

BEST NEWS

February 2012

TBC Expands into New Markets

The last Best News was October 2011. I suggested in that issue that we were entering our busiest time and that hopefully we would finish the year ahead of budget. I am pleased to report that we did indeed have a good final quarter and finished the year with a turnover of £169 million. This is very encouraging and suggests that we are almost back to the levels of business we enjoyed before the economic downturn. We must, however, remain mindful that whilst turnover is important we need to continue to protect margins and continue to develop business based on quality, which comes at a price!

Also in the October issue I suggested there were exciting things in the pipeline. In fact, there were two things which I would now like to share with you.

The first of these was our acquisition of CPA Recruitment Ltd. CPA is a permanent recruitment agency and specialises in search and selection services to the ambient, chilled and frozen food & beverage industries. This is a niche market which we aim to develop and grow and as such, CPA will remain separate, yet fully supported by TBC. An announcement will be made to the press outlining our strategic plans. The company is run by James Wilkins and overall responsibility on behalf of TBC is in the hands of Marcus Jepson. CPA has been in business for 25 years and operates from offices in Hendon. During January this year we opened a second office in Leicester, headed by Fay Murren, as part of our commitment to the CPA growth plans.

Secondly, you will no doubt be aware that during February we acquired City Transport Solutions (CTS) to complement the capabilities of the Group. The business is run by its founder, Mark Gooden, and will continue to be so. Mark founded CTS in 1995 to provide replacement vehicles to large fleet operators across the country. In 1998 it started supplying temporary replacement drivers to its client base and in 2005 acquired a specialised haulage company. These trading divisions are complementary to TBC's core business, but most exciting is the web-based trading platform which CTS has developed to manage all of its business across these three markets. In the coming months we hope to integrate our two systems and to be able to offer web-based solutions to certain of our clients either directly or via CTS.

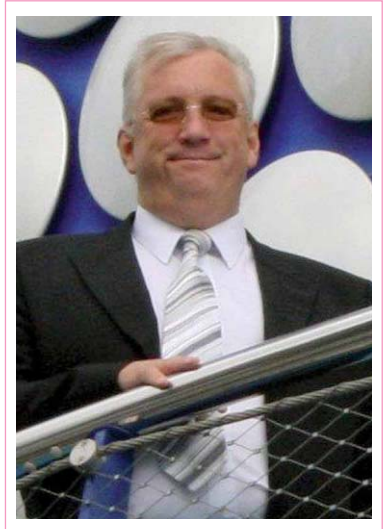
This issue of Best News should have been in January but the CTS deal took a little longer to complete and I wanted to include it as soon as possible. I hope you enjoy this issue which

I consider to be full of positive results and interesting facts!

I was very encouraged with the company-wide briefing concerning the changes we are making to the procedures. It was a mammoth undertaking and I congratulate all concerned. It is a major change for the Company. The temporary workers will all be engaged on a contract of employment giving them additional security. They will all have access to extremely competitive personal accident insurance and they will also enjoy more take home pay each week . . . seems to be a win, win situation.

As we approach the end of our first quarter it would seem that the general consumer and business confidence remains low and is affecting our start to the year. However, I am sure that as the year unfolds and the country begins to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee and enjoys the Olympic Games, confidence will increase and a more settled economic outlook will follow. I know when this happens, as ever, you will all be ready and waiting to take advantage of the opportunities you have created during these quieter times.

Andrew Sweeney - Chief Executive



Andrew Sweeney



NEXT ISSUE...

Could you please contact Jan Blann if you have any topics for inclusion in the next issue of Best News or with subjects for future Press Releases.

tel: 01926 843693

mob: 07976 284248

email: jan@marketnotions.com

Intergreen Contract WIN Helps The Best Connection In Hull To Blossom

The Best Connection's Hull operation has been awarded a contract to supply temporary workers to European flower supplier, Intergreen - part of the Dutch Flower Group. The workforce is required for Intergreen's new site which was launched early January in Newport, east Yorkshire, where hand-tied and belt-tied flower bouquets will be produced for a leading national supermarket chain. The contract will initially utilise 40 temporary workers per day to undertake duties including stock intake, production of bouquets, hand-tying bouquets, labelling and packing. This volume will increase to a peak of around 600 on Valentine's Day and Mother's Day.

Paul Davies, Intergreen UK Ltd, said: "As part of the tender process, we looked at many local providers and found that The Best Connection was able to meet our needs for the changing demands of the business throughout the seasons. We found The Best Connection's team very professional in their approach which was proactive and hands-on."

Lee Harris provided some background regarding how the contract came about. He explained that, as the site sits on the main arterial route into Hull from the



Paul Davies, UK Operations Manager, Intergreen

West, Sheila Eland observed the building throughout its construction on her commute to work from York each day and was assigned the task to find out more. Sheila made this a priority and identified the new occupants of the building through the site next door (JZ



Sheila Eland

Flowers). The opportunity to learn more presented itself when Sheila and Lee Harris arranged to meet with the HR department of JZ Flowers who, at the time, were serviced by a competitor. Apparently, they had not been informed thoroughly about the impending AWR regulations and were keen to find out more whilst also benchmarking other recruitment businesses in the area.

During the meeting Sheila and Lee learned that Intergreen was the company moving in and JZ Flowers was its sister company. They left the meeting having created a positive impression and their contact at JZ was happy to pass their details to her contacts within the group. The rest happened very quickly as Andrew Higgins and Sheila had the opportunity (when Lee was on holiday) to attend a preliminary meeting with the Intergreen management team for an hour-long presentation and Q+A session.

This resulted in TBC being shortlisted and invited to attend a final day of presentations at Holbeach with the senior team of Intergreen. This time Andrew was on holiday so Lee and Scott Meredith were drafted-in to support Sheila.

The team arrived after a long drive ready for an overnight stay in preparation for the all-important presentation the following morning. They booked into a hotel (which didn't quite live up to their expectations!) for what turned out to be an eventful evening.

After declining the landlady's invitation to join her at a wake, the team retired to change for dinner which was to be followed by a run-through of their presentation before an early night. A conversation with fellow-lodgers enlightened Lee as to the proximity of his room in relation to a nearby church and graveyard which was also said to offer a chill during the night and had been reported as being haunted. After unsuccessfully attempting to swap his keys (and trying to convince himself that he didn't believe in such things) Lee went to take a shower. Within 15 minutes, however, Lee had changed his mind! He said that the wardrobe door starting banging (no breeze and the windows were fully closed) followed by the digital freeview box perched on top of the TV flying 10 yards across the room and his door had mysteriously locked itself even though he had put the catch on! His reaction was to evacuate the room immediately and he refused to retire to bed until the very last moment knowing he needed enough sleep to ensure a good performance in the morning. Needless to say, Lee emerged the next morning a little dishevelled and with bags under his eyes!

The rest is history, Sheila, Lee and Scott were magnificent during the presentation and secured a valuable client for the team in Hull to look after; created a 3rd Industrial plan, took on



L to R: Katie Tune, Intergreen onsite consultant & Monika Trela, Intergreen onsite co-ordinator

two new members of staff - Monika and Katie - and are operating from premises on the site.

Neil Yorke, director, commented: "We are delighted to have been selected by Intergreen to provide the people they need to address the dynamic and seasonal nature of this business sector. It was a true team effort which resulted in a bespoke staffing solution."

Congratulations to all involved.

Spotlight on: Tees Valley

Phil Simmonds has been responsible for the Tees Valley branch for the past four years. Throughout that time, the branch has been based in serviced offices in an ideal location, near to the bus station in Tees Valley. Next month sees the team move to an eagerly-awaited new office, which is literally downstairs from the current one.

When Phil took overall responsibility for Tees Valley, Jaqui Craggs was given responsibility for running the industrial division and then subsequently the branch. During this time, Ian Hope was recruited to join the team as a driving consultant. Ian had been out of recruitment for four years because he had been running his own haulage business.

Following a staff reshuffle, Jaqui moved back to manage Sunderland branch and Ian was given Tees Valley branch to run as a senior consultant. After two great years, Ian is now a Divisional Manager and this year has targets for Branch Manager. Ian has developed the branch to have 2 industrial and 1 HGV plan.

Ian lives on a huge boat in Hartlepool marina with wife, Leslie. His team are:

HGV – Steve Belton con1 (ex RAF) and Katherine Hall con 2 (ex-home delivery network)



Industrial 1 - Ian Hope and Rachael Duncan (ex-temp)

Industrial 2 - Alexandra Connor (ex-Royal Navy)

Charlotte Wharton (ex-fitness instructor - sold Ian his membership to the gym – that's how we found her!)

Administration - the ever efficient Louise Speight (part-time)

Tees Valley's clients include Eddie Stobart to whom we are sole supplier - they in turn are sole supplier to a major national supermarket chain. The branch also supplies the same supermarket chain through another source and is working on becoming a core supplier this year with the potential to provide 1,200 temporary workers per day. The branch also services many smaller businesses in and around the Tees Valley area.

Phil Simmonds commented: "Tees Valley is a really good branch with a great team spirit - completely motivated and proactive in looking for new business. The new premises have given everyone a lift and I am expecting great things from the team this year. "



Ian Hope and Rachael Duncan



Charlotte Wharton and Alexandra Connor



Steve Belton and Katherine Hall



Louise Speight

NVQ Update

Congratulations to Claire Leach and Lesley Lacy, Hanger Lane, on completing their NVQs in Business Administration Level 2.

The Best Connection Group Acquires CPA Recruitment

The Best Connection has acquired permanent recruitment business, CPA. CPA specialises in providing search and selection, advertising and executive search services to a range of blue chip and independently owned businesses spanning ambient, chilled and frozen food & beverage categories.

As part of the Group's strategic growth plans, the directors have sought to gain market share in an additional sphere which has resulted in the acquisition of the business.

"CPA represents an opportunity for the group to diversify into permanent recruitment with a quality, market-leading brand. As such, CPA boasts a long-established reputation and has the scope to become a much larger enterprise. To achieve this, we intend to invest in the resources and personnel with the aim of

growing the business significantly over the next five years," said Neil Yorke, Group director.

Founded 25 years ago by Clive Palache, CPA has developed into a market-leading business in its niche sector by providing recruitment and resourcing solutions throughout the food manufacturing industry. "We have now united with The Best Connection in the spirit of true partnership in order to take the business to the next stage of progression. This is proving to be a powerful alliance with all on board making a great effort to integrate, develop, grow and achieve – everyone is enjoying a positive partnership," Palache commented.

CPA has a long-standing team which is led by MD, James Wilkins, who has been based at the business' Hendon office for the past 14 years.

The CPA Team:

London (Hendon): Technical & Development

James Constable (8 years with CPA)
Joshua Treece (4 years with CPA)
Abi Roome (new graduate)

Supply Chain

Eliza Hall (new graduate)

Interim Division

Russell Edmonds (10 years with CPA)
Sarah Goodman (new graduate)
James Wilkins MD - responsible for recruitment in sectors and for both offices



Leics: Operations & Engineering:

Fay Murren (supply production & engineering people) (previously approximately 6 years with TBC in Leicester and Peterborough branches)

Kim Rogers (new graduate)

"CPA has a good structure and modus operandi and this business model can be replicated with investment and the support of The Best Connection. We are looking forward to expanding the business with additional offices and developing it to its full potential over time," Neil Yorke continued.

"I would like to thank the team for their efforts and wish everyone well at The Best Connection," Clive Palache concluded.



CPA Hendon Team



CPA Leicester Team: Kim Rogers (l) pictured with James Wilkins, CPA MD & Fay Murren

First Onsite Win for TBC Leeds

TBC's Leeds branch has won its first Onsite contract to supply temporary workers to leading supply chain solutions provider, Wincanton, for the provision of temporary labour to a national retailer.

Prior to receiving the Onsite agreement, and following an introduction by TBC's Managed Services Division (in 2009), TBC initially supplied up to 15 temporary workers a day to the then Castleford-based business which was in the process of developing a million sq ft warehouse in Bradford.

Initially, the retailer's Home Delivery division moved to the new premises on Easter Monday in 2010 and TBC was supplying 10 temporary workers. Its Equipment section then re-located to the new premises from Staffordshire in July 2010 – once again, TBC was supplying just 10 temporary workers.

Its Ambient Foods division was planning to re-locate to the premises in June 2011 and based on this a tender was put together by Sue Harwood and Phil Simmonds in May 2011 for sole supply. Thanks to the

level of service provided by the branch prior to tender as well as the efforts of TBC's Leeds Industrial desk – run by Martin Miller and Chris Ryan - this was successful in August 2011.

At present TBC has three departments within this site, supplying a total of 120 temporary workers, under the control of on-site co-ordinator, Shaun Grimshaw. Timesheets are exported by Shaun and imported using Automateplus by administrator, Lynne Price.

Movers and shakers in the Northwest

Since re-joining The Best Connection just over two years ago, with the support of his branch team and senior management, Rob Imber has taken Warrington to its first ever year in excess of £1,000,000 margin. We have decided to reward these efforts by giving Rob additional responsibility for Preston and Lancaster branches. Not only will this give those branches the additional support they require to reach the next level, it will also create fantastic opportunities in Warrington for Rob's team to push on to the next level of their careers.

Lee Crimes' commitments continue to grow with the birth of a new on-site at Linpac Allibert in Winsford. In addition to this, we understand that NDL Stoke is expected to become a 300+ user all year round from August 2012 and in an effort to keep Lee sane and re-allocate some of the workload, alongside the Stoke and Crewe branches, Lee will be assuming responsibility for Telford.

As well as the local football team pushing for promotion, Carlisle branch had its own successes in 2011 and this

has helped Andy Little (Ind) and Kevin Atkinson (HGV) to reach the next stage of their careers - both achieving Senior Consultant status in December.

On the administration front, Jane Lynch (Wolverhampton) and Alex Ingram (Stoke) have both been rewarded for their continued efforts in supporting other local branches with Senior Administrator roles.



L to R: Andy Little, Carlisle branch, pictured with Kevin Atkinson

Dave Schilling's Regional Sales Competition 2011

2011 saw Neil Russell (divisional manager, Nuneaton branch) win the overall canvass competition with 358 points - an excellent achievement for a small town. Well Done Neil on winning this year's magnum of Champagne.

Second place goes to Rob Mittell with a staggering 307 points. Considering Rob didn't join the competition until 5th September, to have achieved this in four months, tells you why TBC is opening an Ipswich branch with Rob at the helm this year. Third place goes to Lee Gilbert with 295 points - another superb achievement for Lee considering the client base serviced and the amount of Industrial margin being generated on Industrial in Leicester!

Although not winners of last year's competition, Dave Schilling would also like to acknowledge the performances from Stuart Biggs, Louise Moore, Danny Ahern and Peter Maher. "Sometimes establishing a solid plan, is in itself more than an achievement and servicing a plan generating between £5k - £11k weekly margin, is a winner every week in my eyes, so well done you four, for still achieving over 250 points for the year!", said Dave Schilling.



Overall winner, Neil Russell, pictured with Dave Schilling (on left) along with Neil's boss, Steve Leather, who is responsible for Nuneaton, Peterborough and the opening of Ipswich this year (on right).



Second place - 'Rob Mittell' - who will be opening Ipswich this year with his boss, Steve Leather (on right).



Third place - Lee Gilbert - Leicester senior consultant Industrial, who is running the Industrial division and seeking promotion to DM this July.

Temporary Workers to Benefit from the Best Connection's PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE SCHEME

The Best Connection has introduced its own personal accident insurance scheme that offers wage protection for its temporary workforce. The scheme has been arranged through TBC's appointed FSA regulated representatives, Jobson James Insurance brokers.

Neil Yorke, Director, said: "We take personal safety very seriously and ensure that workers are fully prepared for all assignments. A major element to this is safety training. As a result, accidents are thankfully few and far between, however, they inevitably

happen from time to time and this can sometimes result in long-term unemployment and the associated financial implications. The introduction of an in-house insurance facility gives our temporary workers the option to take out a cost-effective cover which gives a financial safety net and peace of mind."

"We fully support the evolution of temporary workers' conditions of employment and the need for greater job security and benefits in line with permanent positions and believe this new service will be welcomed.

Insurance is a very competitive business and it was important for The Best Connection to offer preferential premiums. To deliver on this, we have negotiated an excellent agreement with one of the top personal injury insurers, Ace Europe, which we believe to be far better than comparable policies available to individuals looking to find their own cover," added Yorke.

Further information on ACE European Group can be found at www.acegroup.com/uk-en/

Things you didn't know about ...Darren Pollard



Darren Pollard

How did you get into recruitment? They say all the best deals are done in pubs. I used to drink with an old Irish man called Miley way back in 1989 BK (before kids)! His son-in-law was in recruitment and thought that I may have a 'knack for it'.

Do you have pre-work duties? I've always been an early bird (if Margaret Thatcher can run the country on 4 hours' sleep

... so I tend to go to the gym for 05:30am.

How do mornings differ from afternoons? I didn't know they did

What is your favourite lunch venue/meal? Like Dave Schilling in a previous issue of Best News, I love to cook and eat Indian cuisine.

What part does travel play in your role? How much do you enjoy your car and driving? Lots. With a Region that encompasses Birmingham to Plymouth, South Wales and Oxfordshire, my office is the M5. Travelling to a branch in the morning or back in the evening gives me time to catch up with people that I couldn't speak to during the day.

What would you do without your mobile phone? Get one.

What makes you laugh a lot at work? 'Genuine' reasons why people can't go to work. Best shortlist to date is: "When I go to bed I let the budgie out at night for exercise. Unfortunately, it landed on my alarm clock & switched it off" "My gums must have swollen in the night as I can't get my teeth in" – Nice!

One gentleman once said that he charges his false right arm up each night but there was a power cut in the area and his arm wasn't charged when he woke up. When I mentioned that I had interviewed him and when shaking his hand thought it was real, he admitted that he thought we were the agency that interviewed him over the phone and the truth was he was still drunk

from the night before!

What's your biggest bugbear? Politicians.

Has your day job evolved naturally since you joined TBC? I was fortunate to join TBC when it was a one-branch company. I worked and learned from the best and was fortunate to grow along with the company.

What's your favourite customer and why? They're all my favourites.

What do your friends and family think about the work you do? I'll ask them and get back to you.

What is the most challenging part of your day to day job? Fitting everything in, in the timescales allowed.

Do you have any obsessions? Chocolate, fizzy drinks, tidiness?! No.

What's the most common request from your colleagues? Would it be possible for TBC to pay them less salary whilst increasing their working week ... There isn't one really.

How do you balance work and play? If you asked my wife she would say "not very well"

What do you enjoy most about your job? The variety, responsibility and success.

How do you deal with tasks you would prefer not to do? I realised a long time ago that they don't just go away, so the quicker they are dealt with the better.

Name your favourite:

- Book - Difficult one as I do like to read a lot of books. One that stands out from years ago is Sydney Sheldon's Master of the Game
- Film - It's a close call between Top Gun and Taken.
- Place - Tyseley
- Song - David Sole, Silver Lady. I won the record in a dance completion with a girl called Michelle Bryan when I was about 9 at my school disco and I am pleased to say that the moves are still there.
- Hero - Andrew Sweeney
- Music - Varied.
- Crisps - None
- Poem - "The boy stood on the burning deck, his face as black as charcoal . . ."

The Best Connection

EMPLOYMENT GROUP



Location	Tel Number	Fax Number
Birmingham	0121 628 8000	0121 628 8001
Bolton	01204 394400	01204 394455
Bristol	0117 957 6999	0117 970 8559
Burton	01283 545333	01283 545075
Cannock	01543 468260	01543 579248
Cardiff	02920 494700	02920 483188
Carlisle	01228 590690	01228 590790
Chesterfield	01246 209222	01246 209333
Coventry	02476 228040	02476 228042
Crawley	01293 515333	01293 516333
Crewe	01270 251100	01270 251117
Croydon	0208 256 0120	0208 256 0129
Derby	01332 291444	01332 291222
Doncaster	01302 341114	0114 275 8188
Dudley	01384 230003	01384 239691
Earls Court	0207 373 1129	0207 373 1770
Eastbourne	01323 887111	01323 430459
Gloucester	01452 383303	01452 521351
Hanger Lane	0208 998 9910	0208 998 6227
Hertford	01920 468770	01920 460272
Hull	01482 610160	01482 610686
Kidderminster	01562 66555	01562 825695
Lancaster	01524 383438	01524 383638
Leeds	0113 243 1033	0113 243 0951
Leicester	0116 251 2363	0116 251 2364
Liverpool	0151 236 0111	0151 236 0999
Luton	01582 405444	01582 488280
Maidstone	01622 664999	01622 664218
Manchester	0161 237 9333	0161 237 9444
Milton Keynes	01908 699466	01908 699477
Newcastle	0191 230 2007	0191 230 2008
Newport	01633 842164	01633 842135
Northampton	01604 629888	01604 627444
Nottingham	0115 958 5880	0115 958 5884
Nuneaton	02476 382211	02476 382233
Oldham	0161 626 4222	0161 626 4777
Oxford	01235 550077	01235 554024
Peterborough	01733 555672	01733 341073
Plymouth	01752 256360	01752 252680
Poole	01202 682282	01202 682482
Portsmouth	0239 286 4411	0239 286 4422
Preston	01772 201777	01772 201888
Redditch	01527 591141	01527 591142
Scunthorpe	01724 876111	01724 876222
Sheffield	0114 275 8181	0114 275 8188
Southampton	023 8033 3188	023 8033 3199
Staines	01784 450555	01784 450122
Stockport	0161 968 1964	0161 968 1965
Stoke	01782 209666	01782 209777
Sunderland	0191 567 1100	0191 567 1133
Swindon	01793 542211	01793 514213
Tamworth	01827 53333	01827 53090
Taunton	01823 330621	01823 256240
Tees Valley	01642 672655	01642 672654
Telford	01952 898242	01952 246065
Walsall	01922 639000	01922 636500
Warrington	01925 629666	01925 629777
West Bromwich	0121 553 7755	0121 553 7766
Wolverhampton	01902 773000	01902 773001
Worcester	01905 731777	01905 731888
Worthing	01903 234500	01903 234555

The e-mail address for each branch is the branch@thebestconnection.co.uk
e.g. burton@thebestconnection.co.uk

