



West Midlands Rail Industries

Newsletter

Editor Julia Chance

**Spring
2006**

CONNECT

the fast track for technology business

InvoRed Amber Stream series of workshops.

Held in Birmingham, these workshops represent a great opportunity to meet and obtain guidance from speakers active within the high-growth/investment industry. These include speakers drawn from organisations as diverse as Ernst & Young, Shepherd Wedderburn, Midven, Advantage Early Growth Fund/Business Angels etc. all of whom are offering the benefit of their experience in a purely neutral capacity.

The Amber Stream is designed for companies who are considering raising money for the first time and want to fully understand their options and the appropriate way of preparing pitches/plans for principally business angels and venture capitalists. It is ideal for companies who wish to have a good degree of knowledge in house so that when they bring in external consultants they are able to inform the development of their growth strategy and make best use of their contractor's expertise. Many companies who pass through the Amber stream often later receive coaching through our Green stream programme. The Amber stream is also extremely valuable for later stage businesses whose executives wish to use the programme for professional development for themselves or their staff (particularly when succession is an issue).

The nominal cost for the Amber stream is £100, although we waive this for University related businesses and - given that it is largely a commitment fee rather than an essential element of the funding package - there are special deals for Rail companies who are part of the AWM COG.

For further information on these workshops (which are occurring in the between 2nd and 10th May 2006 please contact Paula Wood on 02476323505 or email info@connectmidlands.org or visit their website www.connectmidlands.org

International Events

21 and 22 June 2006 - International Rail Seminar/Buyers Event to be held at the Radisson Edwardian International Plaza Hotel, Heathrow Airport. Speakers and buyers from 20 different countries, shall make presentations and meet UK suppliers on a one-to-one basis.

November 2006 (tbc) - Business to Business partnering event and seminar in Valenciennes, hosted by the Nord/Pas de Calais regional railway suppliers association, AIF. after a series of presentations in the morning, participants will have a series of one-to-one meetings with potential partners in the afternoon. It is hoped that a technical visit to either Alstom or Bombardier can also be included in the programme.

2006 (date to be confirmed) - Visit to the SNCF Rolling Stock Engineering Centre at Le Mans. After a presentation of the Rolling Stock Engineering Centre, a group of about 10 to 15 UK suppliers will have the opportunity of presenting their products and know-how to the SNCF's technical specialists. This is a good opportunity for those companies with innovative solutions to get the attention of the SNCF. Invitations to participate in the above events shall be sent out in due course to UK companies who are already registered with UKTI, RIA or one of the regional rail clusters.

Please register your interest with Helen Yendall of UK Trade and Investment, email: Helenyendall@advantagewm.co.uk

T-Rail – Technology Transfer in Rail

The above project has been approved and contracted. Watch this space for further news and developments as the project begins to deliver major long term benefits to the Rail industry in the region.

This newsletter is produced by AWM on behalf of the WM Rail Industry free of charge, to keep you informed of current events and initiatives designed to help grow your business both at home and abroad. Please keep us informed of any events you feel could benefit our members.



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Railway research on the web

A newly launched website has become the first comprehensive and credible database of railway research projects. This provides the rail industry & other research organisations with access to a wealth of existing research.

Developed by the Rail Safety & Standards Board (RSSB) in association with Rail Research UK, this project brings together information on research papers from different agencies, academic journals, universities & various conferences. The site currently holds records of, or links to, well over 4000 published research projects.

The Advisory Group for Rail Research & Innovation (AGRI), which includes representation from all parts of the rail industry, has supported the creation of an online bibliography to assist the rail industry & researchers in identifying what has already been learned, stop duplication of research & reduce the time taken to locate study findings.

Richard Gostling, Chairman of AGRI said on the launch of the site: "Development of this website represents a significant step forward for the industry. For too many years, we have been in the position that research knowledge in potentially important areas has been developed, but with little general awareness of what has been done. As a result, industry has not easily been able to make use of the knowledge gained, & there has been a considerable risk of reputation of work within research organisations. Now, we begin to be able to see what is happening, & we look forward to this web site being a useful tool in the management of research knowledge in the railway industry."

The University of Birmingham, working as part of Rail Research UK, will maintain the bibliography & increase the number of references, to capture as much knowledge as possible & give the industry a one-stop-shop for information. Currently the website holds 4000 records plus 150 published research projects conducted by the RSSB Research & Development Programme & its predecessor, Railway Safety.

The web address for the bibliography is www.railwayresearch.org, RRUK website is www.railresearchuk.org.uk Birmingham University railway research website is www.railway.bham.ac.uk and RSSB website is www.rssb.co.uk

Rail COG Strategy Day

Many thanks to all of you who attended our strategy day at Malmaison on the 22nd March. We ratified our 3 year strategy and redefined our mission statement which now reads;

"To achieve recognition that the West Midlands understands and delivers solutions, innovation and change within global Rail Markets."

AWM would like to extend its gratitude to Mark Foster who everyone agreed did a great job facilitating a highly effective and productive day for all concerned.

Graduate Fairs

The LSC are interested in the demand (or lack of it) for graduate recruitment within the Rail Industry and are interested in hearing from any firms looking to exhibit within this year's Graduate Fairs. If you or your HR department want to learn more about how we can help you exhibit please contact Lyndsey on Lyndsey.Allen@LSC.GOV.UK

For submissions, ideas for features and general feedback for this newsletter please contact Julia Chance on 0121 503 3273 or email juliachance@advantagewm.co.uk

Thanks for reading and I sincerely hope this edition of the Rail Newsletter has been informative and enjoyable to read.. Our next edition of this Rail Newsletter will be published in August 2006, until then good bye for now!

Julia Chance

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