

eLab News



The Broadband eLaboratory Newsletter - November 2003

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- How to get free advice and support to develop your own broadband based business solution

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And it's hello from us.....



This is the first in a series of monthly newsletters published by Instant Search which will bring the latest news on the Broadband eLaboratory to business people in East Lancashire.

As many of you will already be aware, the eLaboratory has been set up to champion broadband, and demonstrate the business benefits to companies looking to take advantage of the latest technology. The interest in the project so far has been very encouraging, and through these pages we'll keep everyone up to date on the latest news, events and initiatives.

We hope you enjoy reading eLab News and if you have any questions, please contact us either on the telephone number for eLab booking, or via the e-mail address at the top of the page.

Anthony Capstick
Managing Director

The story so far

As this is the first edition of eLab News, we thought it would be worthwhile to give a summary of the sequence of events that led to the setting up of the Broadband eLaboratory, for the benefit of anyone who may be reading about us for the first time.

The project idea was conceived by Anthony Capstick, the Managing Director of Instant Search, after his experience of integrating broadband connections into the different areas of his business proved to be more difficult than anticipated. After approaching the North West Development Agency with a project proposal, funding was approved by the North West Broadband Fund, and the project was launched in June of this year.

The broadband eLaboratory is set up at two locations with broadband links at both ends – the East Lancashire Cham-

ber of Commerce office in Accrington and the Instant Search office in Whalley. Until recently, the Instant Search business was based on an eLancs.net broadband connection, but now the Whalley office has been ADSL enabled and has switched to operate on the ADSL connection, leaving eLancs.net to operate the broadband connection for the broadband eLaboratory. The establishment of this link gives project staff the ability to demonstrate video conferencing equipment between the two sites at Whalley and Accrington.

The recent installation of Macs at the Whalley site to complement the standard PC's that were already in place at the offices now means that Mac users can also utilise the facilities in the eLaboratory.

(contd.over)

The story so far (continued)

With the groundwork completed, the eLaboratory project is now moving on to its next phase, supporting and advising businesses who are interested in exploring the benefits of broadband. The project is managed on an ongoing basis by Instant Search, and has the support of major North West business partners, who are listed at the bottom of the page. The provision of their resources and input has been invaluable, and most importantly of all, allows the services offered by the eLaboratory to be provided free of charge.

Wanted - a business with ideas!!!!

If you have a broadband-related idea or requirement that you want to use to develop and benefit your business, we want to hear from you. We are on the look out for up to four businesses, who would like to explore the potential uses of broadband, and in exchange, we can offer the broadband facilities established in the eLaboratory to help you explore your business concept. And the best news of all is that this offer is free of charge!!!!

The offer extends to any business, large or small, and for further information, contact us on the bookings and information number 01254 828269.

And finally.....

Many thanks to Microsoft, who provided invaluable software and technical support to the project. Microsoft Office 2003 has new collaborative aspects which will add value to demonstrations presenting the benefits of using broadband.



The East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce offices in Red Rose Court, Accrington - one of the Broadband eLaboratory sites

Over 30 companies visit the Whalley eLaboratory

In the past two months, representatives from more than 30 different businesses have visited the eLaboratory at the Instant Search offices in Whalley, to experience at first hand the benefits that broadband connections can provide.

As this was a venture into new territory, we weren't sure what to expect with regard to people's reaction and expectations and what would evolve during the sessions. This was no bad thing as it meant we went into all the sessions with an open mind, and where possible allowed delegates to set the agenda. However, after a while the sessions began to follow a familiar pattern, and generally began as a training exercise, where people learned about the technical aspects of broadband, before moving into a hands-on experience session, looking at the broadband connections in Whalley and the types of applications that run on it.

Both large and small companies have been represented, and this mix has inevitably raised a range of different queries. Topics covered have included general questions about accessing the internet and the issues surrounding the installation of a broadband or dial up connection, to the technical aspects of connecting two company offices on separate sites via a broadband link.

In one instance, a company were able to share their experiences of how broadband communications have benefitted their business. They had set up a deal to import a product from China, and needed to communicate with their business partners, a manufacturing company. One of the individuals involved in the deal was disabled, which meant that travelling long distances was an issue. However, they had found that utilising a quality broadband link to communicate with their business partners on the other side of the world provided a perfect solution to the problem.

Overall, it's been an encouraging start, and proves there is significant interest in the project from businesses looking both to investigate the benefits of broadband, and to develop broadband applications that fit their own specific organisational needs.

The Broadband eLaboratory project is managed by Instant Search and supported by the following organisations:

