

NETWORKNEWS

FEATURED

WELCOME ON BOARD

We welcome an impressive range of new members to Rail Alliance all ready and waiting to network with other members.

DELIVERING THE GOODS

How the inaugural MacroRail certainly met expectations of exhibitors and visitors at Long Marston.

NETWORK KNOW HOW

Members share their knowledge of BS11000, Currency Management, Marketing, Railway Civils & Social Media.

OFF THE RAILS

We take a close look at marketing techniques and media and share an opportunity to compete for a share of a £4million innovation fund.

COMING DOWN THE LINE

Forthcoming events you need to know about.

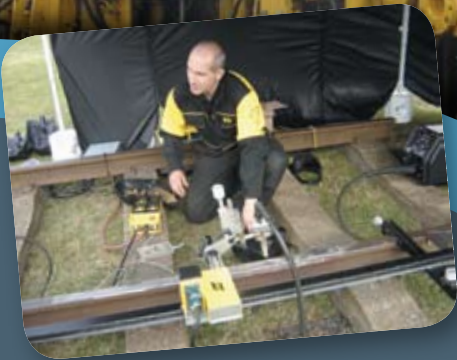
FROM THE RAIL ALLIANCE – KEEPING YOU ON TRACK

Welcome to the latest edition of Network News. In this edition we take a whistle stop tour of the Rail Alliance MacroRail 2011 and share with you some of the many event highlights.

Network News is fast becoming a platform for industry knowledge and in this edition we share the expertise of Dr Robin Singleton on BS11000 – a structured framework for building effective and profitable relationships.

Our regular New Members feature offers a full page of new contacts and Colin Flack, our CEO, stresses the value that 'getting it' brings to business.

Image courtesy of Rail Media Group



Live welding demonstrations were held at MacroRail by Arc-Gen Hilti and ESAB

As you will see from the article below, our MacroRail Exhibition concept worked particularly well and, now the concept is proven, it's full steam ahead to develop that concept for 2012. It has been an incredibly busy period for us over the Summer – planning for MacroRail as well as our 2012 Spring series of networking meetings and our collaborative activity with the knowledge base and the industry at large. Moreover, we have developed our partnerships with the Transport Knowledge Transfer Network and with UKTI which has led directly to the two co-sponsored events – one of which will have taken place by the time you read this and the other (with UKTI North West) is planned for 27 January 2012 in Crewe at the Virgin Training Academy (e-mail rhona.clarke@railalliance.co.uk for further information or to book yourself onto this event).

Back to this issue of Network News; we are very pleased to see our first full advert featuring member company Structural Fabrications in Network News and this is part of the “above and beyond” chargeable

services we are able to offer – however, we value editorial contributions from our members (published for free!) and I am pleased to see so many in this issue from Daventry Business & Consultancy Services, Newton Mann and Qinesis. Furthermore, I am delighted that our guest contributor Dr Robin Singleton, an Associate Director of PSL Limited, has penned an article on partnering and collaborative working entitled, “Two Major Developments to Shape the Future” and this article has relevance right here, right now in our industry. We see this activity as entirely natural for us to develop – not least as it is something we have been practising for some time. Indeed, by the time you read this, yours truly will have completed his BSI 1000 Facilitator Workshop and I will be preparing an article for the next Network News. You will see from the back cover that our CEO has been banging the drum about whether or not people ‘get it’ in terms of the networking message and the whole business development piece ... and this in a way keeps us on our toes to make sure we ‘get it’ right, first time, all the time! Finally, for those companies looking to conduct some business intelligence into the Australian rail market – please bear in mind that we will be visiting AusRail PLUS 2011 in November (22nd-24th) and we are offering our usual RAVAS Rail Advocate service to you ... to pass on marketing material, to make introductions on your behalf, or to seek potential partnering opportunities on your behalf – contact robert.hopkin@railalliance.co.uk for further information.



in association with





Evening Overview

- 18:30 Doors open for drinks
- 19:00 Take seats for dinner
- 19:15 Welcome introduction from Colin Flack and associate sponsors
- 19:30 Guests enjoy a five course meal
- 21:00 Entertainment from the Mentalist Paul Stockman
- 21:30 RailStaff Awards Ceremony
- 23:00 Live band
- 01:00 Home time

Saturday 29th October 2011

The ICC, Birmingham

www.railstaffawards.com

To buy individual tickets or a table of ten, call Patricia or Helen on 01530 56 00 26





Robert Hopkin
Executive Director
Rail Alliance
Editor Network News

WELCOME ON BOARD

The benefits of Rail Alliance membership are now being enjoyed by 39 new members and we are pleased to welcome the following organisations.

Avdel UK Ltd (Part of Infastech – Global Provider of Innovative Fastening Technology Solutions)
www.infastech.com

AD Porta Security Ltd (Railway security specialists working with blue chip rail construction companies; AD Porta operates to BS EN 9001:2008, BS 7499:2007 and BS 7858:2006 standards)
www.adporta.co.uk

Arbil Ltd (Servicing, Hire and Sale of Rail Lifting Gear, Loose Lifting Tackle and Overhead Line Products)
www.arbil.co.uk

Belvoir Engineering Services Ltd (Manufacture and Refurbishment of Engineering Supplies including Headlight Lenses and Cab Heaters)
www.belvoires.com

Bridge Rail Ltd (Provision of Executive Management, Plant/Operational Control, Programme and Project Launch Management Services)
www.bridge.eu.com

Chiltern Railways (Train Operating Company)
www.chilternrailways.co.uk

Clyde & Co (Solicitors to the Rail Industry)
www.clydeco.com

Daventry Business & Consultancy Services Ltd (Provider of Business System Consultancy and Qualification System Support)
www.DBandCSL.com

DeltaRail Group Ltd (Software and Technology Company Dedicated to the Rail Industry)
www.deltarail.com

ESG (Provider of Traction and Rolling Stock Consultancy and Turnkey Solutions)
www.esg-rail.com

Essex Upholstery (Euro Group) (Manufacture, Re-upholstery and Renovation to all seating in the Rail Industry as well as all other Industries)
www.euro-group-uk.com

First Great Western (Train Operating Company (TOC))
www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk

Arthur Flury (UK) Ltd (Supplier of Overhead Line Equipment to Rail and Tram Markets)
www.aflury.co.uk

Focon Electronic Systems ApS (Provider of Passenger Information Systems including Infotainment Systems)
www.focon.com

h2gogo Ltd (Independent Design, Research & Development Company Focused on Producing Products to Provide Vehicle Emissions & Potential Fuel Efficiency Improvement)
www.h2gogo.com

Independent Glass (UK Market Leader in the Manufacture and Supply of Toughened, Laminated and Laminated Toughened Safety Glass Products)
www.independentglass.co.uk

Jobson James Insurance Brokers (Corporate Insurance Broker with Specialism in Rail)
www.jobson-james.co.uk

Kelvatek (Supplier of Protection Relays for Signalling Power and Fault Finding Equipment for LV Networks)
www.kelvatek.com

Kent Modular Electronics Ltd (Manufacturer of Specialist Display Monitors)
www.kme.co.uk

KOREC Group (Provider of Trimble Surveying, Machine Control and Mapping Services, Products and Solutions)
www.korecgroup.com

Hall Rail (UK's Largest Independent Manufacturer and Supplier of High Quality Switches and Crossings to the Railway Industry)
www.hallrail.co.uk

LCM Environmental (Supplier of Tank Cleaning and Other Services Relating to Fuel)
www.lcmenvironmental.com

Matchtech (Provider of Permanent and Contract Recruitment Solutions to the Rail Industry)
www.matchtech.com

Mitsubishi Electric (Global Leader in the Research, Manufacturing and Marketing of Electrical and Electronic Equipment used in Communications, Consumer Electronics, Industrial Technology, Energy and Transportation)
www.meuk.mee.com

MTM Power GmbH (Worldwide Manufacturer of Power Conversion Products Especially Designed for Vehicle and Railway Applications – Based in Germany)
www.mtm-power.com

NewRail – Newcastle University (Applied Research for Railways Focusing on the Development and Strategic Implementation of Innovative Technologies)
www.ncl.ac.uk/newrail

Newton Mann Ltd (Providers of Specialist Publishing and Video Productions)
www.newtonmann.co.uk

Performance Development Ltd (Delivery of NVQ-based Rail Engineering and Assessor/Verifier Awards across the UK)
www.pdlimited.com

Pestokill Pest Control (Leading UK Independent Pest Control Company)
www.pestokill.co.uk

Railway Interiors Expo (Provider of Exhibitions, Conferences & Publications Dedicated to Public Transport Interiors)
www.railwayinteriors-expo.com

Sapa Profiles UK Ltd (Leading UK Manufacturers of Extruded Aluminium Profiles)
www.sapagroup.com

Schaltbau Machine Electrics (Supplier and Manufacturer of Electromechanical Equipment Systems for Rolling Stock)
www.schaltbau-me.com

Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership (Organisation Established to Re-open the Skipton to Colne Railway)
www.selrap.org.uk

STEAM (The Museum of the Great Western Railway)
www.swindon.gov.uk/steam

SYSTRA SA (Suppliers of Public and Rail Transport Planning, Project Management, Civil, Systems and Equipment Engineering)
www.systra.com

W H Tildesley Ltd (Manufacturer of Safety Critical Parts by Closed Die Drop Forge Process)
www.whtildesley.com

Trans-Tronic Ltd (Design and Manufacture of Coil Winding Transformers)
www.trans-tronic.co.uk

Trackwork Ltd (Supplier to Rail Infrastructure Projects, Track Maintenance, Renewal and Disposal)
www.trackwork.co.uk

Unipart Rail (Leading Product Supply and Manufacturing Solutions for Lean and Supply Chain)
www.unipartrail.com

RAIL ALLIANCE'S MACRO RAIL CONCEPT WORKS A TREAT AT LONG MARSTON

On 16 September 2011 the Rail Alliance staged its inaugural MacroRail Exhibition at its Long Marston HQ near Stratford-on-Avon with over 60 Rail Alliance members taking stand space and opening to invited visitors from the Rail Industry. The aim of the 2011 event was to prove the concept that a successful exhibition for the sector does not need to cost thousands of pounds to the exhibitor and that quality can win over quantity. We were delighted to see at least 7 new members joining the Rail Alliance just for the opportunity to exhibit at MacroRail. We were particularly grateful to the companies that brought along equipment to demonstrate including Trackwork's Demountable Tamper which very gracefully dismounts from its low-loader on to the railhead under its own steam demonstrating great flexibility and effectiveness; additionally, Arc-Gen Hilti brought their on-rail welding equipment – a most compact and quiet solution to the challenge of on-track or track-side welding. New members for the event also included Keltbray Rail who brought their pile driving equipment to demonstrate and the ease and grace with which these 36-tonne monsters went about their work had to be seen to be believed! One of the main advantages that MacroRail provided was the abundance of track around the venue – this we feel sets it apart from many of even the most established rail exhibitions in the show/exhibition calendar.

Additionally, we felt it vital to keep the 'associated costs' to a minimum for the exhibitor; so, we made sure (by means of a refreshing change for those of you who have had to pay £80+ for an electrical socket or £100 per half hour for fork lift activity), that exhibitors were not charged for electricity – each exhibitor had the use of at least one 13A socket – and we provided free tea and coffee all day and even the fork lift was offered free of charge. Moreover, the occasion enabled members and visitors alike to see the potential offered by the Long Marston site to their business, whatever sub-sector they were working in. We have for some time now assisted several members in proving and evaluation trials, photograph opportunities for PR work, the provision of meeting and training facilities for consortia or member companies and so on. We see all these activities as part of our core offering in terms of Rail Alliance membership and a true benefit to our members.

Back to MacroRail 2011, with a 'flash to bang' time of less than 3 months, we had set ourselves quite a challenge – but a determined approach by all in the Rail Alliance saw it come to fruition, providing an exhibition opportunity for our members (importantly, at no cost to them) in a live, working rail environment.



Through collaborating with other businesses on site at the Long Marston Business Park - not least the innovative use of existing warehouse accommodation - we have proved that, to quote one of General Colin Powell's famous rules, "It can be done!" In particular, we are very grateful to the CEO of Motorail UK (Ruth Flack) and the MD of Motorail UK (Steve Dunmore) and their team for all their hard work on our behalf, both during the preparation for the event and on the day. Our grateful thanks also go to Richard Pople, the Site Manager of the Long Marston Business Park, for his team's efforts in smoothing the flow of exhibitors and visitors through the main gate.

It is always difficult to put a value on any exhibition; indeed, that factor alone provided the challenge for us to seek to rewrite the rules of this particular game in an attempt to come up with a 'value-based' concept of exhibiting. The combined marketing effort of the event by the members, as well as the Rail Alliance's targeted marketing to influential contacts in the industry ensured that the majority of visitors to MacroRail were informed decision-makers as opposed to those from the well-intentioned 'tyre kicker' fraternity. So, to answer the exam question of; "How much business was done then?" ... the majority of our members reported having received good quality leads (including one member getting a strong lead into the automotive sector); additionally, we have had feedback from a handful of our members where aggregating the value of their potential orders would exceed £1M - itself proof positive that the concept does work.

Throughout the day, there was also the opportunity for typical Rail Alliance 'Four Walls Working' with many members seeing each others' products and services for the first time with - importantly - plenty of time and space to learn more about each other's capabilities and requirements. So, we are particularly pleased, but not surprised, that the initial feedback we have received indicates that a significant number of members reported doing business within the four walls. Importantly, such is the range and diversity of our membership, there was little or no chance for "own goals" where, as can happen at larger events, companies battle with competitors to secure the same leads.

The planning for MacroRail 2012 is already underway and, with 12 months to plan next year's event, the concept can be fully developed and we look forward to partnering with other clusters with a simple, common philosophy that underpins everything we do as an organisation - the staging of 'low cost/high value' business development opportunities.

(Image Credits)

- FL** The Institute of Metal Finishing were just one of a number of trade companies whose members work in the rail sector but were not all available to exhibit on the day.
- L** Independent Glass were demonstrating their safety, toughened and laminated glass used throughout train windows, doors, mirrors and luggage racks.
- C** Live welding demonstrations were held throughout the day provided by Arc-Gen Hilti and ESAB Hilti and ESAB.
- R** Tappex threaded fasteners showing their latest fasteners used extensively inside Rolling Stock in the UK
- FR** Low flying SenseFly unmanned surveying planes were being demonstrated by KOREC Group.



DON'T BE CAUGHT OUT BY THE CURRENCY MARKETS

With the advent of the credit crunch, exchange rate volatility has made international trade incredibly tough as margins are squeezed by increased costs and poor exchange rates. For a business to have survived to this point after all that has happened in the last 4 years is an achievement to be celebrated. Recessions have a tendency to cause 'tree shakes' – i.e. poorly run businesses go under, whereas well run businesses have weathered the storm and are poised to take advantage when the good times return. However, one important area that is often overlooked is effective currency management. Nick Ryder from Smart Currency Exchange explains why you should make currency strategy a priority. One piece of bad economic news can quickly turn a profitable deal into a loss making one as currency markets move against you. What can you do about it to protect yourself, your business and your profit margins?

LOSING £200,000 THROUGH POOR CURRENCY MANAGEMENT

One of the major stumbling blocks for many businesses that trade internationally is that they fail to adequately protect themselves against exchange rate movements. Often companies that have fought so hard in the sales process for an extra 0.5% profit will happily leave the final payment in the hands of the markets – often to their detriment. One company that we now work very closely with came to us after losing nearly £200,000 on a major foreign order. At the time of placing the orders, the exchange rates were at €1.40/£1 against the euro. When the company came to pay for the orders several months down the line, sterling had plummeted against the euro towards €1.10/£1 and the company had no option but to make a significant loss on the deal.

SPECIALIST CURRENCY PROVIDERS

With banks still reeling from the credit crunch, an industry that has grown rapidly over the last few years is that of currency specialists – independent companies that specialise purely in foreign exchange. A currency specialist will offer better than bank exchange rates and a level of proactivity and service that companies have never had from their bank. On an average

transaction, you should expect to save between 1-2% against a bank's exchange rate, which can equate to thousands over a year. Smart Currency Exchange is the recommended currency provider to Rail Alliance. Smart works with a number of companies within the industry and helps them to save money on their international payments and put strategies in place to avoid adverse market movements from impacting their payments.

FORWARD CONTRACTS

One of the underused tools at any importer or exporter's disposal is the forward contract. This enables a company to secure a rate now for up to a year and pay later – as and when invoices become due. This preserves cash flow and enables businesses to effectively manage their exchange rate budget and prevent large exchange rate movements from impacting on your business. One downside of this is that if the rate moves up after you have booked in, you are unable to take advantage of the better rate. However, many companies would prefer to secure profits at or above budgeted levels and have that peace of mind, rather than hold out and speculate for better rates down the line.

ORDERS TO BUY

A currency specialist such as Smart Currency Exchange can help you take advantage of market volatility and buy currency for you the instant that the market touches a specific pre-agreed rate. For example on 14th August 2011 a number of clients were budgeting at €1.15/£1 and they left orders with us to secure currency when the market hit that level. Sterling jumped to €1.16/£1 for around 2 hours one morning and we filled these orders for our clients before they had even looked online to check the exchange rate. This ensured they could spend time running their business, safe in the knowledge that their currency specialist was watching the market for them.

If you would like to discuss how Smart Currency Exchange might be able to help your business reduce risk in the international payment process, call them on 0207 898 0500 or go to www.SmartCurrencyBusiness.com/rail to request a free, no obligation currency audit.



For a small civil engineering company seeking to enter into the rail market there are several barriers to overcome beyond the normal hurdles of price, programme and quality. Assuming that the prospective supplier is only offering a service rather than seeking to manufacture or supply materials or parts the process is relatively straightforward. It is almost certain that the first step would be by acting as a sub (or sub-sub) contractor to one of the existing main contractors holding a Network Rail Principal Contractor Licence. These are the organisations that contract directly with Network Rail across a wide range of works including earthworks, bridgeworks, drainage and general civil engineering construction.

Because of the very high emphasis on safety for all those working on or near the line or in and around the infrastructure workers are required to be trained in the railway safety regime and to be sponsored by an organisation which is required to manage their competence and maintain controls and records including Drug and Alcohol testing and Medical examinations. To become a sponsoring organisation a company is required to register on Link-up, the rail industry Supplier Qualification System, and to submit to an audit of its systems and processes. Once this has been successfully achieved the organisation

system as a means to become aware of potential suppliers and use the possession of a Link-up audit as a first step to validating the competence and capability of potential suppliers.

All of this is prior to actually getting into a position of winning work! Fortunately there is a lot of available information to guide potential rail suppliers through this journey. Much of this is on-line via the web and in particular the websites of the Sentinel scheme (www.ncca-sentinel.co.uk/), the Link-up system (www.achilles.com/en/uk/sectors/transport/rail-industry) and Network Rail's own website (www.networkrail.co.uk) are a mine of information.

Additionally if a supplier is already working for a contractor who, in another part of the business, is working on the railway they should engage with them. Last but by no means least there are a number of organisations who are able to provide guidance. The Rail Alliance, the Civil Engineering Contractors Association, the Rail Industry Contractors Association and the Railway Industry Association all have useful websites and can either offer help directly or put you in touch with one of the consultants offering help and advice in this area.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A RAIL CIVIL ENGINEERING CONTRACTOR?

can put staff through the safety courses offered by approved training providers. The status of the sponsoring organisation and the sponsored staff is held centrally on the Sentinel database which is used by all the sponsoring organisations. Being a sponsoring organisation is a big help to entering the industry as many organisations treat this as a minimum requirement for engaging subcontractors although some will, in exceptional circumstances, sponsor the employees of subcontractors. Equally many main contractors use the Link-up

The key fact to remember is that while the above requirements will help an organisation to be capable and competent and visible to the main players there is always the need for marketing and customer engagement to actually find and win work!

Andy Harrison
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Rail Alliance member and RAVAS Consultant
Davertry Business and Consultancy Services Limited

ARE YOU READY FOR BSI 1000?

At DBACS we are keeping up with the latest developments in the marketplace. At the moment there is nothing more central to these changes than the move towards Collaborative Working. Arising out of the early work on partnering carried out as part of the Egan and Latham reports there is a new impetus to finding the right organisations to work with and to develop closer, mutually beneficial relationships.

The change now is that there is a template to work to and an accreditation to identify your organisation as one of those leading the way. The BSI 1000 accreditation is now available and provides a framework within which to work. At the Railway Strategies Live conference earlier this year, Network Rail made a commitment to Alliancing as a preferred route forward and have also expressed their commitment to BSI 1000. It is certain that the UK rail industry will benefit from this approach.

So, how can DBACS help?

As an Associate Company of PSL, the leading authority on collaborative working and BSI 1000, we can work with you to identify the right areas of business and the most appropriate routes to achieving the accreditation. Typically this involves a day or two with a DBACS consultant from which you can focus your business towards the requirements of the standard. We would then recommend that a formal gap analysis is undertaken to confirm that you are ready to undertake the accreditation process successfully.

With our experience in business systems and understanding of the UK rail sector we are in a prime position to offer assistance to organisations seeking to move into this area.

Visit us at www.DBandCSL.com to view our capability and experience.





Structural Fabrications

Hooton Station

New build and installation of double span 25m bridge with camber linking 3 platforms.





Structural Fabrications

www.structural-fabrications.co.uk

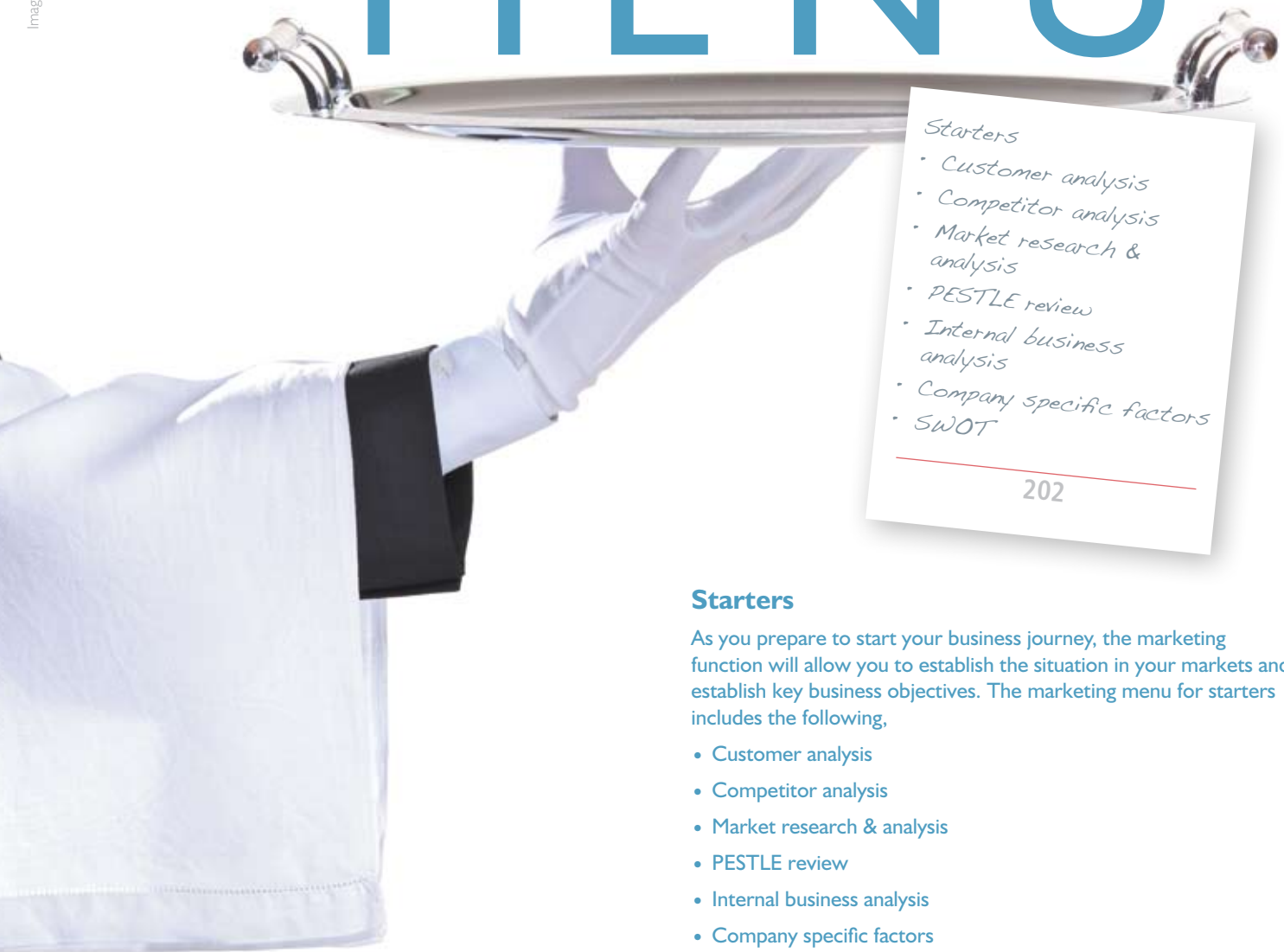
Nature of works - New build and installation of a double span 25m bridge with camber linking 3 platforms. 3 lift shafts with stairs and motor rooms. Rigidal roof cladding with Kingspan Optimo D on the lifts. Glazed windows on the bridges with 9mm vitrified floor tiling. Nickel cast nosings on the stairs with nylon coated stainless steel hand rail. Steelwork along with link steelwork connections, DDA handrail, Corus cladding, clad roofing system with aluminium guttering.

Painted to N1 specification. Design & fabrication of internal roofing system around new link connections including steelwork & DDA Nylon handrails.

Tel: **01332 747400** Fax: **01332 747447** E-mail: sales@structural-fabrications.co.uk

Structural Fabrications Limited, 2 Castings Road, Sir Francis Ley Industrial Park South, Derby. DE23 8YL

MARKETING MENU



Starters

- Customer analysis
- Competitor analysis
- Market research & analysis
- PESTLE review
- Internal business analysis
- Company specific factors
- SWOT

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Starters

As you prepare to start your business journey, the marketing function will allow you to establish the situation in your markets and establish key business objectives. The marketing menu for starters includes the following,

- Customer analysis
- Competitor analysis
- Market research & analysis
- PESTLE review
- Internal business analysis
- Company specific factors
- SWOT

The marketing menu starters involve many analysis options. All are comprehensive and not limited to areas of weakness. Analysis forces people to think, allows the gathering of important information such as PESTLE which are political, economic, social, technological, legal and ecological factors that may affect your business. Often these factors may be out of your control but if you are aware of them you can prepare to counteract them or indeed capitalise on them. Market research is critical to reduce the risk of making poor decisions. Internal analysis is always critical because we often neglect key internal issues by always looking outwards. Your situation review also reduces the risk of a crisis as one proceeds to the main course in the marketing menu because important issues and critical success factors have been identified.

However the starters don't end here. There is so much more to choose from. Consider,

- Segmentation, targeting and positioning
- Objective setting

Marketing is the most misunderstood dish of business. Marketing is an acquired taste, enjoyed by few, shunned time and time again and never gets the billing of "Chef's Special". Partly because many people think marketing is advertising. Not helped by the fact that often marketing is confused with its so glamorous sister, sales. The final nail in the coffin is that when marketing does get a chance, results are not instant.

So what's on the marketing menu? Why should every business in the land have marketing as the core to existence? Why should marketing come out of the shadows of sales and be UK business' most popular cuisine? Well, if one considers the marketing menu and all the dishes that marketing can serve, you may begin to share my view.

Find your groups of customers (segmentation) that will be sustainable and profitable, pick your priority customers (targeting) with respect to your company's strengths and then identify with your priority customers by positioning correctly. The objective setting should be both financial and non-financial. Yes we all want to increase profits but you have amassed a great deal of information while looking at the starters on the marketing menu including the critical success factors. Use this information to improve your business, consider quality aspects and serve your customers better. So set objectives against these critical success factors. These objectives should be set from a corporate perspective, marketing perspective and an operational perspective

Mains

The starters have set an expectation that the marketing menu is going to get even better. The analysis in the starters clearly points you in the right direction and you have set your objectives with clear conviction.

The mains on the marketing menu are going to allow you to achieve your objectives. The tasty dishes can be divided into two as follows,

- Strategy (Fish Courses)
- Tactics (Meat Courses)

The strategic mains focus on options such as,

- Growth versus retreat
- Premium versus low cost
- Brand stability versus new brand direction
- Attack versus defend

Again the starters are setting the tone for the main course. The strategic options need assessing and decisions need to be made. What are the current strategies? Are they appropriate to objectives? What are the key issues? Where to next? This is the strategic direction and includes brand direction. Strategy is formulated by use of appropriate models of which there are many. The models have many advantages but be aware of the limitations of the models. The strategic options are evaluated and justified by a simple pro's and con's exercise. The strategic choice is made and then the tactics to realise the strategic choice can be established.

The tactics options for the main course are centred on what marketers refer to as the marketing mix. If one goes to a cheap restaurant there are only four options. However an exclusive marketing menu will list seven and if you end up in an up market London restaurant possibly eight as follows,

- Products
- Price
- Promotion
- People
- Process
- Place (distribution)
- Physical evidence
- Presence

The meat dishes on the marketing menu is when you roll your sleeves up and simply get stuck in. Which products are going to be the key products? Are some products coming to the end of their life cycle and so new product development is the front runner. How will the pricing be set around your strategy to meet your objectives? Not to forget the tremendous impact price has on your entire marketing menu! If you have identified a weakness in your people, the training budget may have an impact on the promotional budget. If brand development is key, then is the budget proportional. Are the processes optimised and able to deliver the best quality and service? Can technology be employed to make the processes better and thus the customer experience superior to that offered by

your competitors and save you money at the same time? Are the staff and the buildings smart so that the physical evidence to customers appropriate? Consider an exclusive London restaurant relative to a bar 'n' grill in Doncaster! Finally if you are an online business do you have a presence? For each meat option in the marketing menu, clear tactical plans have to be prepared and executed.

Dessert

If the starters established the situation, informed you regarding what was possible and set the objectives for the main course. Then the main course set about a strategy that was going to realise your objectives to have the marketing meal of your life. Finally the dessert will allow you to assess if your objectives have been realised and allow you to assert some control so that you don't get indigestion.

The dessert options are,

- Action
- Control

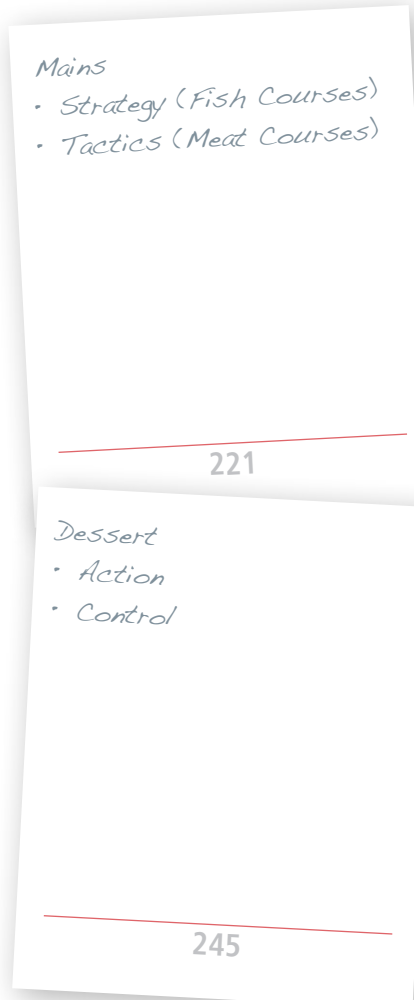
No point worrying about your waistline when it comes to the marketing menu. We insist you indulge both action and control. Action everything you established in the marketing mix, all eight tactical options. Some will take priority because some actions may not be taken until prior tactics have been executed whilst some tactics can be actioned simultaneously. To help you, use a Gantt chart so that you get your timings just right. Then assess the actions with a critical eye to ascertain the outcomes by employing a degree of control. Do you

need to change something? Could you have done things better or differently? Did it go to plan? How was it for you?

Coffee & mints

Over coffee and mints I am sure you will realise like me that the marketing menu has an array of wonderfully rich and appetizing options to feast on. Don't rush, provided they are taken in the right order, with due consideration and time to savour you will be sure not to get an upset stomach. The wonderful part is that should you insist on having marketing as the core of your business and thus partaking the marketing menu on regular occasions the health of your business will be tip top.

Dr Cham Kang
 Rail Alliance member and RAVAS Consultant
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ACCELERATING INNOVATION

The Technology Strategy Board and RSSB are investing up to £4m to accelerate business innovation in the UK's rail industry. The Transport KTN is helping to deliver this funding competition.

The "Accelerating Innovation in Rail" funding competition aims to support the development of technologies that are able to address the challenges facing the rail industry, as well as meeting customer requirements in both UK and international rail markets. Themes include: reducing infrastructure costs, energy efficiency and carbon emissions reduction, operational safety and efficiency, network management and control, and improving customer experience.

To support this competition and enable those interested in participating to gain more information, share ideas, and understand how to make a compelling entry, the Transport KTN is running an "Accelerating Innovation in Rail" Consortia building and information day" on the 20th October 2011 at the Coventry University Techno Centre.

The event will present the full scope of the competition along with information on some of the challenges facing the rail sector. It will be an essential step for companies, universities and other organisations to understand the aims and scope of the competition, discuss convergence scenarios and build relationships with potential collaborators that can be leveraged for the competition and beyond. The workshop is multidisciplinary and we welcome the participation of organisations from all relevant sectors.

You can register for this event by emailing: events@transportktn.org with the subject: Innovation Rail 20 October Registration

To find out more, visit the official Transport KTN group at: www.transportktn.org



ANTI-SOCIAL MEDIA?

Do you ever find yourself trying to remember how things were before email, laptops, tablets and Smartphones?

How did we manage without the ability to communicate – instantly – with colleagues around the globe? How did we engage in a dialogue – a conversation – with customers and colleagues without social media?

It must have been hopelessly difficult to carry out daily business functions. Tough enough when in the office – at least there was a phone, a fax and a franking machine; but then, when out of the office or at home in the evenings or weekends you were almost completely disconnected from the day job.

Now there's a thought...

So here we are in our 24-7 always-on digital business environment with an ever-increasing volume of digital communications beaming at us through our various devices. Do you ever feel that keeping on top of all this is getting in the way of doing some actual work?

Are you increasingly feeling overwhelmed trying to stay on top of all this stuff, or are you truly a digital player in a digital age – comfortable with the technology and well able to process the constant stream of information and demands for your attention?

Whilst you reflect on that for a moment, let's take a view from the other end of the telescope.

Having done your strategic marketing and decided on who it is you want to buy what you have, you turn a thought to what your marketing communications strategy might look like.

Talk about 'digital' and there's plenty of exciting toys to play with: email marketing, text marketing, social media, blogging and video, all promising precise, measurable, trackable contact with your target market.

All true, but there's a catch; our digital communications aren't alone. We are trying to get our message received by our audience when their digital ears are already ringing with the enormous volume of digital noise in their space.

Getting attention is only the first part of the battle. Even if we have grabbed a few moments of someone's valuable time, turning curiosity into engagement is the next step.

For your future client, wanting to know more can take many forms, so an integrated approach is essential. Picking up the

phone or emailing an enquiry are great responses when you get them, but for many, you may be a few steps away from that.

A link to your website might work, but often that desire for free information is a useful means to get people comfortable with your proposition. Get them registering to receive your newsletter, following you on social media or reading your blog and you then have a longer term engagement to get them on board.

That's providing, of course, you publish good quality, appropriate content, routinely updated. Social media in a business context has often been misused to deliver trivia in the absence of anything meaningful to say. If that's a problem, either don't do it, or get some help. Having aroused some interest, don't blow it.

Cutting through the noise has become the marketing challenge of the era, let alone making the choices needed to create an integrated strategy across a wide range of communications channels; but do it we must if we are to compete in this rapidly changing communications environment.

Dr Cham Kang and I will be working on these and other issues in a series of presentations and articles to help Rail Alliance members develop their marketing strategies.

Now, just need to check my email...

Rail Alliance member Charles Mann heads up Newton Mann Ltd, a media company that specialises in helping organisations use a variety of communications strategies to engage with target audiences, whether through publications, video or other digital media. Recently he found himself interviewing senior figures in the rail industry at Railtex including our very own Executive Director. Check out the Railtex TV and Rail Alliance channels on YouTube.

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TWO MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS TO SHAPE THE FUTURE

Two major developments

The old joke refers to buses not trains: you wait for one for ages, then two come along at once.

In the rail sector, there have been two major developments in just six months, which are strongly connected and can shape the industry's future over the next generation.

When the McNulty Report on *Realising the Potential of GB Rail (Rail Value for Money Study)* was published in May 2011, it made numerous references to the benefits that collaborative working could bring to the sector. It specifically mentioned a new British Standard.

That standard was BS 11000 on *Collaborative Business Relationships*. It was launched at the House of Lords in December 2010. It is the first national standard of its kind anywhere in the world and represents a landmark in collaborative working.

These two developments were each aimed at making a significant difference to business. Taking the two developments together, the effect on the rail sector could be profound.

McNulty's expectations

The McNulty Report identifies the need to look radically at how the industry operates to find ways of delivering improved value.

The detailed Report contains significant statements and recommendations relating to collaborative working. For example, that successful collaboration can improve decision-making and the

whole-system approach. It can help increase procurement performance and lead to reduced costs. Supply chain management can benefit through alignment of customer requirements with service and infrastructure delivery. The Report cautions, however, on the need for skill, cultures and behaviours to move from traditional approaches to more collaborative approaches.

But what is needed?

Collaborative working is not new. It has been well-understood for over two decades that collaborative working could increase the competitiveness and performance of organisations. It could even create additional value for customers. But many forms of partnering and alliancing have been tried over many sectors and over many years, but with only relatively low levels of success. Why? What was needed?

One thing that was clearly needed was a **strategic framework** for successful collaborative working.

A strategic framework would help organisations to build relationships, allowing them to share knowledge, skills and resources to deliver joint objectives. And create additional value.

Moreover, the right strategic framework would help an organisation assess its collaborative capabilities, select the right partner, measure joint performance and manage risks. It would provide a consistent platform for collaborative working, with a common lexicon, for large-, medium- and small organisations, across both public and private sectors.

The right strategic framework would provide a structured process. It would also provide guidance on collaborative skills and competencies ... and organisational enablers ... and individual behaviours ... and more besides.

That strategic framework is provided by BS 11000.

How was BS 11000 developed?

The foundation for the new Standard was created by David Hawkins, Operations Director of PSL, who was the architect and author of the CRAFT collaborative methodology. David used this methodology when he became the technical author of PAS 11000, which was the British Standards Institution's (BSI) forerunner of BS 11000. The Standard was then jointly developed by PSL and BSI, with significant input from both public and private sectors, including the results of pilot certification at five organisations.

What does it cover?

BS 11000 is a three-phase, eight-stage model, which builds on an organisation's existing best practice. It can help an organisation to develop and manage approaches to working with other organisations - from concept to disengagement. The stages it covers are

- **Awareness** - understanding where relationship management fits with business objectives
- **Knowledge** - understanding how others have progressed and developing an approach

- **Internal assessment** - evaluating how the organisation is positioned to collaborate
- **Partner selection** - finding the right partner relationship to complement own objectives
- **Working relationship** - building a joint approach focused on mutual benefit
- **Additional value creation** - developing additional value from the relationship
- **Staying together** - ensuring the relationship is measured and maximum benefit maintained
- **Exit strategy** - recognising internal and external changes and preparing a well-managed disengagement

In addition to the process set out above, BS 11000 provides important guidance on skills and competencies, plus the organisational enablers and individual behaviours, for successful collaborative relationships.

And the benefits?

BS 11000 provides a strategic framework for collaborative working, which in turn offers an alternative and enhanced capability to build new value propositions beyond the capabilities of an individual organization. It gives an opportunity to share knowledge, skills and resources to deliver joint objectives, create additional

value and manage risks. Successful collaborative working builds trust in relationships and drives beneficial cultural change. Most importantly, it helps deliver the radical change in the industry expected from the McNulty Report.

Much work to do

There is clearly much work to do to achieve benefits for the rail sector from BS 11000 and the McNulty report.

Organisations in the sector will need to gain a full understanding of collaborative working. They will want to establish collaborative leadership skills and train staff accordingly. New processes will need to be introduced and, critically, new cultures and behaviours will need to be developed. Organisations will consider whether to demonstrate their enhanced capability by becoming certified to BS 11000 by BSI.

Where to go for advice...

... that is expert and independent? PSL was established in 1990 as a joint initiative between BIS (formerly DTI) and CBI. It is a self-financing, not-for-profit organization with a role to help

organizations, large and small, in both the public and private sectors, to build and develop effective business relationships based on collaborative working.

PSL operates with an impressive Executive Network for Collaborative Knowledge, which comprises over 60 major organisations from government, industry, and academia. Through this Network, PSL runs a number of events each year to share experience of collaborative business relationships. Applications to join the Network are welcome from all organisations that could benefit from such networking.

PSL has an extensive international network and provides on-line partnering tools and guides, reports, articles and case studies. It also handles assignments on behalf of clients, using its network of Associates to bring business relationship knowledge and BS 11000 expertise to address, say, forming new relationships or optimising existing relationships.

Perhaps you would like to be on the leading edge of collaborative working and contact PSL today? www.pslcbi.com

Keltbray Rail's pile driving equipment hard at work during demonstration at MacroRail 2011



BUFFER STOP

The Importance of "Getting It"



Here, at the Rail Alliance when we look to recruit new members, and retain existing ones, the most important criteria is the simple concept behind the catchphrase "do they get it?". Although 'blindingly obvious' it took us a while to realise the value of customers who match your profile as a

business. I believe the value of selling to customers who really want YOUR product, as opposed to just a product, cannot be underestimated. This customer will be loyal to you and your brand, will see you as a main supplier, will take you into their confidence and share information about their business and their future. In turn, confident that you be respected and rewarded, you will be looking to anticipate their needs, help in the development of their goods, services or products and "go the extra mile" for them.

Of course what I am actually talking about here is the relationship between people who know and respect each other. I believe that one of the most important fundamentals of doing business is meeting with, and through that understanding, customers. The tools of modern life, namely the omni-present mobile phone and the Internet, mean it is all too easy to neglect the real value of getting to know people face to face.

When Blake said "no man is an island complete of himself" he could have been talking about businesses. We are naturally pack animals and modern successful companies (and economies for that matter) consist of businesses that understand the value of developing and nurturing the pack. No matter how big the company it needs a whole variety of outsiders for it to work, whether this is the transport networks that bring its staff to work, or the micro-SME, niche manufacturer, in a remote site making critical components.

The first two elements of our motto are "Network and Collaborate" and for us these are the fundamental components of "Getting It". To form relationships we need to meet people

in an environment where the aim is not overtly to sell. We form friendships through a process of getting to know one another and understanding each other's needs, wants and aspirations.

Networking is a catalyst in this process and its value should not be underestimated. We do however need to be careful here; there is a level of precision to this. Whilst quantity may have a quality all of its own, the adoption of the 'meet 100 people, get 20 follow ups, and make one sale' is not what I am talking about, it's much more subtle than that. Powerful networks are ones where the members start to think and work for each other, confident in the knowledge that others will be doing the same for them. This is not an altruistic act, nor is it cynical. Customers who have been referred by a trusted friend, or contact, are ones looking for YOUR product, goods or services; and it is these "trusted friends and contacts" that are likely to be found at networking meetings...or at least some!

The next stage is collaboration and this is again a subtle and multifaceted process. What I am talking about here are companies and individuals who are genuinely looking to enhance their networks by partnering, sharing information and ultimately collaborating. Whether this is a large company developing its sustainability through working to actively develop its supply chain or smaller companies working together to enhance their collective capability offering ie the whole being so much greater than the sum of the parts, it matters not; the vital element is that all players "Get It" and understand the value and the power.

I am really excited, enthused and motivated by working with people who "Get It" and am equally inspired by the new BS 11000 which seeks to provide a formal structure with which to recognise success and excellence in partnering. The Rail Alliance is totally committed to this new flagship standard and continuing to: NETWORK – COLLABORATE – INNOVATE AND THRIVE.

Forthcoming Rail Alliance events

2 November

Members' Meeting and Networking Event

London – hosted by Clyde and Co

Contact rhona.clarke@railalliance.co.uk to book your place on this event

6 December

Members' Meeting and Lean Process Seminar

Worcester – hosted by Southco

Contact rhona.clarke@railalliance.co.uk to book your place on this event

27 January 2012

Joint Event with the UKTI North West Regional Rail Event

Virgin Training Academy, Crewe

Contact rhona.clarke@railalliance.co.uk to book your place on this event

February 2012 (date tbc)

Members' Meeting and Networking Event

TRaC Global, Skelmersdale, Yorkshire

Contact rhona.clarke@railalliance.co.uk to book your place on this event

March 2012

Seminar "Innovation Gateways – What's Really New?" and Networking Event

Venue and Date TBC

Contact rhona.clarke@railalliance.co.uk to book your place on this event

Forthcoming events supported by The Rail Alliance

6 October

IMechE Seminar 'Gaining Traction in Energy Efficiency'

IMechE, Birdcage Walk, Westminster, London

Contact railway@imeche.org or call Sian on 020 793 1245

29 October

Rail Staff Awards 2011

ICC, Birmingham

Contact railstaffawards.com

Patricia or Helen on 01530 56 00 26

15-17 November

Rail Interiors Expo 2011

Kölnmesse, Germany

Contact m.blackhurst@ukipme.com

Tel: +44 1306 743744
Fax: +44 1306 742525

22-24 November

AusRAIL PLUS 2011

Brisbane, Australia

Contact AusRail: Customer Services info@informa.com.au

Tel: (+61 2) 9080 4307

