saujana Golf course.

Robert added: "By 2050, China and India will be among the wealthiest nations on the planet, offering huge business opportunities, no matter what sector you work in. Companies in the East are now looking for partners in the West and, as the historical crossroads for these cultures, Malaysia is the ideal gateway to expanding eastern markets." ●

To find out more, visit www.bni-worldwide.com for full booking details and the option to take up special delegates' rates at the sumptuous Mandarin. You can also call BNI Worldwide on +44 (0) 1227 728027 or email: info@bni-worldwide.com

PUBLIC SCHOOL CREATES A UK 'FIRST' FOR BNI

The business benefits of BNI to a public boarding school may not be immediately apparent, but that hasn't stopped one of the country's most exclusive educational institutions from joining its local chapter in Gloucestershire, creating a 'first' in the UK.

Wycliffe Preparatory School's Marketing Manager Melanie Gray persuaded its management team that becoming part of the Stonehouse Chapter would be a positive move, after discovering that three of their pupils' parents were already members of BNI - while another of her new chapter colleagues had been a former pupil at the school.

She said: "I was invited along to the Stonehouse Chapter by a business associate, Chris Isaacs, who does our graphic design work, and although I could not instantly see how BNI members would help the school to gain any significant business - which for us of course, primarily



means attracting more pupils - I felt that in every other respect it was right for us to be involved with such an enterprising business networking organisation.

"The profile of BNI members is very similar to that of our parents, comprising many dynamic and successful entrepreneurs, and I believe that aligning ourselves more closely with the region's business community and promoting Wycliffe's considerable achievements through BNI members, can only be a good thing. If in due course we are able to benefit from membership in any more tangible ways, then that will be a pleasing bonus," added Melanie (pictured above).●

Contact Melanie on 01453 820449 or at: melanie.gray@wycliffe.co.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

CROYDON MEMBERS' TOY COLLECTION

Members of Croydon's Foundation Chapter showed the benevolent side of business when they collected - and then delivered - toys and games for sick children being cared for at the CHASE organisation's Christopher's Hospice near Guildford.

Meanwhile chapter members were also widely involved in staging Croydon's 'Last Night of the Proms' charity concert chapter that raised over £15,000 for the Hospice.●

FORTY FOOT DAPHNE STANDS TALL

Daphne Wynne is standing very tall these days. Maybe not quite Forty Foot tall (that's the unusual name of her Dun Laoghaire chapter in Ireland) but as tall as any woman could feel after winning the Dublin-wide Enterprising Women's Award.

Her company, LogArt Homes, designs, imports and erects ecologically-friendly Finnish log houses in the UK and Ireland, and it was the quality and style of these homes together with Daphne's entrepreneurial skills that saw her awarded the top prize.●

Contact Daphne on (+353) (1)280 2879, or visit her website at: www.logart.ie

FLAGSHIP RACES FOR CHARITY

Members of Gatwick's Flagship Chapter have raised over £3,000 for two charities, St Catherine's Hospice and The Teenage Cancer Trust. The proceeds came from a charity golf day and auction at Tilgate Forest Golf Club, followed by a fun 'race night' and raffle at Gatwick's Copthorne Hotel.

Meanwhile, many female members from Surrey and Sussex chapters joined Flagship Chapter's Membership Co-ordinator Karen Hibbart to raise £8,000 for breast cancer research at the annual "By Invitation Only" charity lunch.●

Contact Karen on 01444 461796

CoGS MAKES NORTH YORKSHIRE MEMBERS GROW!

Tree stump removal is not exactly a common category in BNI groups but, when horticultural expert John Hart joined Harrogate's White Rose Chapter, he quickly realised its potential not only to generate work for himself but also for other garden landscaping and tree surgery practitioners.

Keen to dispel the view that many 'garden specialists' are often little better than unskilled itinerant labourers, John set about persuading some of his closest colleagues and best customers to become members in neighbouring chapters, and soon started to receive good referrals from garden and tree specialists with complementary skills.

Wondering how this situation could be expanded, John, who runs 'Stumps.Biz', arranged a meeting of different gardening experts at a local pub, from which a new 'green alliance' of predominantly BNI members - called CoGS (Complete Garden Solutions) - has emerged.

He said: "There are plenty of excellent professionals in my field, and because we all have different areas of expertise, we tend to refer work to each other. We now hold regular evening meetings to pass

referrals and discuss joint tendering for contracts. It means that no matter what day our members have their own chapter meetings, they can still be cogs in this unique alliance. Even in situations where several members were offering the same services, we've found they were able to refer work to each other, proving that 'Givers Gain' works well even amongst competitors."

CoGS members have already passed thousands of pounds worth of work to each other and the group recently tendered for a joint six-figure contract. Tim Yarrow of Yarrow Gardens and Landscapes said: "As individuals, we would have struggled to tender for this project, but thanks to our BNI network, we are able to bid for major business. It also helps when we can tell potential clients that, as BNI members, we've signed up to a code of good business ethics."●

The group now wants to expand its alliance by bringing in other BNI members able to further develop this blossoming partnership. Any green-fingered specialist is invited to contact John Hart on 01423 709080 or 07903 247246.

BREAKFAST BONANZA



DREAM RIDE FOR BROADWAY'S DIANE

When Harrow business coach Diane Corriette shared her 'burning desire' with BNI colleagues, she never imagined anyone would give it a second thought. After all, how many people have a lifelong ambition to ride in an Eddie Stobart articulated lorry?

But of course, in BNI anything is possible, and one of Diane's Broadway Chapter (Pinner) colleagues, solicitor Simon Shaffer, decided he'd like to play fairy godmother for what seemed such a modest wish!

Berkshire's Big Breakfast Bonanza

It's busy, brash and bloomin' good for business: that's Berkshire's annual Big Breakfast bonanza, which this year again saw well over 100 members turn up for the countywide event, dressed in outrageously zany costumes to promote their trades and professions to BNI colleagues.

With the only prerequisite demanding that they should arrive wearing an exaggerated style of dress - or simply a hat - depicting their own business activity, members used the occasion to network energetically with

colleagues from different chapters and form new alliances.

The inter-chapter networking event is so large that there is no time for participants to present their 60-second infomercials. Instead, each attendee is simply allowed to tell his or her Big Breakfast colleagues: "My dream referral would be an introduction to"

In the case of Maidenhead Chapter's lifesize cuddly toys mail order specialist Sarah Tubb (pictured below left), that meant getting an introduction to Hamleys, London's best-known toyshop, but the morning brought her another reason to smile, when she won first prize for being the most appropriately dressed.

She said: "BNI has been absolutely brilliant for me. Running a mail order business, I'd had no experience of presenting myself to others in a business context but, after a year of weekly presentations to chapter colleagues, I'm so much more confident. The other great benefit is that there is always a friendly expert to offer you advice, no matter what you need." ●

Contact Sarah on 0118 940 1414 and visit her website at: www.lifelikefriends.co.uk



Simon, from Moerans Solicitors in Edgware, contacted the famous transport company, told them about Diane's yearnings, and arranged for her to be taken on a journey as a cab passenger. "It seemed such a simple idea to phone and ask," he said, "but I never really expected them to say yes!"

Eddie Stobart sent a lorry to collect Diane from her north-west London home and gave her a VIP journey along motorways and main roads, before returning her to the Harrow offices of her business, Inspirational Guidance.

Afterwards, an exhilarated Diane said: "I'm not at all surprised that Simon did this for me. Since I joined BNI a year ago, it has provided me with over 70% of my new business and chapter members are all very supportive of one another.

"Being able to travel in an Eddie Stobart truck really was a great thrill, and the experience has made me even more determined to continue contributing to the growth of my colleagues' businesses." ●

You can contact Diane Corriette on 020 7692 4971 and Simon Shaffer on 020 8952 0242





Question: How many BNI colleagues does it take to help launch your latest business idea?
Answer: Quite a lot if, like Rotherham Phoenix Chapter's David Chafer, the new venture is all about hosting 'fun' wine-tasting parties!

As boss of DCA PR & Events, David recently celebrated the inauguration of

At the same time, computer specialist Matt Blyden handled the web design and e-marketing of wineparties' website, with Ian Hayes providing web database development and management, and fabrics specialist Andy Caulton creating the 'blind' wine

Phoenix members make it a real (wine) party affair

Wineparties.co.uk, a business he hopes will popularise the 'stuffy' image of wine tasting, and offer a new social option - whether you're hosting a corporate event or a private dinner party.

And there to support him were many of his fellow Phoenix members including nearly a dozen who had provided their collective expertise to help David realise his dream of offering "a wine tasting party in a box, that you buy over the Internet."

His longstanding business adviser Richard Gourlay provided invaluable business and strategic planning advice, with lawyer Gareth Owen offering intellectual property advice. Meanwhile, print broker Phil Dudley produced promotional and stationery printing, signage specialist Carol Morris developed display materials, and graphic designer Jane Egan created all the visual branding.

tasting bags, so vital to the overall concept. Even the Chapter's ecoflow distributor Richard Horsfield got in on the act, helping Wineparties.co.uk set up as a reseller of drinks-related Bioflow magnetic products.

David said: "Without the skills and support of many BNI colleagues, this idea would never have come to fruition. My aim is to turn the stuffy, elitist appeal of blind wine-tasting into an entertaining event that can be shared by everyone, either at home or in corporate entertaining."

Three different packs are available, each including eight bottles of quality wine (hidden in tasting bags), host and guest notes about the 'wineparties' experience, score sheets, pens, winners' prizes and even a gift for the host. ●

Interested? Then log onto: www.wineparties.co.uk or contact David on 01709 370022

A FAMILY AFFAIR: David Chafer (fifth from left in foreground) with some of his BNI colleagues who have spent the past 12 months helping him to bring his wineparties venture to the market place.



BE MY VALENTINE! Liam McKeating with the creators of his promotional initiative, Hugh Green (Left) and Mike Ritchie (Right).

Glasgow builder Liam McKeating sent his wife Tracey a lovely Valentine's Day card this year - which was just as well, because he also sent out hundreds of others to people all over the city!

Before anyone starts to think he's a serial romantic, we should point out that happily-married Liam, a member of Glasgow's Alba Chapter, was simply using the opportunity to tell his customers and suppliers about his company's move to smart new offices - and the idea of conveying the message in a huge Valentine's Card was the brainchild of two of his chapter colleagues, PR consultant Mike Ritchie (who provided some clever purple prose) and printer Hugh Green, who designed the card.

Liam said: "I told Hugh and Mike that my company, McKeating Builders, was on the move, and that I was looking for an eye-catching way of notifying people that would make them remember us. Then the Valentine's Day theme emerged and, thanks to their creative efforts, the resulting cards were really brilliant. Judging by the number of calls we've received since the middle of February, it has certainly done the trick, because many callers have specifically referred to receiving our card." ●

Contact Liam on 0141 882 7555, Hugh on 0141 649 1040 and Mike on 0141 423 6939

LIAM'S HUNDREDS OF VALENTINE'S CARDS ARE JUST BUSINESS - HONESTLY!

YOUR ZANY PRESENTATION



ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY?

Sometimes a man's just got to do what a man's got to do - especially if it means helping a BNI colleague to get her business message across in a more memorable way...

Which is how IFA and international property adviser Shaun Fagan came to be lying prostate on a treatment table in front of all his bemused Muswell Hill Chapter colleagues, receiving a full leg waxing (or, to be precise, sugaring) from beauty therapist Rosalie Epstein who said: "Everyone has heard of waxing but far fewer people - especially men - have seen the treatment at first hand, and that's what I wanted to demonstrate.

"More and more men now want parts of their body to be hairless and, as someone with a total dislike of men's hairy backs, I'm all in favour of increasing my male clientele."

So Rosalie, who joined the north London chapter three years ago, recruited the normally hirsute Shaun to give him a taste of the 'pain' that her predominantly female customers go through, to achieve a smooth, sleek profile, rendering his lower limbs hair-free zones in her recent 10-minute presentation.

And Shaun's reaction? "I'm quite happy with my legs the way they are, so I won't be rushing to repeat the experience - but painful? I really don't know what women make all the fuss about!"

We believe you, Shaun - even if Rosalie did let it slip that your eyes were watering during the process! ●

Contact Shaun on 07951 571630 or: shaun@wealthmakers.co.uk, and Rosalie Epstein on 07779 590715

JAMIE DOES HIS DEAL - IN BORROWED SHOES

Cheltenham Chapter's business communications consultant Jamie Rendell was driving to his chapter meeting one morning when he suddenly wondered why his feet felt unusually comfortable. He glanced down and discovered he was still wearing his slippers!

"I chuckled and hoped no-one would notice, since my feet would be under the breakfast table most of the time," he said. "But then the awful truth hit me: I was due to go straight on to a business meeting in Birmingham, and knew I would look a

complete idiot if I arrived wearing a smart suit and slippers."

When fellow members started giggling, he knew he had to do something. "I decided to make a joke of it, so during my 60-second slot I asked for introductions to companies needing 50 or more mobile phones - and then I held up my slippers and added an urgent request for a referral to a spare pair of size ten shoes," said Jamie.

Happily his unusual appeal produced immediate results. After the meeting, cleaning company director, Colin Gooch offered Jamie his shoes. "I felt for him and wanted to help," explained Colin. "I told him to take my shoes and I'd go back to my office in his slippers. He was very relieved."

Jamie went off to do his deal, while Colin's staff were highly amused when their boss turned up wearing someone else's slippers. "I was really grateful to Colin," added Jamie, a former bowler with Gloucestershire County Cricket Club, "even though his shoes were two sizes too big. I felt like a circus clown with

oversize floppy feet, but it obviously didn't show, and it's entirely thanks to Colin's generosity that I won the contract." ●

Contact Jamie Rendell on 01453 829270 and Colin Gooch on 01242 528564



SLIPP(ER)ED UP: Jamie Rendell with the slippers he was almost forced to wear to an important client meeting - until a chapter colleague came to the rescue. (Photo by Mark Terry-Lush of Renegade Photo. Tel: 01452 760147).

ONS!

MARK'S THREE-COURSE FEAST

There are classical chefs. There are short order chefs. There are TV chefs. And then there is BNI's very own Mark Earnden who is all three, and a lot more besides!

As the Jamie Oliver of the North-East, whose catering businesses have earned him regional celebrity status, there was only one way Mark was ever going to fill his 10-minute slot at South Shields' aptly-named Cookson Chapter - by preparing a three-course gourmet meal from scratch for his colleagues!

"Both my presentation and the food went down a treat!" he said. "It's the only time I've seen everyone out of their seats,



standing on chairs to get a better view, and taking photos. And, when they tasted the results I think they understood why I'm passionate about healthy, fresh food."

For Mark however, it was all in a day's work. He has built his Platinum Chefs business on providing a fine dining experience for people in their own homes and work places, while his other venture - ExpoChef - comprises a Jamie Oliver-style culinary roadshow which he takes into schools, clubs and shopping centres to deliver his healthy-eating message.

"I'm fanatical about good food and I've managed to create quite a following through media coverage and high profile events. But, like Jamie, my driving force is to educate people to eat more healthily. When it came to my chapter presentation, I was attempting to show both arms of my business - healthy eating plated like a fine dining experience!!" •

Contact Mark on 07977 561 514 or visit his website at: www.platinumchefs.co.uk

THE WONDER OF BNI - ELVIS STYLE!

Every member of a chapter's leadership team likes to finish his or her stint on a high note, but few can have made an impression like Braintree Chapter's former Education Co-ordinator, printer Paul Gardener.

As a founder member of the Essex chapter, Paul decided he was going to do something very different when the time came for his final training slot - and

colleagues were not disappointed! "After talking about the individual qualities that each member brings to the table, explaining that it is through teamwork we build a successful chapter, I quickly put on an Elvis Presley wig and dark glasses and sang his classic hit, 'The Wonder Of You' - with the help of a backing track that I'd secreted away. Although members knew I was a big Elvis fan, none of them had a clue I was about to break into song - but the lyrics were very appropriate for my final presentation. Judging from the feedback, I didn't do too badly - but I'm not planning a career in music!" •

Contact Paul on 01376 518000

HARLEQUINS IN CHARACTER FOR 60 SECONDS!

When your chapter is called Harlequin, it seems you are duty bound to live up to the colourful Italianesque artistic comedy performances from which the name derives.

So, when the Richmond-upon-Thames chapter recently staged a 'Not your 60 seconds' training initiative, it was not so much a case of mistaken identity, but a question of who could act out the wittiest and most entertaining one-minute slot on behalf of a chapter colleague.

The idea was to make sure that members had been paying proper attention to their chapter colleagues' presentations - and understood their business - by each taking over a fellow member's 60-seconds slot.

Chapter Director Andrea Page said: "It was one of the most enlightening sessions we've held. We announced the initiative in advance, when each member drew the name of a colleague out of a hat, which then had to be kept secret. This gave everyone several weeks of 'spying time' to brush up on their selected colleague's



business, and decide how best to deliver his or her presentation."

True to their chapter name, members' performances did not disappoint, most of them turning up armed with imaginative props and colourful outfits to match their adopted roles. Andrea added: "Not only was there some great wit and abundant acting talent, but it gave each of us an accurate opportunity to reflect on whether we'd been getting our business messages across as we intended". •

Contact Andrea Page on 020 8940 9484 or at: andi@onlinesupport.co.uk





NOTHING AVERAGE ABOUT HEART OF KENT'S 100 A WEEK!

It's bulging at the seams (with members) and it boasts BNI's most prolific networker in the UK amongst its number, so perhaps it should come as no surprise that Tunbridge Wells' Heart of Kent Chapter has just established another new record.

The Chapter's statisticians have just calculated that over the whole of last year, Heart of Kent members passed a

staggering 5,123 referrals - which means they topped a weekly average of 100 referrals over the entire 12 months!

Within that incredible figure, champion referral giver, plumber Bob Dubock alone was responsible for giving a massive 364 referrals to his colleagues, bringing his personal tally to an incredible 885 since he joined BNI three and a half years ago.

Chapter Director Roger White said: "Our group is one of the most successful in the region, with a membership that surpassed the 45-mark earlier this year, and it boasts one of the most dynamic networking environments I've come across in BNI. We are very proud not just of our high level of referral giving during 2005, but also the consistency of our performance throughout the chapter's six-year history during which time we've passed well over 12,000 referrals."

Roger, a director with the Pendry White strategic marketing and communications partnership, added: "If anything, it's our long-term success that is most impressive, because it shows we have sustained a very high level of enthusiasm, motivation and commitment in the group right from our launch. I'm delighted for our members, and I hope our achievement inspires other chapters in our region to challenge our record." ●

Contact Roger on 020 7549 1672 or 01892 506923, or at rwhite@pendrywhite.com

FLOWER POWER TURNS HEADS FOR SHARON

Award-winning florist Sharon Wood has long been a well-known networker in the Tunbridge Wells business community, and her involvement with the town's Heart of Kent Chapter has now guaranteed her an even higher profile.

After seeking her BNI colleagues' advice on a new corporate identity, she first decided to adopt a striking green and purple colour scheme for her Colonnade Florist shop, and then commissioned two chapter colleagues to acquire and paint a new van for her business in a style that would be even more eye-catching!

Alan Hartley of Ignition Vehicle Leasing found her the right van, leaving Phil Stratten at IVC Signs to create some truly psychedelic artwork for the vehicle. Phil said: "Even by my own standards the design was a bit loud, but Sharon had a clear idea of what she wanted, and each time we showed her something new she just said 'Bolder'!! However, we're delighted with the result."

A six-times winner at the Chelsea Flower Show, Sharon (pictured below) added: "I wanted it to look like a mobile bunch of flowers to grab people's attention. I've always had a strong marketing focus and I needed the imagery to say something about our business personality, as fun-loving people who are always coming up with something new and vibrant."

Happily Phil's creativity has also brought him ongoing potential benefits. So many people were stopping Sharon's van driver to ask who designed it, that he now carries a pack of Phil's business cards to give out to admiring enquirers. ●

Contact Sharon Wood at The Colonnade Florist on 01892 549919



MORE NEW CHAPTERS LAUNCHED

More than two dozen new chapters have launched recently in the UK,

Ireland and mainland Europe.

In the UK they include: 2020 BNI (Mansfield), Alton (Hampshire), Arches BNI (Bushey, N.W. London), Bute BNI (Cardiff), Lighthouse (Burnham, Somerset), National Saints (St Andrews, Fife), Olympians (Sheffield), Southampton 3, Trinity (Dublin), Welland (Market Harborough), Westminster (Cambridge) and White Cliffs BNI (Dover).

Meanwhile, the latest mainland Europe chapters include: Austria: Strauss (Vienna). Germany: Drachenfels (Bonn-Mitte), Justus von Liebig (Giessen) and Opal (Rosenheim). Netherlands: de Zwaan (Rotterdam), Jupiter (Utrecht), Opaal (Amsterdam), Smaragd (Amsterdam) and Stern (Delft). Switzerland: Ahorn (Root) and Eiche (Kriens). ●

GOLD CLUB WELCOMES LATEST 'FIRST ELEVEN'

BNI's prestigious Gold Club has welcomed its latest champion team, with the arrival of 11 more black badge recipients, each of whom have introduced six or more members to the organisation.

They are: Nicola Acton (from Genesis Chapter, Denton, Cheshire), Alan Bain (Hastings), Richard Dandy (Meridian, East Grinstead), David Everett (Reading Central), Suzanne Hearnden (Chapter One, Harrow), Stephen Howard - (Genesis, Denton), Graham Laker (Victory, Crawley), Mike O' Shea (Gold Cup, Cheltenham), Mark Orr (Kappa, Kilmarnock), David Wimblett (Business Class, Twickenham) and Jim Wood (Moonrakers Chapter, Middleton, Cheshire). ●

Our congratulations to each of them!

FROM FLORIST TO MEDIA 'STAR' - THANKS TO BNI



As an award-winning florist with a thriving business in Ipswich, Rob Dunger took to BNI like a duck to water, little knowing that joining the town's Wolsey Chapter would help him make a dramatic career change at the tender age of 52!

Just a couple of years ago, Rob was making press headlines with a range of attention-grabbing promotional initiatives for his floristry business. Today, he is even bigger news, but this time as one of East Anglia's most popular media presenters with his own daily morning radio show.

While his transformation to regional media star was primarily the result of his own enterprising determination, Rob acknowledges that it was through BNI

membership that he gained his public speaking skills - an ability that boosted his confidence and helped him develop the more extrovert personality that has seen his radio career go from strength to strength.

He said: "After being a florist for 25 years, I've been incredibly fortunate to change direction. At my age, it's unusual to be able to pursue an entirely new career, let alone in a job that I adore.

"It all started when I heard a BBC Radio Suffolk presenter inviting business people to phone in if they wanted her show to be broadcast from their premises. I responded and we had a great time when the programme went out from my shop. That led to my being invited back as a guest

reviewer and because I found the environment so exciting, I started doing odd jobs around the studios, taking calls and providing general assistance. From there, it just took off and now I'm lucky enough to host the top-rated 'Dawnbreaker' programme every weekday."

Ironically, while his daily 5am to 9am show means he's had to relinquish his chapter seat, BNI still plays a major role in Rob's everyday life behind the microphone, with his bulging file of BNI colleagues providing not only him - but also many of his co-presenters - with access to a host of local expert interviewees on almost any subject.

Every day during his first week of presenting 'Dawnbreaker', Rob invited BNI members onto his show to talk about their work and comment on topical issues. Several months later, many of the region's leading business people interviewed on Radio Suffolk, continue to be local chapter members, "chosen because we know they always have something of value to contribute," said Rob.

He added: "Who knows what would have happened, had I not joined BNI and become a confident speaker and networker? It has led to the most rewarding time of my working life. It doesn't get any better than being paid to talk and, far from losing my BNI friends, I'm actually expanding my BNI network through my radio opportunities." ●

Contact Rob on 01473 250000 or at: rob.dunger@bbc.co.uk

Lincoln wagers a Pint of the Best!

Barely a year old, it may be one of our younger BNI groups, but that hasn't stopped Lincoln's Olympians Chapter from throwing down a tasty wager to every other chapter.

The Olympians meet in the sub-deanery of Lincoln's majestic 11th century cathedral, occupying buildings erected in 1272, parts of whose ancient walls can still be seen - leading Chapter Director David Walters to claim it may be the oldest BNI venue in the country.

He said: "We are so lucky to meet in such a magnificent setting, that we're offering this challenge to every chapter: If you can prove your venue is older than ours, and part of its original structure is still standing, we'll invite your members to be our guests

and serve them all a pint of local real ale and a plate of sizzling traditional Lincolnshire sausages.

"We're pretty confident but, if any other chapter can 'out-age' us, we'd be delighted to bring its members down to Lincoln to claim their prize and of course, share in some equally rewarding networking with us!"

Deanery Manager Jackie Osgodby added: "I'll add to the Olympians' wager by offering a free cathedral tour to any BNI member who visits Lincoln." ●

If you think your chapter can stake a claim to Lincoln's beer and sausages, contact David Walters on 01522 839549





train & gain



HOW TO MAXIMISE YOUR REFERRAL RATE

By Guy Griffiths, Executive Director, South Wales

One of the key concerns of many BNI members is how to get more business for their fellow members.

There are plenty of opportunities to do this - at networking events, at seminars, even during day-to-day contact with other colleagues, friends and associates. But the real question is how to find out what is really important to these contacts so that you can refer them to one of your chapter members. How can you maximise the chances of your colleagues gaining their business?

Here's one technique that can help: Anchoring. Just as a ship is held fast when it is anchored, so too is your prospect. Anchoring a referral means that you build a strong foundation for them to change a situation. You'll find out what motivates that prospective buyer to work with you or the person you'll refer them to.

The basis of this technique is that "Today's Problems Affect Performance". Let me explain.

Today means that you understand the prospect's current situation, and what is happening to them today. Ask them questions to find out what they are working on. The second step is identifying **Problems** surrounding their products or services. This isn't always easy: sometimes we don't acknowledge the problems we have and can't articulate them. The third step is to find out what **Effect** these problems are having on the prospect's business. Are they affecting the company? If so, what are the negative impacts on **Performance** because of these problems - and the consequences?

Have a look at this example. **Today**, a uniform retailer has 23 sales staff using Outlook or paper-based contact management. The **Problems** related to this are that there's no sharing of sales data, no sales reports and management can't predict sales volume. Sales people aren't focusing on selling. The **Effect** is that revenues fluctuate, and there've been no pay increases for two years. Poor **Performance** is the result: sales people aren't learning, new tools to help the selling process are not being developed and there's animosity between sales and management. This would be an excellent referral for Prophet, a company providing Outlook-based software solutions.

By anchoring a referral you are more likely to close the sale. You can suggest a sales path for the person you are referring and they can tailor their approach to the prospect. You create rapport with the prospect - it's a good way to get to know them and a great topic of conversation. Using this technique also shows you care about the prospect, and his/her needs. Listening and creating empathy are key attributes of top sales people. And, of course, if a referral is properly anchored and worth the investment, it is easier to track through the referral process.

So, next time you have a prospect in front of you, try anchoring their referral. I'm sure you'll find it makes referring business so much easier.●

Guy can be contacted on 07932 164216

QUESTIONS TO USE WHEN ANCHORING A SALE

Today:

1. Tell me about some of the processes you are using. How do they work?
2. Why do you have that number of sales people?
3. What sort of things are you doing to improve sales or turnover?

Problem:

4. Tell me about the problems you're having in the company (i.e. with your sales) etc?
5. What management problems are you having personally?
6. What management problems are you having as a team?

Affect:

7. How are people handling these problems?
8. What's the atmosphere like in the company / team?
9. How consistent are your sales?
10. What's your turnover of people?

Performance:

11. How is the performance of the sales team, given these problems?
12. With sales being down, how are things affected?
13. What sorts of things are helping your sales team perform better?

TO MENTOR OR NOT TO MENTOR

By Tim Gale,
Area Director for East Anglia

If I've heard it once, I've heard it too many times. "So and so hasn't got a clue what they're doing. Did you see this referral I got from (A.N.Other)? It's worse than useless..."

The listener's response is often equally unhelpful or negative: "If it was me, I'd do (x-y-z) about it" or "I want to know what someone is going to do about it..."

Invariably such exchanges produce no useful outcome, because the subject of the conversation will usually be none the wiser as to how (s)he has unwittingly failed, letting themselves and everyone else down.

Why does this happen? Quite simply because we assume that others know everything they need to know and everything that we already know. This, of course, is nonsense. Most successful business people have made mistakes - and they're usually quite willing to share their errors, to help others avoid the same pitfalls.

While the 'School of Hard Knocks' may be a tough last-line of education, applying BNI's Givers Gain philosophy would surely discourage us from putting anyone through such an ordeal. So why don't we take more time to provide feedback and advice to those of our chapter colleagues and business associates who demonstrate they need it?"

Is it because we fear we'll get a bad reaction, or be seen as unduly critical? And if so, why? Surely we've all experienced those occasions when we have failed to see something blindingly obvious, until someone pointed it out - invariably leaving us grateful for their intervention, even if it did hurt our pride!

The excuses we make for not taking the time to offer someone feedback or to act as a mentor, rarely have any legitimate basis and yet, making the effort to offer constructive, supportive advice has many potential benefits, including improved relationships, being seen as a true and caring Giver, increased self-esteem and greater 'gain' on an individual basis.

So what would be a great way to start? Why not keep it simple and ask: "Would you be interested in some feedback?" Offer some small hints or subtle tips and build up from there. The value to you and those around you is limitless. Good Luck.●

Tim can be contacted on 07808 631167



FROM THE CHAIR



Be seen to do the right thing...

Says Rick Armstrong, past Chapter Director of Leeds' Network Central

As a member of any chapter leadership team there is always plenty to do but, however big your contribution, it is essential you are seen to be proactive, communicating the 'positives' in your chapter. When you do the right things, those things must have a high visibility.

Regular communication, such as an e-mail to your BNI colleagues, will help them see you are on the ball and, importantly, show that you don't simply appear for breakfast, say your piece, and then disappear until the following week's meeting. That is not leadership, it is just attendance.

One important opportunity that members of leadership teams often seem to miss, is the chance to combine their high-profile BNI role with the way they want to be perceived as a 'captain of industry' in their own business sector. Quite simply, if you fail to show the leadership skills and dynamism expected of you in your chapter role, why should members believe you are at the top of your game in your own business?

A key benefit of being on the leadership team is that you get more scope than other members to present yourself, how well you work, how efficient and effective you are. Show me someone who demonstrates efficiency and effectiveness as a BNI leader, and I just can't help but assume they'll be good in their own work. Will I try harder to bring them business? You bet I will. Do I want to follow someone who goes out of their way to help my chapter succeed? Absolutely!

Happily, this approach doesn't have to be limited to the leadership team.

All members should strive to do and be seen to do the right thing. Givers Gain is not just a clever phrase used by BNI, but a universal and simple principle: you reap what you sow. It is also not just about bringing third party referrals or testimonials, but a philosophy to be carried through all your BNI activities. Why? Because when you make that extra effort and raise your standards, you help others to aim higher, inspiring colleagues to do better and, when they lift their game, you in turn will be inspired to continue the pursuit of excellence.

Do most of your members turn up just before 7am, not always looking too smart? You don't have to be on the top table to show them how to do better. I've seen chapters turned around by one or two people doing the simple stuff well. Turn up at 6.30 and soon you won't be alone. Look smart, and others will soon be suited and booted. Give a warm welcome to every visitor and others will start to do the same. In short, your chapter will do more business when members get this simple message: you need to *participate* to be a part of the chapter's success.

Anyone who is serious about their business must aspire to be with other successful people. Whatever your role in BNI, by following some basic steps you will show people how easy it is to be a leader. Be seen do the right thing and others will follow your example!●

Rick Armstrong is Chief Executive of McKay Law, based at 41 St Paul's Street, Leeds, LS1 2JG, tel: 0845 123 5571

GETTING THE BEST FROM OUR TECHNOLOGY TOOLS!

As every BNI member knows, successful business is built on good business relationships and, in today's networking environment, this means working smarter to become more professional in the way we develop our business relationships to gain referrals and reap the benefits of Givers Gain. On this page, we highlight three of the latest 'technology tools' now available to help even the most effective members become even more efficient.

And now... a BNI Guide on your mobile!

The Royal Armouries Chapter in Leeds has acquired a unique method of keeping its members and visitors informed about the latest BNI activities - using mobile technology developed by one of its members.

Pick up your mobile, text SOS BNI to 60999 (your standard network tariffs apply) and you will see the very first mobile BNI Guide. The brainchild of Pixaya (UK) Limited, the guide summarises the services of all of Royal Armouries members' businesses, as well as chapter meeting times, training dates, venue locations, social events and available member categories.

Initially created as an emergency guide for UK travellers abroad as part of a Foreign & Commonwealth Office service, the company quickly recognised the power of the mobile phone for highly selective target marketing, and added facilities for bulk messaging, video clips, audio guides and live marketing data.

Director Stewart Mclean said: "We first personalised the guide for our chapter's travel company who, by looking at the live statistics of customers who



responded to their phone text marketing, could see what holidays or services the user was interested in. And the system ensured they had the phone numbers of every caller, so they could get back with a relevant offer."

Then another chapter member suggested the mobile BNI members' guide could be adapted to help recruit new members, leading Stewart and his team to come up with their comprehensive chapter guide. "Now, when a member tells a business associate to check out BNI's local chapters on their mobile phones, we can monitor the results, find out who is looking at what categories of membership and which services - and simply ring them up to invite them along, or send them a text message with the chapters details," he added.

Within two days of introducing the guide to BNI colleagues, 20 had signed up to promote their businesses in the guide. Stewart added: "By structuring information about their goods or services, we can instantly show them which of their potential customers are interested in what items - turning target marketing into even more effective sniper marketing." ●

Contact Stewart Mclean on 01924 476042, or simply text SOS BNI to 60999 from any WAP-enabled mobile



From small referrals, mighty software grows!

When computer programmer Simon Burrows was given a referral to do a couple of days programming for a fellow member in Trowbridge's Ushers Chapter, little did he realise it would lead to his creating a piece of software which, barely 12 months later, is in worldwide demand!

His colleague, a marketing consultant, was trying to compile a typical database of company contact details across several target markets and, to keep the costs down, he was employing students to search Yellow Pages websites for the target markets and then laboriously key the results into a new database.

Simon, the Chapter's Secretary/Treasurer, was asked to find a way to automate the process and his resulting 'Data Ferret' software programme proved such an instant success that he is now selling it to major corporations throughout the world.

He said: "The programme embeds any existing database into its own application which means that on-line searches for prospective customers that previously took countless days can now be completed in minutes, with the resulting names, addresses, phone numbers and web information automatically used to produce mail-merged letters, emails, labels, or simply be exported to other file formats. And, it is a vastly cheaper option that using a typical mailing house or data management firm."

Naturally, in the spirit of Givers Gain, Simon has given each of his chapter colleagues a copy of the programme. ●

Contact Simon at Ferreting Software on 01225 781122 and try the software free of charge by visiting www.dataferret.net

Organising your business cards and contacts

It doesn't usually take long for the average BNI member to amass a huge number of business cards but, unless they're properly organised so that you can instantly access the information when you need it in a hurry, things can quickly get out of hand.

Enter the BNI business card reader and scanner, an efficient addition to your desk top or briefcase, that reads and stores all business cards, providing a rapid transfer of the information to your computer's contact database, from which it is easily transferable to a PDA, laptop or mobile phone.

Although such devices are on the market costing between £200 and £300, thanks to Wimborne Minster Chapter's Mark Hankin, BNI is able to offer its own-brand USB 'Biz Card Scanner' to members for less than £60. Mark saw the scanner in an in-flight magazine and, after buying one 'duty free' for £95, decided to source it and negotiate a competitive purchase price, so he could offer it cheaply to BNI members.

He said: "It allows me to have all my updated contacts in a database from which I organise and export the information to my PDA and mobile, and it's a great help in creating more referrals for fellow members. It helped me find 22 referrals in just two weeks!"

One of the scanner's first customers was Wimborne Chapter colleague Simon Philbrick who said: "I spend most of my time on site with clients, so my mobile and PDA are vital tools of my trade. While discussing a recent shop refit with a customer, I realised he also needed other services and trades. Within seconds I was able to give him contact details from my PDA and generated referrals worth £8,000, simply because I had those details available - thanks to the scanner." ●

Members can buy it for £59.95 via the Resource Centre on BNI's Europe Website at: www.bni-europe.com/uk

A high-profile business and personal coaching consultancy is busy settling into smart new offices - after gaining so much business through BNI that its founder decided he needed to move the company 150 miles south - from the calm of Carlisle to the bright lights of Leeds.

The Hughes Company has become a major player in 'maximising the potential of people', so much so that its client list now ranges from A-list celebrities and sports stars to some of the UK's biggest corporate names. And, says founder Chris Hughes, it's largely thanks to his membership of BNI, which has produced 95% of all their new business over the last four years.

"I am so grateful to my former colleagues in Carlisle's Edwin Chapter who truly boosted our early business, but ironically we won so many clients through BNI referrals that we had no choice but to move to a larger, more centrally located city. We were dealing with clients all over



the country and we couldn't ask them all to travel almost to the Scottish borders to see us," said Chris.

responsible for our rapid progress, I wanted to give something back to the organisation and its members," Chris added.

"Since I joined BNI in 2002, we've gained business worth hundreds of

BNI provides 'moving' experience for coaching company

thousands of pounds through chapter colleagues, much of it involving top-tier clients such as BT, Deloitte, United Utilities and Ann Summers. Without BNI, our client base, turnover and profits would have grown far more slowly. That's why I am so confident that our membership will continue to flourish." ●

Having moved south, the next step was to find a 'replacement' chapter - which is how one of Chris's senior trainers, Stuart Powell came to be a founder member of Leeds' new Network Exchange Chapter.

"If I'm honest, we didn't need to re-join BNI because we're in the fortunate position of reaping the rewards from our fantastic growth but, since BNI is directly

Contact Stuart on 0113 203 1348 and view the company's success at: www.thehughescompany.co.uk

Team building in the New Forest

At the start of the day, they weren't convinced that walking tightropes high above the ground or clambering over assault courses would make their BNI performances any better. But barely five hours later, members of the New Forest Chapter not only understood the connection, but were happy with the gruelling 'team building' event they'd just completed in Hampshire's famous forest.

Despite having just celebrated its first successful year, the chapter had seen significant changes to its membership, so the incoming leadership team felt a team development programme was the ideal way to invigorate the chapter and focus members on the coming year's priorities.

Which is how more than 20 of the group came face-to-face with a

range of new challenges, each designed to raise awareness of their impact as individuals on the performance of the whole team, enhancing mutual trust, co-operation and communication.

Outgoing Chapter Director, solicitor Robert Bolwell commented: "We have always been a friendly chapter but since this event, the number of referrals has noticeably increased because we have a better understanding of each other and our colleagues' businesses." ●





WE'RE OFF TO THE BIG APPLE!

It's official! There are 11 lucky winners of the biggest and best prize ever offered by BNI - each of them destined for almost a week of opulent living on the world's largest, most luxurious liner as it cruises across the Atlantic to New York, followed by three magical days in Manhattan.

Their names emerged from a series of regional draws involving nearly 300 potential winners from more than 60 qualifying chapters, following last autumn's chapter building drive, and members of the winning team are now looking forward to the trip of a lifetime, departing Southampton at the end of May aboard Cunard's 150,000 tonne flagship, the QM2 (pictured below).

They are: David Robinson (from Beacon Chapter, Great Barr, Birmingham), Graham Lane (Chariots, St Albans, Herts), Roger Howes (Business Leaders of Tomorrow, Sandwich, Kent), Wendy Patterson (Harlequin, Richmond upon Thames), Steve Evans, (Churchill, Bromley), Mark Haywood (Falcons, Altrincham, Cheshire), Gregor Nau (Ferrit, Munich), Rob Crawford (Falcons, Newcastle upon Tyne), David Parton (Fosseway, Newark), Peter Ingall (Strayside, Harrogate), and Paul Voltzenlogel from Brighton's Pavilion Chapter.

Each winner introduced at least two new members to his or her chapter, but Sandwich's Roger Howes brought in five new members, and Altrincham's Mark Haywood added four to his chapter. ●

SuccessNet wishes them all a fantastic and well-deserved holiday!



CHELTHENHAM'S KING OF THE DANCE (CARD)

Enthusiastic new members are always welcome at BNI chapters, but Cheltenham Chapter's latest arrival, Justin Hunter, has excelled expectations by 'waltzing' his way to a new record in the chapter's dance card competition.

Justin, who runs promotional gifts franchise, Connect 2, with his wife Rachel, (a member of the neighbouring Gold Cup Chapter), completed an astonishing 11 dance cards in the first week of Cheltenham's latest competition - and all within two weeks of his joining.

"I knew that having one-to-one meetings with my new chapter colleagues was the best way to get to know their

businesses. As a new member I had to learn about the different activities of more than 40 people, so I decided to devote my whole week to BNI and just go for it. And of course, it gave me the opportunity to take along our mobile showroom, which was the best way to help them find out more about what I do," said Justin.

He feels that everyone has benefited from his efforts.

"It's the quickest and most effective means of getting involved in BNI, and learning about members and their businesses," he added. ●

Contact Justin on 01684 297961

getting in touch...

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you and SuccessNet...

SuccessNet is published quarterly and distributed free of charge by BNI to all members. We are delighted that with each successive edition, we receive more and more of your emails, letters and calls, asking us to include your news or picture items in the newsletter - but please remember we don't have space for them all!

If you have an item you'd like us to consider for inclusion, please email it to: successnet@grosvenorassociates.com - making sure you include your phone numbers (office and mobile) and address as well. ●