



# Messenger

Volume 12

Winter 2009

## Hello, and welcome to the Christmas edition of the MPH Messenger

As we rush headlong towards two of the biggest celebrations on our calendar, it's odd, how as the mercury plunges and the nights draw in, spirits rise in expectation despite the bouts of late-night last-minute shopping.

It's easy to be cynical about the meaning of Christmas: overindulgences followed by pronouncements of New Year's resolutions that somehow, even with the best of intentions; soon drop off the radar. Within no time at all our resolutions are forgotten as Christmas fades in the memory for another year.

Although December is traditionally the month for celebrating this particular anniversary, I'd like to introduce you to another, less well known but none-the-less significant to many: the International Day of Disabled People on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

The date is the anniversary of the UN General Assembly's adoption of the World Programme of Action concerning Persons with Disabilities to promote understanding about disability

issues and to increase awareness and inclusion.

The UN invited organisations to run programmes and events on the Day to raise awareness and to take practical action to further demonstrate progress being made towards social inclusion.

Most organisations generally accept the social model of disability – that disability is imposed on people with impairments by a society, which creates or permits barriers to equality. Unfortunately, one call to action in a time of so much festivity, can end up like so many New Year's resolutions, and fade from memory without much, if any, action taking place.

So if I can ask for one thing, during this season of goodwill, it would be this: look around within your business/organisation and find the



small things that, if changed, would make a big difference to your friends, colleagues and customers with disabilities.

The parallels are obvious. Celebrate the Day but be steadfast in your resolution. Don't just organise events for the Day, carry the sentiment into the New Year and translate it into positive action for social inclusion.

Now that's the real meaning of Christmas.



Equality Award finalists (L-R): Georgia Cogdon, Alan Matthews and June Brewis

## MPH Group finalist in 2009 North East Equality Awards

MPH Group MD, Alan Matthews, was presented with a certificate in recognition of the Group being a finalist in the “Employers of between 51 – 250” category of the 2009 North East Equality Awards.

“This is another fantastic achievement by the Group,” said Alan. “Each year businesses across the region are honoured for their commitment to developing and promoting equal opportunities within the workplace and it is particularly pleasing as we won the award for this category back in 2006.”

## Group MD guests at regional training awards

MPH Group MD, Alan Matthews, was guest speaker at the 2009 TDR Training Awards held in Gateshead recently. The Awards recognise the efforts and achievements of both organisations and young people in training.



Alan spoke about being an entrepreneur, and stressed that everyone has the potential to become one.

“Entrepreneurs are not some mythical being, they are real people; flesh and blood,” said Alan. “Everyone reading this can become one; all it takes is a good idea, product or service, an identifiable market, a lot of hard work and some luck upon the way.”

“It also pays to surround yourself with talented people; people with skills that complement your own, because you will not be able to do everything. And by employing talented people you can consistently deliver, and continue to improve, a first-class product or service.”

# Our flex

By the way, where can we  
It's just ano

Events come in many shapes and sizes and accommodating customers' special requests an everyday occurrence, but not many come with the added proviso to be able to run five separate workshops and have space for a small fleet of transport and security services equipment, including two buses, a fire engine, two police vans and an ambulance.

But that is just what MPH Training and Conference Centre did recently for its customer Nexus (the Tyne & Wear Passenger Transport Executive) in conjunction with the regional emergency services in order to raise awareness among local primary school children of the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour and the positive aspects of social responsibility, making the right choices in life.

Five different highly interactive workshops were held in the Centre's five main training rooms, with pupils from five local schools rotating between each workshop.

Activities included role-play, music (Rap), a quiz and drama with themes such as the events that overtake a schoolboy when he truants from school, the potential real life consequences of hoax 999 calls, throwing missiles at public transport and emergency services and more.



To read these and other stories visit: [www.mph-uk.com](http://www.mph-uk.com)



# Boys and their toys...

New servers, stronger firewalls, increased data security, shorter run times, faster turnaround... Christmas comes early to the boys in IT and Development

MPH Accessible Media is the UK's largest independent transcription service provider. A technologically driven and innovative company that delivers 24-48 hour turnaround on large volume transcriptions (depending upon SLA) backed up by rigorous quality control.

And 'technology' is the most important part of our business as it controls client customer data transfer and data security; it runs our production processes and it is at the heart of all our new product developments, like our Automated Audio Billing and PIN production and secure transcription.



Anyone who has assembled flat-pack furniture would wince in sympathy at the sheer number of boxes of equipment that accompany the new server

Our work with standards-based application integration means that you don't have to change the format of your data to fit our system; the Development team creates unique formats to accommodate yours, and this is about to become even easier.

## System upgrade

In order to maintain our technical competitive advantage, the IT and Development team are in the process of upgrading the Group's main servers. The scale of investment is such that



Staff training and development is a fundamental part of everything we do

it will allow us to make major improvements in both internal and customer support systems and follows the recent installation of a new intruder and fire alarm system throughout the Media (transcription) Centre.

Rob Wray is MPH Group's IT and Development Manager: "This is a massive undertaking and will be implemented over a reasonably short period of time. Once all the hardware is in place our data will gradually be migrated to the new servers to ensure there is no disruption to our business."

"Many of the changes we're implementing will radically improve integration with our customers' systems. By adding Redhat Enterprise Linux (RHEL), SuSe Linux and



## PIN Production and Secure Transcription

Fully protected transcription systems equal to the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. PINs produced via fully automated process in Braille, large print and audio without the need for human intervention.

To find out more, visit our website: [www.mph-transcription.co.uk](http://www.mph-transcription.co.uk)

To read these and other stories visit: [www.mph-uk.com](http://www.mph-uk.com)

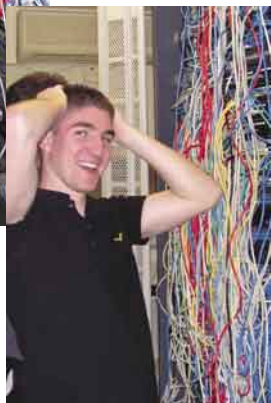
Solaris based servers to our existing server mix we will be able to provide better support and compatibility.

“Our Microsoft servers will be upgraded to the 2008 version of the server product.”

“We will also be employing virtualisation by using Hyper-V for Microsoft servers and XEN for new Linux based servers, allowing us to run multiple operating instances on single hardware boxes, providing in turn, enhanced energy efficiency, server utilisation and system redundancy.”



“All existing firewalls will be replaced with the latest CISCO firewalls giving us the increased efficiency of a single platform while increasing



“No, Gary, the **other** red!”

Preparing the old server for decommissioning

compatibility with our customers' external systems.”

“This means that as well as increased capacity and system redundancy we can also now facilitate shorter run times for existing customers.”

For MPH internally, we will be upgrading to Exchange 2007 for internal email, calendaring and scheduling, we will also implementing SharePoint services for project collaboration and a blackberry enterprise server to provide enhanced support to our mobile users.

Employing an updated AV server with 4TB of storage will increase the capability of our video and audio production and editing systems for MPH Studios.

## Meet the Team



The IT Team pictured L-R: Gary Doran, Rob Wray, and Alan Murray

**MPH has a small, dedicated, yet highly effective IT team drawn from backgrounds as diverse as engineering and computer game development, but they also have experience in mainframe and minicomputer technology, networking, object-oriented software development and data communications.**

The head of the team is IT and Development Manager, Rob Wray, who is the first point of call and technical liaison for all our customers. It's his job to guarantee the integrity and security of the data transfer and then determine how the files will be transcribed.

Lead Programmer, Neil Hislop, looks after the maintenance and development of the automated transcription system.

Neil takes the raw data and writes a script so that the information in the standard print document appears in the appropriate part of the transcribed page.

Also when agreed file formats arrive altered because the client has included marketing information or messages, then Neil creates a work-around to make the output match the new original.

Other team members are: Gary Doran, Production Automation Coordinator, who handles/runs day-to-day automated processes for transcription and Alan Murray, IT Support Technician, who looks after end-user hardware support.

# Bottom line makes good headline

A positive end to the financial year with business showing a healthy year-on-year growth despite the current economic climate

The MPH Group Shareholders' Meeting took place on 26 October 2009 in the Training & Conference Centre's new IT Training Suite.

The MD's Office presented a comprehensive report outlining the company's financial position during 2008/09 as well as a detailed forecast and budget for 2009/10, both of which were endorsed by Jane Freeman, Accountant.

MPH Group MD, Alan Matthews, provided a high-level overview of the overall performance for the year, supported by his Executive Assistant, Georgia Cogdon, who delivered the financial results in detail.

"The best performers were undoubtedly the Training & Conference Centre, Studios and Customer Centred Training, who all traded well above expectation and showed substantial growth year-on-year," according to Alan Matthews.

"MPH Training & Conference Centre recorded positive growth on 2007/8. A large number of organisations continued to focus on training and developing their staff despite the recession. I'm pleased to say that this has justified the investment we made in the IT Training Suite, Executive Meeting Room and refurbishment programme."

"This was also Customer Centred Training's first full year of trading, having been set up



MPH Group MD, Alan Matthews, during his presentation to directors. Also present (L-R): Georgia Cogdon, Executive Assistant to the MD, Helen Lewis, HR Director, Dee Matthews, Director, and Jane Freeman, Accountant. Out of shot but also present: Tim Marrison, Transcription and Technical Director.

in 2007/8; its results have exceeded both expectations and targets."

"It was a record-breaking year for Studios ostensibly by developing the British Sign Language (BSL) side of the business."

"MPH Accessible Media saw good steady growth particularly within automated audio billing and increased demand for EasyWord - EasySpeak - EasySee."

All present at the meeting agreed that despite the recession and an increase in competition, these results were particularly encouraging.

---

SEASONS GREETINGS  
from everyone at



MPH Accessible Media • MPH Accessible Environments • MPH Customer Centred Training  
MPH Studios • MPH Training & Conference Centre

To read these and other stories visit: [www.mph-uk.com](http://www.mph-uk.com)

# MPH Group attends DNEX

MPH Group were represented in strength at this year's Disability North Exhibition (DNEX).

DNEX, the North's biggest independent living event, was held at the Metro Radio Arena, Newcastle.

The stand was shared by two of the Group's business units: MPH Customer Centred Training featured apprenticeships, NVQs, adult literacy and numeracy and a range of half- and full-day professional short courses relating to disability and the compliance and legislative issues surrounding the DDA.

MPH Accessible Environments featured the services they provide as an access consultancy, as well as a range of disability aids, including Customer Care Packs (transaction aids for disabled people) and induction equipment.

Jim Taylor, Principal Access Consultant, MPH Accessible Environments, said: "There was considerable interest in our range of Customer Care Packs particularly from people working in care homes and housing associations, and solid enquiries on our accessible information training."

June Brewis, Training Provision Manager, MPH Customer Centred Training added: "We received many positive enquiries about our in-service NVQs and professional short courses."

Managers from other MPH Group companies (MPH Studios, MPH Accessible Media and MPH Training & Conference Centre) also assisted.



Jim Taylor talks-up the Customer Care Packs while June Brewis discusses NVQs at DNEX09



## MPH Customer Care Packs

Transaction aids for disabled people.

High visibility **counter stands** for reception and customer-facing service desks and **portable cases** for mobile representatives or people making home visits.

For more information visit our website:  
[www.mph-uk.com](http://www.mph-uk.com)



To receive this in alternative format call: 0191 438 6063 or visit: [www.mph-uk.com](http://www.mph-uk.com)

# Will you make a difference next year?

The envelope read: "Please open in private."

Inside, a brightly coloured leaflet asks: "Are you alone?"

You are invited to: "Draw the curtains. Sit in a cold room. Speak to no one."

This, we are told, is "Christmas for one million older people in the UK".

What the leaflet doesn't say is, this is the same Christmas faced by many of the 10 million disabled people in the UK, regardless of their age.

Cut off from society by their disability. People with motor/ambulatory impairments, cognitive and visual impairments, hearing/auditory impairments; trapped in their homes; isolated because they can't join in.

Can't go to the office party because the loos aren't accessible, or the entrance has too many steps, there's no braille or large print menu. Transport timetable has changed for

the holidays but it's only available in one format.

Take a look at the gifts under your Christmas tree this year: the audio book for grandma, the novel in large print for uncle Joe. Things you give automatically for people you know. But what if those things weren't available?

Ask yourself, would you put up with this? Would you let your grandma or uncle Joe become isolated? No? Then why should anyone else?

Here's something to mull over while you decide on your resolutions for the new decade: Legislation won't make the difference; it's the people who are meant to implement it who will. In Dickens terms, we can change 'Christmas yet to come'.

Organisations don't change; people change. Organisations change one person at a time.

All it needs is enough people to make the difference because, disability doesn't discriminate; peoples' actions do.

Merry Christmas.



## Hi-Tech, Hi-Spec IT Training Suite



- Up to 10 delegates
- Laptops with wireless internet access
- 78" Interactive white board with built-in projector
- Audio, CD, DVD and Video facilities
- All equipment included in the price
- Flexible half-, full-day and delegate rates available
- Superior quality furniture
- On-site catering
- Fully accessible

### MPH Training & Conference Centre

Tel: 0191 495 2895 Web: [www.mph-conference.co.uk](http://www.mph-conference.co.uk)

The Messenger is written and produced by MPH Group marketing department. MPH is registered in England and Wales as a limited company: no. 4250604. Registered office: The Media Centre Stonehills Shields Road Gateshead NE10 0HW T: 0191 438 6063 F: 0191 469 1955 Minicom: 0191 438 1122 E: [enquiries@mph-uk.com](mailto:enquiries@mph-uk.com) W: [www.mph-uk.com](http://www.mph-uk.com)

To read these and other stories visit: [www.mph-uk.com](http://www.mph-uk.com)