

*Summer 2001*



# *News*

*Volume 7 Number 2*

## Joys of Spring

Bisham Abbey proved a successful venue for the two-day Spring event held on 24th and 25th April. Some two dozen participants took pleasure in the thought of discussing modern technology issues in the ambience of the old Abbey building. And those who took a turn in the extensive grounds, beside the field where the England Football squad trains, or communed with old Father Thames who at the time was only just contained within the banks alongside the Abbey, found much to recommend. Rugby devotees could report back that they had lunched beside the Wasps who had been training hard throughout our first morning.



English Sports Council staff who run Bisham Abbey centre were keen to tell us to keep an eye open for the ghost of Lady Elizabeth Hoby whose large portrait hangs in the main hall looking down upon the diners. Her spirit is said to have been condemned to walk the Abbey as penance for having immured her teenage son in a cupboard. The story goes that she had confined the lad for failing to do his studies, had then gone to London and stayed in town for 3 weeks forgetting that her son had been locked up. We weren't troubled by any spirits except perhaps the bottled variety!

Harold Cloutt, our Vice-Chairman, welcomed delegates and presided over the opening session of the event.

Bill Bentley, from AG Solutions and Chris Hill, BEA Systems, took the first presentation session to discuss

integration of e-business applications with back-office systems. AGS, supported by Centrica and DMR as major share holders, is now part of the Fujitsu family. The company has partnered with BEA Systems to use their Tuxedo expertise to assist with the development of e-business solutions. Bill described a case study based on a British Gas Trading project to illustrate his talk. Chris Hill then gave some insight into the software portfolio including WebLogic Server and WebLogic Collaborate that are fundamental to the integration solutions which AGS uses.

Kevin Bailey, UK Business Manager at StorageTek, came to Bisham fresh from successful completion of the London Marathon. His session was entitled "SAN - open, integrated, intelligent". He reviewed StorageTek's present portfolio of storage solutions with particular reference to Storage Area Networking which is perceived by StorageTek and IDC as a major growth area over the next 3 years. Recent improvements to tape storage support the predictions that automated tape libraries remain a viable alternative to disc.

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## Executive Committee

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about AXiS from our  
very own Web site:

Visit at:  
<http://www.axis.org.uk>

### Dates for the Diary 2001

12 August	Deadline for copy for AXiS News Vol 7 No 3
25 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup> October	Autumn Conference: Bisham Abbey
12 November	Deadline for copy for AXiS News Vol 7 No 4
11 December	OPERA meeting: Camden Town

For updates watch the Events page on the AXiS web site:  
<http://www.axis.org.uk/diary.htm>

## Editorial

It was good to have a Spring Conference this year. Numbers were lower than we had hoped but sufficient to make it viable financially. Your Committee was keen to hold a Spring event to make up for missing out on a Conference last year. Let's hope we can arrange a good Autumn event as well.

It is very disappointing to learn that ICL has decided to reduce its support for AXiS this year. This follows close upon the demise of the ICL CUA and its short-lived successor the ICL Customer Forum. Whilst we are confident that we can still call upon ICL speakers for conference we will have to be more self-sufficient in terms of finance and marketing of future events. The chief loss will be not having the indefatigable support of Dick Norris who has been the main liaison between ICL and your Executive Committee for many years. Thanks, Dick, for your support and friendship.

*Don Folland*

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## Acting Chairman's Column

Firstly, I need to let you know that Andy Kirkham has indicated that he can no longer serve as Chairman of AXiS because of pressure of work. I am sure that you will all join me in thanking Andy for his work on behalf of AXiS during his term as Chairman. He will remain on the Executive Committee so we will continue to benefit from his experience.

On a positive note we held a successful event at Bisham Abbey in March. It was good to meet with many old friends again. We held a members meeting at this event, and those present told us how important AXiS meetings were to them, so your Committee is pressing ahead with arrangements for an Autumn event.

If you were not able to make the event at Bisham, you missed a good event at an interesting venue. Hopefully we will be able to return to Bisham next Spring for another event. Why not join us at both the Autumn and Spring events, an interesting programme awaits you.

*Harold Cloult*

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## Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

At an Executive Committee meeting on 20th June 2001 it was agreed that Harold Cloult would continue in the role of acting Chairman and that he be assisted by Ian Myatt as acting Vice-Chairman until the Autumn

Conference. At that event a General Meeting will be arranged to enable AXiS members to vote to confirm these appointments or consider other nominations that may be submitted in the meantime.

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*Continued from front page*

Legato's business is about protecting customer data and keeping it readily available. Tim Hubble identified the perceived gap in data protection today as a result of the increased complexity of systems involving networks and open systems. He traced the evolution of service from straightforward backup and recovery to continuous information protection and described some of the Legato product set which supports customers today, e.g. Networker 6 offering SAN support, SmartMedia and Celestra. A nice feature of this presentation was the lighter approach to the summary. Drawing from Dr Suess Tim introduced the "Man with a SAN" [Ed: This forms the Tailpiece in this issue.]

The last presentation of the first day came from Xitec Software. After a brief introduction from Adrian Thompson, Richard Halsey took delegates through key solutions offered today by Xitec including off-mainframe development, data mirroring pathway, visualisation and migration. Off-mainframe development increases productivity and offers some encouragement to those staff involved in that they begin to acquire skills which are moving them towards modern technology whilst retaining their old skills.

The day ended with a membership meeting when Harold Cloult on behalf of our Chairman presented the Annual Report and Financial statement for 2000. This was an opportunity to encourage discussion on some of the problems perceived with arranging meetings to meet the current interests of users, improving service delivery, and recruiting additional Committee members. A productive discussion took place which continued over dinner that evening amongst delegates staying overnight. The following points were made:

1. Meetings are important - this is for three reasons - They provide an opportunity to find out about new products and services from ICL and third parties, hear about other users experiences and get ideas and meet other users in an informal social setting.
2. Delegates now have broader responsibilities - not just Trimetra/VME - so there is an opportunity to broaden the AXiS scope/appeal.
3. It is the content of the meeting which is important. Members are prepared to pay for meetings if the content is right. They find it difficult to justify attendance both to themselves and their management at a 'free' meeting if the content is too thin.

- 4 Where travel is involved it is easier to justify a two day meeting.
- 5 Set a membership fee which delivers one free conference place
6. Ensure that mailings, e.g. calling notices, Newsletters, actually reach those with active interest

The second day commenced with a session entitled 'Enabling e-Business with OpenVME', presented by Margaret Leigh, the first of two ICL Distinguished Engineers speaking at this event. This session focused on ICL's HostTalk, a range of products and services to extend access to existing applications. The key business drivers are:

1. Customer-centric systems with call centre focus - supported by gateways to existing account-based systems.
2. Increased efficiency - removing some manual processes
3. Competition from new companies, e.g. 'dot coms'
4. Reduce margins to improve competitiveness

Margaret identified the main benefits of exploiting legacy systems:

reduced project timescale  
 lower investment  
 low risk  
 gradual migration to new user interfaces - training issue  
 rapidly enable e-business  
 users often like existing systems

HostTalk environments can be supported by VME, Windows, IBM mainframe, or AS/400 with middleware such as Microsoft COM, and MSMQ; Tuxedo or WebLogic; and Java. Dialogue Manager, once seen as just a simple screen scraper, now has XML connection and connectivity. It can recognise screens on the fly and present information in HTML format. Version 5 should shortly be available offering XML support. It is anticipated that the product will be eventually extended to take on Cochise. Several case studies were included in this presentation based on experiences at Companies House where a VME system has been integrated with MS Office environment to improve image for customers (<http://www.companiesshouse.org.uk>), British Gas Trading and Book Club Associates.

Harold Clouff took the next session to present on behalf of Centrica (British Gas) user experience with OpenTP Version 3. The author of the presentation was unfortunately unable to attend on the day. Harold described the evolution of today's services from the original 12 regional services using green screen devices set up by British Gas West Midlands in 1978. These were integrated in 1995 to provide 8 office images. In 1997 users connected via a routing service rather than one of the individual office images. In 1999 two additional routing services were added. The 12 TP services for Gas Billing are supported on 3 production Trimetra mainframes. There are 27 TP training services. All services use TPMSX 0630 and IDMSX 0610. 20 million messages are processed each week; 15 million are routed by DTS.

To round off the morning session our second ICL Distinguished Engineer, John Popplewell, a popular presenter at AXiS events, spoke about EMC performance with a main focus on the Symmetrix range. John perceives EMC as a software company providing a lot of intelligent software controlling the cache and industry standard discs. He described how connections are made to VME systems with a look at typical configurations and performance characteristics.

The final presentation was enticingly entitled "SCL : Language of the Future". Roy Fulker, representing EBE Computing, reflected on the use of System Control Language. Is it really necessary? He described OpenSCL, a new operational environment for Windows and UNIX-based systems which complements the host operating system and works seamlessly with it. It is neither an operating system nor a superstructure product - it is an operational environment which is offered in two major versions : Developer and Enterprise. Developer is an interactive facility for developing and testing programs written in any language. It offers a common look and feel. The Enterprise version is a sophisticated operational environment for running work in attended or unattended mode across the whole enterprise. A comprehensive Editor is provided offering rapid development of programs and files. The benefits? A common English-like computer language, requiring no retraining, offering a single standard for the entire enterprise, and access from a single program to multiple operating systems.

The closing session was chaired by Harold Clouff to reflect on points made during the member meeting on day 1, and look at potential events for the coming year. Feedback to date indicates that members will support an autumn conference. Members were asked to consider whether they would be willing to help shape the future of AXiS by joining the Executive Committee.

# AXiS Annual Report – Year 2000

## ***Introduction***

In IT it still seems strange to use the phrase ‘Year 2000’ without adding the word ‘Problem’. In some ways it might be appropriate to add that word because the year 2000 was not without problems for AXiS.

The first problem was connected with our annual conference. The Executive Committee was rather disappointed with the level of attendance at the 1999 conference which had been held at Keele University. This gave us concern about interest for a conference in 2000.

The second and more immediate problem was that Dave Longson who was serving as Chairman had to step down as a result of an increased workload at his employer. As you know Andy Kirkham who was the Secretary agreed to stand for election, Don Folland who was Vice-Chairman at the time volunteered to act as Secretary and Harold Cloutt agreed to stand for election as Vice-Chairman. This was duly put to a vote of the membership and was ratified. Unfortunately a recent change of employment for Andy Kirkham has meant that he has been unable to devote time to Chairmanship and for the present I am acting in his stead.

## ***Twenty-fifth Anniversary***

The year 2000 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the group and of the VME Operating System. The Committee felt that a celebration should be arranged to mark this event. Initially a date in June was pencilled in but this clashed with the ICL Engineering Conference. The event was then planned for 20<sup>th</sup> September at London Zoo. We reluctantly had to cancel this event because take-up was rather slow. A small celebration was held at ICL Beaumont on 8<sup>th</sup> December. A full report of this event has been published in AXiS News.

## ***Focus Group Meetings***

The Year 2000 Focus Group held its final meeting in March to bring a very successful Group to a tidy conclusion. There was a Capacity Management meeting in May and OPERA held a meeting in December.

During the year the new Trimetra Focus Group was formed. This held its inaugural meeting in June which was very well attended. It was planned to run side-by-

side Trimetra and Cross-Platform meetings on 21<sup>st</sup> September in conjunction with the London Zoo event. These were postponed as a result of several speakers being unable to attend because of the Fuel Shortage.

## ***Plans for 2001***

Following comments from members about the lack of an Autumn conference last year, the Committee decided to hold a small Spring event in addition to the traditional Autumn Conference. Dates for these events are as follows:-

Spring Event 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April 2001

Autumn Event 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2001 [**Ed: Now arranged for 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October**]

In addition there will be a number of Focus Group events.

## ***Help Needed***

Planning and running events takes a lot of time and effort. All the members of the Executive Committee are volunteers. If we are to continue to run events we need to enlist your help. If you have any ideas about how AXiS should be run and are able to give your organisation some of your time to make it happen, please let us know.

***Harold Cloutt***  
Acting Chairman

## ***Treasurer’s Annual Report 2000***

Our Treasurer, Harry Barnes, reports that because expenditure for the 1999 autumn conference at Keele could not be brought to account until our 2000 accounting year, the balance of account for the year was in deficit largely equivalent to the cost of the conference.

Total Income : £13916.96  
Total Expenditure : £39744.53  
Total Loss on Year : £25827.57

The closing balance at the bank as at 31st December 2000 was £13208.49

# VME Definitely Alive and Well in Merseyside

Supporting VME Open 3, VME Open 2 and SV294 on platforms including Trimetra LY 18, SX 425 and a Dual Node Level 80, **Miracle GA** has extensive knowledge of ICL's flagship operating system.

From a purpose built Data Centre in the Liverpool area, **Miracle GA** run a full 24 x 7 manned operation supporting a range of clients all with 'Business Critical' VME systems. Just as well the Data Centre is checked and approved to MOD and Merseyside Police standards. As somebody recently remarked 'It's a long time since I've seen such a large (and clean!) computer room.

But then that's what we do.

**Miracle GA** run other peoples VME workloads. We can do this at our site or yours, provide operator and technical support and with a range of tape technologies can cater for most migration needs – 3 in the last 6 months.

So if it's a move you are looking for why not ask **Miracle GA** first.

You might also be aware that recently **Miracle GA** acquired two significant Business Units from ICL along with their staff and contracts. Included in the purchase are two major products:

EMCS A state of the art Product Data Management tool for controlling the modification and release of products and used in most industries including electronics and software development.  
One major user is ICL itself!

OMAC Well known as ICL's major VME manufacturing system and also for its use of Application Master along with DDS, TPMS and IDMSX. In its day OMAC was a significant player in the market and still boasts some of the largest manufacturing companies in the UK and is still relied on in ex – ICL factories. These clients are of course now **Miracle GA**'s clients.

Both of the above products and staff add significantly to the skills **Miracle GA** can bring to any VME requirement.

So our skill is running and supporting VME environments. Other products which can assist include: Tape Library Management, Print Management and Archiving to CD Rom, Report Distribution and Document Imaging.

In future issues **Miracle GA** plan to outline some case studies including VME migration, Local Authority use of Archiving and Document Imaging and describe other products in our portfolio including payroll.

In the meantime should you wish you can contact **Miracle GA** you can do so at:

Email [info@miracle-ga.co.uk](mailto:info@miracle-ga.co.uk)

or

Tel 0151 944 2244

Fax 0151 944 1444

**Miracle GA - Supporting the VME Community**

## ICL Liaison

At a recent Executive Committee Dick Norris advised that he can no longer continue to represent ICL at AXiS meetings, and that ICL can no longer support the Group to the extent that it has. The Committee is very disappointed to lose Dick as a staunch supporter and valued colleague, and wishes to express its appreciation for the hard work that Dick has put in to help populate events with good speakers and assist with the marketing of AXiS activity. Dick has been associated in various ways with AXiS and its predecessors for most of the Group's active life but his most significant contribution has been during the years since the late 80s in which he has been our official liaison point with ICL.

Executive Committee

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## Farewell to CCTA

The end of March 2001 saw the departure of the name CCTA from Government and IT circles. The Department, formerly known as the Central Computing and Telecommunications Agency, was integrated with the Office of Government Commerce as from 1st April 2001.

CCTA, created as Central Computing Agency, on 1st April 1972, from HMSO's Central Computer Bureau, Treasury O&M, and the Post Office Technical Support Unit, was a founder member in 1975 of our ancestor, the 2900 User Group, and played a significant role by deploying early releases of VME/B and with help from the ICL Goodies team and other Government departments who took early releases of VME, developed popular common software, including G-Macros, Government Accounting Package, and a High Level Scheduler. It made a significant contribution to the world of service management through development of the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) and this remains a valuable source of best practice in service management today.

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*..... and they thought it was safe!*

A reply received from a pensions administrator in April apologises for an error reported in the pensioner's date of birth recorded on the pensions advice slip as April 2011! Quote: "...it was indeed a computer glitch and only affected persons born 1920 and before."

So who moved the window without checking?

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# Centrica Provides On-line Account Access to its 14 Million Gas Customers

Centrica's 14 million tariff gas customers can now benefit from on-line account access via the internet thanks to a development by AG Solutions. Customers can view account details, pay their bills, review consumption history, input meter readings and receive an updated account on-line. Customers can also opt to be emailed when a new bill has been produced.

Centrica have one of the largest customer bases of any UK company. Providing on-line access to any that wish to use such facilities is a major undertaking. The system has been designed to handle an initial user base of up to 2 million customers and is scaleable thereafter.

AG Solutions were responsible for the functional and technical design, development, testing and implementation preparation of the core application and all aspects of integration.

To ensure a fast response time and provide a true 24 x 7 service, customer details are held on an Oracle database of e-Utility registered customers. This database is refreshed with the latest customer account information from the multiple ICL VME mainframe, multiple TPMSX/IDMSX service Gas Billing system each time the customer logs in to the system. The target response time is an average 5 seconds at the Internet boundary. The project utilises Sun 450 hardware as the platform for the application layer, clustered to enable load balancing and fault tolerance. Application middleware is provided by BEA WebLogic server. This server uses Java2 (EJB) and communicates with the e-Utility Oracle database via JDBC. A Jolt extension to the WebLogic server links via Tuxedo to the ICL VME Gas Billing system.

Customers paying their bills via debit cards are given the assurance that the transactions are secure through the use of an environment that is protected by Verisign certification and SSL encryption.

The front-end customer screens were produced by The Hub, a web site design company who are responsible for the existing Centrica web site. AG Solutions undertook the content management of the graphic screens during the development and the integration of these screens with the core application. Ongoing content management is an important aspect of any web site and this continues to be managed by AG Solutions as part of its 24 x 7 support service for the complete system. AG Solutions also manage the release and

promotion of any updates to the live system hosted by PSINet, an independent internet service provider (ISP).

This new on-line system went live to Centrica's gas customer base in January 2001 and will form part of a number of on-line services that Centrica will be offering its wide range of customers in the future.

*William Bentley*  
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## E-Commerce News

### Problems created by new top level domains

ICANN, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, is facing a challenge from New.net, a start up company which has just released news of the launch of a scheme offering 20 new top level domain names. The names which include .sport, .law, .shop and .kids will, in fact, be third level domain names. Due to the use of a downloadable software patch these will appear as top level domain names to on-line users.

At first glance the opportunities provided by such a scheme appear to be wide. However, it is likely that the scheme will impose further pressures on ICANN which is, itself, struggling to implement its own new top level domain names – the launch of which has now been delayed until the end of the year.

Furthermore, little is currently known about the proposed administration of these new domain names. We can assume it is likely that the problems already posed by cybersquatting will create havoc amongst the new system, the names of which are intended to be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Although there is obvious need for the expansion of the top level domain name system, this venture operating outside the auspices of ICANN is only likely to create further problems. ICANN's view is that most users require assurance that the Internet will continue to function in a stable fashion and not risk disruption from uncontrolled developments. This may however be the catalyst for ICANN to respond to the demands of industry which thus far they have not managed to do.

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**AXiS Autumn Conference**  
**25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October 2001**  
**English National Sports Centre**  
**Bisham Abbey**

# ICL News

## Processing Census 2001

A few weeks ago, at the end of April, most of us would have been involved in Census 2001, the mechanism by which Government gathers data to inform planning for homes, jobs, schools, health, transport and other vital services.

It is a major logistical exercise involving some 33 million households in the United Kingdom. A total of 33 million Census forms are expected to be processed in 10 months between June, 2001 and March, 2002. The completed forms are being dealt with at ICL's document processing centre in Widnes. The forms will be scanned through a Lockheed Martin information system that uses automated recognition technology to "read" the handwriting and marks on the forms and convert them to digital information at the rate of 88 forms every minute or 160,000 per day over two work shifts. Seven computing clusters will be used to perform the processing - a total of 477 computer workstations, 133 servers and 28 scanners. Approximately 28 terabytes of images and data will be captured from the forms.

The Data Capture and Coding System (DCCS) supports the entire Census processing from check-in of returned forms to the point where the final captured data is forwarded to Census analysts. After initial scanning the system evaluates the zones or areas where hand written entries are expected. If anything is present in one of these zones, the system attempts to recognise it, using OCR techniques. First, a zone is segmented into characters by looking for breaks in the writing, which of course should have been printed in accordance with instructions. After segmentation into possible characters, the digitised hand writing images are analysed according to the size and shapes of the characters or alphabet letters written. This is achieved by a type of statistical analysis that is programmed to recognise each alphabet letter in a number of variations, eg., a big fat A, a little A, an A with a decided slant, a capital A, a lower case a, all specifically programmed for UK handwriting styles.

## Northern Rock's future business strategy supported by ICL

In May Northern Rock, a long time member of AXiS, awarded ICL a £23 million contract to help provide the IT infrastructure which will support its future business.

The contract is intended to protect Northern Rock against the 'technology trap' - the risk that technology bought now will soon be superseded - as ICL will provide new hardware technology if deemed appropriate by both parties, within the contracted price.

Steve Davidson, Assistant Director of IT at Northern Rock, said: "Strategic investment in IT will be intrinsic to the future success of our business, in a very competitive market. ICL has a close relationship with us, enabling it to add real value by evolving our IT infrastructure in line with our business projections and strategies."

Peter Slavid, business strategy manager at ICL, said: "We are confident that the IT infrastructure ICL has provided will support Northern Rock's aggressive growth targets and open up more possibilities for the future."

Northern Rock has exploited ICL's data centre server technology for over 30 years, to provide a reliable, scalable IT infrastructure for the key administrative systems within the business.

## New training courses for IT Service Management

KnowledgePool has responded to revisions made by the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) by updating its portfolio of IT Service Management courses. The improved courses which lead to the ISEB Foundation and IT Managers Certificates are available now. KnowledgePool will also offer a Refresher Workshop for qualified IT service managers, to update them on the ITIL changes and to cover business benefits of the ITIL restructuring.

The ITIL has been updated in consultation with Service Management organisations and ITIL user groups, to reflect technology changes and the growing dependency of business upon IT. Represented by a series of books, the ITIL outlines shared best practice for the IT infrastructure service industry worldwide. It covers issues relating to the management of business networks, software and telecommunications in six principal elements;

- service support
- service delivery
- business practise
- infrastructure management
- applications management
- planning to implement service management.

ITIL provides the foundation for quality IT service management. The standards recommended by the ITIL and related ISEB management qualifications offered by KnowledgePool enable businesses to develop an effective IT Service which will benefit both the IT service provider and their customers.

# From the Archives

*During 1981 ICL made the following announcements.*

## **PERQ**

*ICL announced the intention to market the PERQ Personal Scientific and Engineering Workstation. It is the first of a new breed of very powerful single-user computers with integral top quality graphics display. It provides the scientific and engineering user with a powerful, easy to use scientific computer which is completely under their own control and which can be linked into local area networks.*

***The standard PERQ system which ICL will be offering includes:***

- *16 bit processor with a speed of up to 1 million Q codes per second. This is the equivalent power of a medium sized mainframe.*
- *256.Kb to one megabyte of memory*
- *A 4 bit-mapped graphical display*
- *Keyboard graphics tablet*
- *24Mb Winchester rigid disc*
- *1Mb floppy disc*
- *General purpose Interface Bus and the RS232 standard interface which enables peripherals and laboratory equipment to be connected to PERQ*
- *4K writeable control store, which means that micro code can easily and simply be produced by the user.*

*Current software includes an operating system utility and a PASCAL compiler. Plans for PERQ include UNIX, Fortran and a significant set of software tools to assist designers in the use of PERQ and thereby improve their performance.*

## **Distributed Resource System (DRS)**

*ICL also announced Distributed Resource System which is described as a family of multiple micro processors, of which the smallest member is a simple intelligent work station. Users can grow their own network simply by adding similar units all of which are fully collaborative, to develop an advanced communications system.*

# Tailpiece

**The Man With A SAN**  
by Tim Hubble, Legato (with thanks to Dr Seuss)

## ***Problems***

The sun did not shine  
It was too wet to play  
So we sat in the office  
All that cold, cold, wet day  
I sat there with Sally  
We sat there, we two. And I said,  
“Any ideas?”

The Servers weren't running, the backups said “FAIL”  
Our Web site was down and the boss looked quite pale.  
So all we could do was to  
Sit! Sit! Sit! Sit!  
And we did not like it.  
Not one little bit.

## ***But wait....***

And then something went BUMP!  
How that bump made us jump  
WE looked! Then we saw him step out of his  
van  
We looked! And we saw him!  
The *Man With a SAN*

## ***The Man With a SAN***

And he said to us,  
“Why do you sit there like that?”  
“I know things are bad and  
servers aren't running.  
But you could have  
systems both  
running and  
humming!”

## ***Tricks.....***

“I know some good games  
we could play,” said the man.  
“I know some new tricks.” Said the  
*Man With a SAN*  
“A lot of good tricks. I will show  
them to you.  
Your board of directors won't mind if  
I do.”  
Then Sally and I did not know what to  
say  
The Directors were out at a  
meeting all day.

## ***The Boss.....***

But our boss said, “No! No!  
Make that man go away!  
Tell that *Man With a SAN*  
You do NOT want to play  
He should not be here.  
He should not be about  
He should not be here when Directors are out!”

## ***Reducing Load.....***

“Now! Now! Have no fear. Have no fear!” said the  
man.  
“My tricks are not bad,” Said the *Man With a SAN*  
“Let's put in a network for SCSI and see,  
If we can't take the load off traditional IP”  
“Please don't!” said the boss.  
“Let's keep it on LAN!”  
“Please don't!” said the boss. “I do NOT trust your  
SAN!”

## ***Faster and better than SCSI.....***

“Have no fear!” said the man.  
“I will make this work fine.  
Your LAN will be free of this traffic in time.  
With Fibre your storage will be on a SAN,  
But that is not ALL I can do!” Said the man...

## ***SAN component***

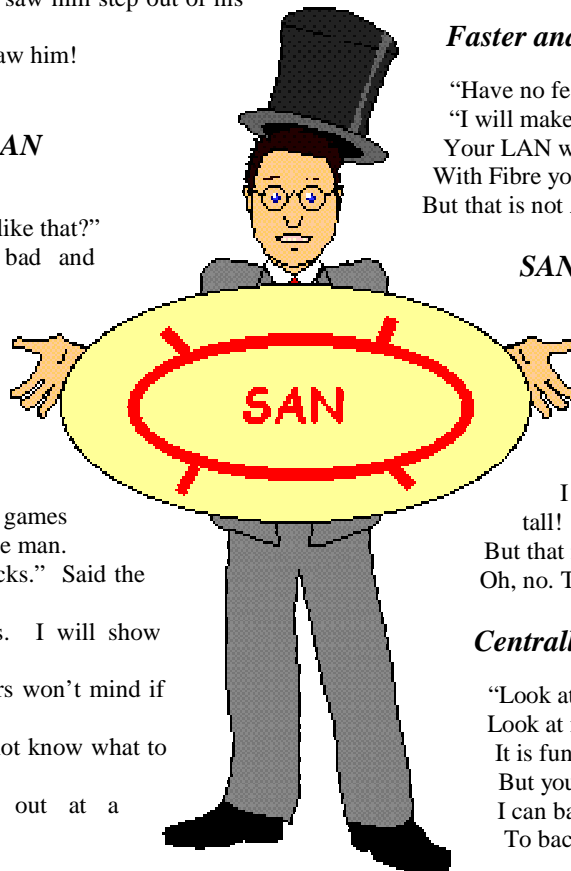
“Look at me! Look at me now!”  
said the man.  
“With a bridge and a switch and  
RAID for my disk,  
I can hold all your data with nearly  
no risk

I can add lots of storage and rack it real  
tall!

But that is not all!  
Oh, no. That is not all.....

## ***Centrally Managed Backup***

“Look at me! Look at me!  
Look at me NOW!  
It is fun to backup  
But you have to know how.  
I can backup all servers and even am able  
To backup your NAS box from this little table”



### ***Serverless backup***

"I'll hold an index and media Dee Bee  
And while I back up, the server's still free  
This means it's OK for use by all!  
But that is not all,  
Oh, no.  
That is not all..."

### ***A Box***

And then he ran out.  
And, then, fast as a fox,  
The *Man With a SAN*  
Came back with a box.  
A big red wood box.  
It was shut with a hook  
"Now look at this trick,"  
Said the man. "Take a look!"

### ***Cluster***

He opened the box with the strength he could muster  
And said to us both "We call this stuff Cluster.  
This Cluster is cunning and clever and quick  
And fails over servers when they're feeling sick."

### ***WAN Cluster***

"It'll fail over buildings with SRDF  
And does it so quickly you needn't draw breath.  
It fails over quickly on LAN, WAN and SAN,  
Your users won't notice a thing" said the man.

### ***But there's more....***

"But there's more, so much more  
You can do with a SAN.  
So much more you can do"  
Said the *Man with a SAN*

### ***Sharing Resource***

"Whenever you sit on a seminar or course  
You're sure to find out about sharing resource.  
Resource is expensive and data will grow  
So you'll need a big library for tapes as you know."

### ***Dynamic Drive Sharing***

"These libraries have drives,  
Lots of drives you can see  
But sharing these drives? DDS is the key.  
It will allocate servers to drives on request  
And utilisation is kept at its best."

### ***The Boss Agrees***

Then my boss said "OK"  
"Let's connect it together.  
With this kind of stuff we'll be running forever.  
With luck I'll even protect my position  
As Head of IT and server physician"

### ***Maximum protection***

"Sign here and we'll put all in straight away."  
Said the *Man with a SAN*  
What could the boss say?  
We signed on the line  
And we all got to work  
And when we were done  
The man gave a smirk.

### ***Job Done***

Then he shook all our hands  
Then he said, "That is that."  
And then he was gone  
With a tip of his hat.

### ***Directors are back***

Then our directors came in  
And they said to us two,  
"Any problems today? Tell me.  
What did you do?"

### ***No problem***

And Sally and I did not know what to say.  
Should we tell them the things that went on there that  
day?  
Should we tell them about it?  
Now, what SHOULD we do?  
Well....What would YOU do  
If your directors asked YOU?

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## **Autumn Conference - 25/26th October 2001 - Bisham Abbey**

This is a key date for your diary! The English National Sports Council will host our Autumn event. This is a comfortable venue in very pleasant surroundings offering some sporting fringe benefits to delegates.

The programme is now being drawn together to provide a two-stream event. It is anticipated that the

streams will offer sessions on electronic business, user experiences (eg early experience with Open VME4), tools and services, migrating a VME workload, and OpenSCL (first introduced to us at our Spring meeting).

It is hoped to set up a small exhibition in support of the conference.