

# The Ring

THE JOURNAL OF THE CAMBRIDGE COMPUTER LAB RING

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# Ring news

## Ringlet bars

The drinks events continue to be popular and are drawing larger crowds. **Alastair Gourlay** reports.

### London

On Thursday, 5th April 2007 we held the third London Ringlet bar event at a pub near to Covent Garden. There was an electric atmosphere at this event, just before the Easter holiday weekend. Indeed, later in the evening smoke started to emanate from the bar, alarms were ringing and the fire brigade was called. The London Ringlet Bar carried on regardless and few aspects of UNIX were left undissected. Otherwise there was much talk of entrepreneurial opportunities and some remarkable coincidence of ideas.

On Thursday, 7th June 2007 the London Ringlet Bar found itself at a new venue: Balls Brothers, Victoria. It was a very enjoyable evening with many animated conversations. All present were very grateful to Ring Council Member Lorenzo Wood for his sponsorship of the bar on behalf of LBi ([www.lbi.com](http://www.lbi.com)). About half of the attendees were new to the Ringlet Bar with the fresh location being an influential factor in this. Indeed one member happened to live in a flat above the bar. Others worked in Silicon Victoria. The wine flowed and the seafood went down a treat.

The event on 2nd August 2007 was the best attended yet, helped perhaps by the latest venue being in the City — Corney & Barrow on Old Broad Street. The tab this time was kindly picked up by Dynamic Management Solutions ([www.dms-london.co.uk](http://www.dms-london.co.uk)).

The London Ringlet bar will continue to run on the first Thursday of even-numbered months.

### Edinburgh

On Thursday, 3rd May 2007 we held the second Edinburgh Ringlet bar event. One of the highlights of the evening for me was talking to one enthusiastic member who had travelled all the way from Aberdeen just for the event. Others attending were for the most part continuing their studies at Edinburgh University, on paths to PhDs at the School of Informatics. Many detailed technical and theoretical conversations ensued in addition to more down-to-earth discussion about Edinburgh and the world.

The Standing Order pub was a successful spacious venue with an extensive menu.

The Edinburgh Ringlet bar will continue to run on the first Thursday of odd-numbered months.

### Cambridge

The Cambridge Ringlet bar has proved popular. Forthcoming events will continue to be held in the upstairs bar at the Castle Inn, 38 Castle Street.



From left to right: Mike Walker, John Grant, Mark Grundland, Richard Jebb, Tim Ward, Martin Kleppmann, Sean Moran

## Events calendar

### 2007

#### September

Thursday 6th, 18:30  
**Edinburgh Ringlet bar**  
Venue TBC

Wednesday 19th, 18:30  
**Cambridge Ringlet bar**  
Upstairs at the Castle Inn, 38 Castle Street

#### October

Thursday 4th, 18:00  
**London Ringlet bar**  
Venue TBC

#### November

Thursday 1st, 18:30  
**Edinburgh Ringlet bar**  
Venue TBC

Wednesday 21st, 18:30  
**Cambridge Ringlet bar**  
Upstairs at the Castle Inn, 38 Castle Street

#### December

Thursday 6th, 18:00  
**London Ringlet bar**  
Venue TBC

### 2008

#### January

Wednesday 16th, 18:30  
**Cambridge Ringlet bar**  
Upstairs at the Castle Inn, 38 Castle Street

#### March

Monday 31st, 19:00  
**Ring annual dinner**  
Queens' College, Cambridge  
Reception 19:00; dinner 19:30  
Admission by ticket only

## Salary survey plans

The results of a salary survey would provide interesting and valuable information to Ring members. By **Alastair Gourlay** and **David Colver**.

We would like to give some advance notice of a salary survey which we will be inviting all Ring members to complete in the near future. The results of the survey will allow members to see where they stand against their peers and how different career choices may affect their financial rewards. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. The survey will be very short and will allow for anonymity. The method we are proposing to use is to ask for a few key pieces of information such as these:

- Highest degree (MA, MPhil, PhD, etc.);
- Age group;
- Main industry Sector (financial services, software, hardware, internet, telecoms, media, academia, etc.);
- Role (staff, manager, director);
- Size of organisation;
- Current remuneration (total amount per year in GBP);

Optionally:

- Remuneration history;
- Future remuneration expectations;
- Additional comments.

We will then request that members send the response to Jan Samols using an anonymous e-mail sending Web page. We will provide a choice of such Web pages.

Your feedback on this proposed procedure is welcome. We look forward to publishing the results of the survey on the RingWeb site and in the newsletter.

## Facebook group

Social networking phenomenon Facebook has already attracted many of our members. All are now invited to join the private Ring group on Facebook.

It's hard to escape media coverage of the meteoric rise of the social networking site Facebook. The raw figures are certainly impressive: more than 31 million active users; average of 3% growth in users *every week* since January 2007; more than 40 billion page views per day.

Compared to other social networking sites (notably MySpace), Facebook has an older and more professional audience. More than half of Facebook users are outside college and the fastest growing demographic is the over-25s.

Though certainly of the moment, Facebook's success is substantially due to its design. It is very good at keeping you up-to-date with

your friends' activities without being overwhelming. It is also very easy to start using it, with more depth available if you care to explore.

Many Ring members are already active on Facebook, using it to keep in touch with their friends, work colleagues and clients. *The Ring* has created a private group on Facebook for members. Entry is by invitation only. We would like as many members as possible to join the group to encourage networking and discussion.

You should receive an invitation to join from Jan Samols. Please get in touch if you have not received your invitation

The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for the group 'The Cambridge Computer Laboratory Ring'. The top navigation bar includes 'Profile', 'edit', 'Friends', 'Networks', 'Inbox', and links for 'home', 'account', 'privacy', and 'logout'. The group's cover photo is a blue circle with a red ring. The 'Information' section lists the group's name and description. The 'Members' section shows a list of members with their profile pictures. The 'The Wall' section displays a post from Hui Li.

*The Ring's private group on Facebook is growing fast*

## New look for *The Ring*

Since the society was founded, *The Ring* has been one of the most popular services with members. In this issue we have updated the design and improved the printing quality. Please let us know what kinds of content you would like to see in future issues.

# Who's who

**Rashid Abdalla** (PET MPhil05) is working as an analyst at Accenture.

**Peter Barkley** (EM MPhil07) is an officer in the United States Navy. He is training to be a naval aviator.

**Tim Deegan** (EM BA98, PHD06) is currently working for XenSource.

**Adam French** (EM BA07) has joined nCipher as a graduate software engineer.

**Liam Goddard** (CHU BA04) is now working at 3i plc as an analyst.

**Chris Goodfellow** (PEM BA04) is working at Autonomy as a technology specialist.

**John Grant** (SE BA67) is director at Nine Tiles Networks, developers of equipment for sending time-critical media over digital networks.

**Richard Hadden** (Q BA96) has recently joined Cytox, a UK biotechnology company, as CEO.

**Russell Haggart** (CHR BA91) is VP for marketing of SiConnect Ltd. He is responsible for all product management and marketing functions.

**Tom Hayward** (T BA95) is a venture capital fund manager at Herald Ventures. Herald Investment Management specializes in investing in companies operating in the information technology, media and telecoms sectors.

**Martin Kleppmann** (CC BA06) has founded Ept Computing, a software consultancy based in Cambridge.

**Fabre Lambeau** (ED MPhil) is Head of Consultancy Services at AMX Inspired Signage.

**Daniel Lau** (Q BA04) is currently working at Autonomy.

**Rob MacAulay** (CL BA78) is a consultant at Ardencaple. Rob provides technology consultancy and specialises in processor and system architectures.

**Anil Madhavapeddy** (R PhD07) is a release manager at XenSource.

**Ewam Mellor** (CHU BA01) is working at XenSource.

**Richard Moore** (Q BA07) is working at KBC.

**James Moore** (DOW BA05) is now general manager of the .NET Developer Tools Division at Red Gate Software in Cambridge.

**Stephen Montgomery** (CHU BA86, PhD) is the director of Control Systems Software at Ricardo UK, the world's leading independent automotive engineering services provider.

**Amir Nathoo** (JN MEng02) has founded Cambridge Data Limited, which provides hosted document sharing solutions for individual professionals and small legal and financial services firms.

**Oleg Podsechin** (GIR BA05) is a director at Ionsquare, a company he founded in 2001 to develop and deploy server side, desktop and mobile applications.

**Peter Polkinghorne** (T BA79) is IT manager at KSB Law LLP, a commercial law firm.

**Matthew Rowen** (CC BA04) is working at Tenison in Cambridge.

**Susmit Sarkar** (PhD07) is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory.

**Mark Stringer** (RA04) has founded AgileLab which offers consultancy and training to allow customers to understand the benefits of Agile and implement Agile ways of working in their business.

**Oliver Thorp** (CHU BA04) is a systems engineer at Fujitsu Telecommunications Europe. He has been the Fujitsu representative to the DSL Forum, Metro Ethernet Forum and IEEE 802.1 committees.

**Maja Vukovic** (N PhD06) is a researcher in service delivery technology at IBM Research in New York.

**Simon Walker** (CHU BA07) is working as a software engineer at Broadcom.

**Frank Wilson** (JN BA79) is principal consultant and director at FwSoft Limited.

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*The Ring* is the journal of the Computer Lab Ring, which is the graduate society of the University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory.

Governing council: Prof. Andy Hopper (TH78) (Chair); Stephen Allott (T80); David Colver (CHR80); Peter Cowley (F77); Richard Jebb (DAR88); Lorenzo Wood (CHR93)

Careers committee: Peter Cowley (Chair); Andrew Herbert (JN75); Chris Morgan (JE01)

# Richard Muirhead



*The Ring* was delighted to talk to Richard Muirhead about Tideway Systems, a company he founded in 2002. Richard is a graduate of Jesus College. Richard was a finalist in the UK Technology Innovation and Growth Entrepreneur of the Year Award for 2006.

*TR: Richard, can you run me through your career up to the point of founding Tideway?*

RM: From Cambridge I went to Monitor Company, the strategy consulting firm founded by Michael Porter, where I was a consultant to telecoms equipment and service providers. From there I used my experience to found Orchestream with my brother in 1995. The company was listed in London and on NASDAQ in June 2000. I then left and helped launch Nexagent and Sportev before becoming the entrepreneur in residence at Accel Partners. I launched Tideway while I was there in 2002.

*You get addicted to the whole process of building product and companies*

*TR: Can you tell me why and how you started Tideway? How was the business model of the company developed?*

RM: In answer to the 'why', well you get addicted to the whole process of building product and companies. Once you've done it once, it's a habit that's hard to break. The whole process happened very quickly. As to why Tideway in particular, well I took some of the principals involved in managing telecoms and applied them to investment banks. In 2001/2002 telecoms were in an unhealthy state so I decided to concentrate on investment banks. From day one I worked very closely with customers to build the product and co-developed it with them. I also took advantage of the amazing network of people I knew from my Orchestream days.

In developing the business model I drew from my experience at Orchestream where I felt that our execution was not what it could have been. Strangely though we stuck with a business model which, at the time, was deeply unfashionable. 95% of other software companies who were trying to sell to enterprises had failed and been forced to redefine their business model. We, however, succeeded relatively well.

*TR: Why did you succeed where they failed?*

RM: We were fortunate — or maybe clever — to focus on investment banks at a time of relatively strong economic growth. Investment banks are early adopters and they have deep pockets. We made sure we covered every angle to make sales happen. We focused the solutions on them, wined and dined them and used all possible contacts to get those first deals done. Being based in London also meant that we could more easily take advantage of London's success in becoming a global financial centre. The pure fact of their location meant our competitors in Silicon Valley and the East Coast were not as proximate and cosy with the investment banking community. Crucially, this was underpinned by an all-star technical team who are still with me and hence a great product as the fruit of collaboration with our lead customers.

*TR: Can you explain the key features of your flagship product Foundation? How does it understand dependencies and map them?*

RM: The key thing to understand is that you've got all this interest in Web applications whether it be Facebook, Google or your Internet banking, trading applications or supply chain applications. Web applications have created an explosion in the use and complexity of data centres. In the last 15 years even this has been outstripped by the explosion in the proportionate cost of running data centres and in the

*Web applications have created an explosion in the use and complexity of data centres*

absolute amount spent on people. There has been an increase in both the number of people and in the cost per person. These people spend a lot of time tackling a lot of complex, collaborative tasks reactively just to "keep the lights on", when they should be working to align IT to the ever-evolving needs of the business. Tideway's all about automating these tasks to put people in a position to plan, track and validate valuable changes more proactively, safely and speedily.

The core task is to understand what's going on in a data centre so that a company can gain total transparency of what's going on in its IT landscape.

*TR: How long does it take Tideway to create all the dependency maps and what is the impact of application dependency mapping on a business's processes?*

RM: It's very quick though it depends on an organisation's internal security considerations. It can be up and running in a few hours or a few days. The key thing is that it allows organisations to shift from being reactive to being proactive. By aligning IT with business, it enhances an organisation's ability to manage change.

*TR: What sort of companies would get the most out of Foundation? Can the product provide a company with cost savings?*

RM: Basically any organisation that has Web applications and anything from 1,000 servers to 100,000 servers. The cost savings come in the form of a reduction in data centre personnel headcount and in the cost of outages. Benefits come from clarity of the audit processes and compliance and an enhanced ability to keep up with business demands.

*TR: How does Tideway Foundation work with other network management products?*

RM: From day one it was designed to integrate with the full range of product. It works with HP Openview, BMC Atrium CMDB, CiscoWorks and SAP.

*TR: Does one appliance cover an entire organisation?*

RM: We can scale the architecture to cover large organisations. One appliance covers up to 5k servers. Above that and you need to get more exotic which we have done!

*TR: What technical challenges are you working on now?*

RM: The product automates the operations and knowledge of expert individuals. Making this automation an increasingly generic and powerful capability is a key challenge as is making it as compelling and simple to use as Google or Facebook and of course, always, scalability.

*TR: How do you think the market will look in the next couple of years?*

RM: There is a massive backlog of issues to address regarding the management of data centres. However, this also provides a massive

opportunity. Companies failed to get off the ground in our space not because the solutions weren't needed but because, in the early 2000s it was hard to convince large companies to buy solutions from small companies. So many small companies were bought by the large organisations. This left Tideway as the leading independent company in the space.

*TR: Finally, what is the most important thing that you have learned about business?*

RM: Never give up.

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*For more information about Tideway and its products visit [www.tideway.com](http://www.tideway.com).*

# Igor Drovkov



*The Ring* was delighted to talk to Igor Drovkov about Cronto, a company he founded in 2005. Igor is a graduate of Trinity Hall.

*TR: Igor, tell me about Cronto and how you got started.*

ID: Cronto makes Internet services easier to use and more secure at the same time (never before achieved in security). The company was founded by myself and Dr Elena Punskeya, who did her PhD and post-doc research in Information Engineering at the Cambridge University Engineering Department and is a fellow of Homerton College.

Having worked in two Cambridge technology start-ups, Anacubis and Isocra, I had an opportunity to see first-hand what works and what doesn't when it comes to product development and market strategies. It was a very useful experience that also gave me this "I can do better" feeling. Around the same time, we had been experiencing increasing problems with our credit cards: not being able to use the card abroad (without phoning up the bank first), getting fraudulent transactions on the card with the subsequent investigation by the bank taking a long time. Meanwhile, broadband has truly arrived and the number of services available on the Web has exploded. This growth, however, has been accompanied by the next generation in the evolution of Internet-based fraud and this is why banks started to tighten up their controls. Looking at the market data the situation just didn't make any sense — the value at risk (private and financial data) has increased by orders of magnitude since 1995 and so has the fraud, yet the way users are protected is still just with a password. It was clear to us that there was a new market emerging for consumer authentication and that it was going to be really big.

The main challenge in building a secure solution is making it acceptable to the users. Making it acceptable to millions of on-line users (as opposed to at most thousands of employees in a company) takes it to a completely new level. Combining our expertise and experience in business, technology and research, it should be possible to develop a new solution that will be easy to use for everyone yet deliver better security, and we thought we could rise to the challenge.

*TR: What are the challenges you have faced in building a start-up team? How do you think start-ups can compete with well-known players when it comes to the talent hunt?*

ID: This is a very good question. You can have the best idea in the world but very rarely can you execute it just on your own. What is needed is a clear vision of what you are trying to achieve and how you can validate your vision. The vision helps you to get people interested, the "proof points" help you to persuade them that it is real (or at least has a good chance of succeeding).

*You can have the best idea in the world but rarely can you execute it just on your own*

Obviously, friends and former colleagues are a good first point of contact. If you are lucky you already know someone who has both the right skills and is prepared to take a risk on joining a start-up company. I would note, however, that it is important to realise that not everyone is dreaming of working for a start-up. It might sound obvious, but as a founder one tends to believe that no one would pass on an opportunity to work on a new exciting project that will make people's life easier and has high potential rewards. Yet, in reality, different people have different priorities.

We have been extremely lucky in attracting some very bright and experienced people. Being in Cambridge and having connections with the University certainly helps.

*TR: How does Cronto's approach deal with identity theft and man-in-the-middle attacks? How does it differ from that of your competitors?*

ID: Cronto's proposition is unique because we can prevent very advanced on-line attacks, such as "man-in-the-middle", without making it too complex for the end user or too expensive for the business. The biggest security vendors today are the companies who have built their businesses on providing information security for the enter-

prise market. Their technologies and services are very effective in addressing requirements in that sector. Today, however, there is a much greater need for consumer-focused security and requirements for a successful solution are different in scale and in the variety of threats. Security solutions are always about a compromise between security, usability and costs. Providing security to millions of on-line users that defends against ever-evolving threats, is cost-effective to deploy *and* is simple enough for anyone to use requires a new solution.

Our solution is based on two main principles. First, you need to be able to “sign” your actions in order to prevent advanced attacks and make identity theft less valuable to attackers. Just having a password (however complex) is not enough because it only links your on-line identity to accessing the service (eg, logging into your bank account). In a recent security incident with a bank in the Netherlands, attackers were able to intercept the one-time passcode generated by customers’ chip and pin cards (similar technology is being rolled out by some banks in the UK). The attackers were then able to relay the passcode on to the real bank and authorise a money transfer to a fraudulent account.

In order to prevent such attacks, the account holder should be able to authorise transactions by creating an electronic signature. In such cases, the attacker won’t be able to change any transaction details that would allow them to take money out of the account. This approach is called transaction verification as it is based on the transaction being checked and “signed” by the user before the bank executes it.

The question then is how do you implement transaction verification in a way that people can use? A bank may require customers to have a separate device that they use to type in details of the transaction and generate an authorisation code. This approach however has a number of weaknesses: people are prone to make mistakes when they type, so the authorisation code could be created incorrectly; customers would have another device to carry around with them, which doesn’t scale well (imagine having to have a separate device for each on-line service you use). Hence, our second principle is to use a visual channel to transfer transaction information to the user for generating the “signature”. It might sound complicated, and it is. Behind the scenes there is a sophisticated protocol designed to provide strong security. However, from the user’s point of view it couldn’t be simpler: the user is presented with a Cronto image (specific to the user and the transaction to be authorised) on the screen of their computer and uses the Cronto application to verify the transaction. The Cronto application could either be stand-alone (eg, running from a USB memory stick) or on a mobile phone — no dedicated security device is needed.

There are many competing technologies today on the market, but most don’t go beyond “fancy” passwords (that don’t address current

security threats) and those that can provide transaction verification have higher costs/worse usability associated with them compared with our solution.

*TR: How has your visual signing technology been received so far?*

ID: Very positively. We have users complimenting the ease of use of our technology, we have security experts validating the approach we have taken and we have potential customers being extremely interested. Our solution addresses a recognised need and it does it in a simple unique way that everyone can understand — this makes people excited about our proposition, and those are business people who normally have a very limited interest in security.

*TR: Which sectors do you see as being the most advanced in their attempts to minimise the threat of on-line fraud? Are there any sectors in particular that are exposing themselves as soft targets to fraudsters?*

ID: It is difficult to say who is most efficient and who is behind. Being most exposed, banks are working on mitigating the risks, but their efforts and success rates vary a lot across the industry. Other targets include Internet payments companies, brokerages (on-line share trading) and some large on-line retailers. The reality is that users have become more vulnerable as they have started using more services (on-line banking, shopping etc.). Even non-financial Internet services are targeted by attackers as they can provide some valuable information. For example, given that virtually every Web site nowadays requires a user to register with their e-mail as the user name and create a password, a great number of people simply use the same password everywhere. Then if an attacker steals a password for a photo sharing Web site, they can quickly check if it also works on eg, Paypal or Amazon. “Phishing” on a large scale (millions of users) provides attackers with a very high return on investment. Their costs are as minimal as the software tools for sending e-mails and setting up a fraudulent Web site can be acquired for a few hundred pounds.

*TR: What do you see as the main security challenges of the future?*

ID: The main challenge is to stop trying to solve yesterday’s problems. As one of the security experts recently put it, we have on the Web: “2.0 functionality, 1.0 security and 3.0 attackers. This cannot stand” — meaning that protecting new Internet services against new attacks with security designed more than 10 years ago cannot be sufficient.

This requires thinking on a different scale, innovating in usability and security and avoiding attempts to centralise everything. This is also where security and privacy issues come together. In a recent incident,



a large US retailer was compromised and 45.7 million credit and debit cards details were stolen. Having a large central database creates a single point of failure which is very difficult to protect.

The Security group at the Computer Lab (University of Cambridge) is doing a lot of work in security and economics/privacy/regulations. They have a great blog ([www.lightbluetouchpaper.org](http://www.lightbluetouchpaper.org)), which provides one of the best ways of staying up to date with the leading security research topics.

*TR: What are the next steps? What challenges do you face in the next 12 months?*

ID: We have a very well-defined product proposition targeting commercial deployments in the financial industry. We understand the challenges in this space and our go to market strategy reflects it. Over the next year we will expand our sales and marketing (directly and through partnerships) and continue building up our team to support these activities. This also has to be done in the context of our overall strategy and resources.

*Ultimately, just do it. Now is a good time to be starting a company. There is an unprecedented amount of help and information available for entrepreneurs. Cambridge has a great number of very bright and experienced business people who can help with advice, introductions and funding. Provided you are interested in starting a company in the first place, it is difficult to see why you would not*

*TR: What is your advice to potential entrepreneurs?*

ID: Read “Starting something” by Wayne McVicker — the most personal account of starting a company I have read. It really shows the ups and downs of being a start-up founder. Also, read a recent post by Marc Andreessen on “Why not to do a start-up” [blog.pmarca.com/2007/06/the\\_pmarca\\_guid\\_1.html](http://blog.pmarca.com/2007/06/the_pmarca_guid_1.html) — it helps to understand the challenges facing a start-up.

Understanding the market you are aiming for and associated challenges is important and takes time. Your business strategy will have to reflect it: type of resources needed to execute, sources of funding and timing — all depend very much on what you are trying to achieve. Are you planning to sell to enterprise or consumer? Software/hardware/

service? Are you building a lifestyle business or a gorilla market player? Try to validate things quickly; time is the most valuable resource and it helps to be efficient in getting some market validation early on.

Ultimately, just do it. Now is a good time to be starting a company. There is an unprecedented amount of help and information available for entrepreneurs. Blogs by investors and entrepreneurs, all sorts of social networks and meetings, government grants and small business support schemes can also help. Cambridge is also very entrepreneurial and has a great number of very bright experienced business people who can help with advice, introductions, funding (we are privileged to have a few such people helping Cronto). To be honest, provided you are interested in starting a company in the first place, it is difficult to see why you would not.

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*Igor's e-mail address is [igord@cronto.com](mailto:igord@cronto.com). For more information about Cronto visit [www.cronto.com](http://www.cronto.com). Cronto's security-related blog, Security X.0, is at [blog.cronto.com](http://blog.cronto.com).*

*The Computer Laboratory Security Group's blog is at [www.lightbluetouchpaper.org](http://www.lightbluetouchpaper.org).*

# Hall of fame news

## blinx.com

blinx.com, the largest video search engine, won Business XL Magazine's "Rising Star of the Year" award. The award was the result of a nationwide competition to find Britain's best businesses.

blinx has also been selected by TIME.com as one of the "50 Best Web sites" of 2007. The award honours "the best examples of what's new and exciting about the Web right now."

blinx has now indexed over 14 million hours of audio, video, viral and TV content, and made it fully searchable for free to users on the Web.

## Codian

Codian, the leading provider of video conferencing infrastructure solutions, has filed a complaint against Polycom Inc in the federal district court in Texarkana, Arkansas, alleging infringement of US Patent numbers 5,262,964 and 6,535,238. Codian seeks a permanent injunction and monetary damages. Codian asserts that Polycom infringes Codian's patents with its voice and video conferencing products.

## Ept Computing

Everybody has experienced it: frustration with products which are simply not user-friendly. From such experiences Ept Computing was born. It is a software consultancy and development service focusing on usability, user interfaces and the user experience.

Ept specialises in creating custom applications for the Web and mobile devices. However Ept doesn't just write the software. A clear analysis and understanding of the market and customer needs is critical in developing a good user experience, as is usability testing and refinement of the user interface. Ept Computing brings all these

aspects together to increase e-commerce retailers' revenues and boost user satisfaction in interactive services.

Founded by Corpus Christi graduates Lionel Nierop (BA Law & Management '06 then LEK. Consulting, London) and Martin Kleppmann (Computer Science '06 and Ring Member) and based in Cambridge, Ept Computing was recently joined by Peter Cowley (F BA77 and Ring Council Member) who brings in his wide-ranging business expertise.

Find out more at [www.eptcomputing.com](http://www.eptcomputing.com).

## Envisional

Envisional has been acquired by Group NBT plc, for a maximum consideration of £4.0m.

## Equisys

docSTAR has teamed with Equisys to use Equisys' Zetafax network fax software to support the faxing interface of docSTAR's newest document management application.

Equisys recently introduced Zetafax 2007 which supports Microsoft's latest platforms. The integration of Zetafax with Microsoft Windows Vista, the 2007 Microsoft Office system and Microsoft Exchange Server 2007 makes it easier for users to send faxes from within Outlook and Office running on Vista or XP.

## Global Inkjet Systems

Former Adobe developer Steve Westgate has joined Global Inkjet Systems.

## Insight Studios

Insight Studios, winner of UK Fast Network's Best Web Design Award, has launched "Pay as you go" Web sites. There is no minimum contract and no set up fee. If your business

does well through the site then you can upgrade through the packages and grow the Web site with your business. Insight has a number of site templates to choose from. All designs will be altered according to company colours and logo.

A member of the team is also at hand to offer advice.

## Linguamatics

Linguamatics, the leader in natural language processing for life science research, has announced the latest version of its flagship software, Linguamatics I2E 2.10, to enable organisations to maximise the value derived from available text resources. I2E allows research and business decision-makers to apply advanced NLP to discover new knowledge rapidly. Business-critical decision-making is improved through more effective mining of text.

## Masabi

Masabi, the secure mobile applications company, has launched EncryptME, a new mobile Java security application that provides Web commerce level security on the vast majority of existing handsets. EncryptME is to be used by YourRail to enable train tickets to be securely bought and used from almost all mobile phones using credit and debit cards.

EncryptME requires just 3kB of memory and allows old and new phones to establish encrypted connections over cellular systems such as GPRS, 3G and SMS as well as short-range wireless technologies such as Wi-Fi and NFC. The software is built to public standards in order to ensure all server-side cryptography can be handled by existing security systems such as those produced by Sun and Microsoft.

## MessageLabs

MessageLabs has revealed a new trend in highly targeted C-level and senior management e-mail attacks in larger volumes than previously seen.

On June 26, MessageLabs intercepted more than 500 individual e-mail attacks targeted toward individuals in senior management positions within organisations around the world. The attack was so precisely addressed that the name and job title of the victim was included within the subject line of the e-mail. An analysis of the positions targeted revealed that CIOs accounted for 30% of the attacks. The e-mails had a Microsoft Word document attached which contained embedded executable code which, when opened, would activate a Trojan component that would then compromise the victim's computer.

MessageLabs also intercepted e-mails where the recipients of the attack e-mail were related or connected to the actual intended target, for example a spouse or dependent of the CEO. The intent is to compromise the family computer and indirectly gain access to confidential correspondence and intellectual property relating to the target.

## nCipher

The miSense biometric airport security trials at Heathrow Airport that used nCipher encryption and database security technology have received a positive response.

The report evaluated the experiences and feedback of the 3,166 passengers who took part in the voluntary trials in Heathrow's Terminal 3 during a 16 week period.

nCipher's Hardware Security Modules were deployed in the miSense system to generate and protect the unique cryptographic keys that were used to identify and validate each traveller based on their biometric information. nCipher's database encryption was used

to protect stored passenger information and passport details in order to ensure compliance with data protection legislation.

## Sophos

Sophos, a world leader in IT security and control, has published its latest report on the top twelve spam-relaying countries over the second quarter of 2007.

The US continues to relay more spam than any other nation, accounting for 19.6%. Europe now has six entries in the top twelve, which when combined, account for even more spam relaying than the US. The UK lies 10th equal with Italy on 2.8%.

According to Sophos, the overall global volume of spam rose by around 9% during Q2 2007 versus Q2 2006.

## Trampoline

Trampoline's SONAR platform has been nominated in the Enterprise Software Product of the Year category at the CNET Networks UK Business Technology Awards 2007. Trampoline is one of just five nominees.

Trampoline has also been recognised by KPMG in its report *Enterprise 2.0: Fad or Future? The Business Role for Social Software Platforms*.

## Ubisense

Ubisense has won the European Auto ID Award 2007 in the category "Innovative Company".

Ubisense has also announced a strategic partnership with Building Sustainability Ltd. which will focus on the marketing of real-time location solutions that complement radical and advanced energy reduction schemes in the modern work place.

## Job bulletin board

### August

#### Alertme.com

- *Sorcerer's apprentice*

#### AMX Inspired Signage

- *Junior software engineer*
- *Software engineer*
- *Implementation consultant*

#### Trinamo Consulting

- *Internal resourcer*

#### Trinamo Solutions

- *Software pre/post sales consultant in virtualisation software*
- *Sanctuary security specialist*

### July

#### APT

- *Software engineer*

#### True Knowledge

- *Software engineer (data mining)*
- *Software engineers (C++/PHP)*
- *Knowledge engineers*

#### Apama (Progress Software)

- *Software engineer*

#### Zinwave

- *Software engineer*

#### KBC Financial Products

- *Analyst programmer (world-wide)*

#### TomTom

- *Senior software engineer/architect*

#### Tideway Systems

- *Administrative assistant*
- *Configuration management engineer*

Visit the Job Bulletin Board in the Business and Professional section of the RingWeb site for details and more jobs. To advertise a job, click on "create advert".

# Computer Laboratory news

## Teaching excellence rewarded

Dr Neil Dodgson was one of eleven University of Cambridge lecturers recognised for their excellence in teaching at an awards ceremony for the 2007 Pilkington Prizes.



Dr Dodgson is a Reader in Graphics and Imaging at the Computer Laboratory. He was nominated for his innovative courses in computer graphics, in which he has created interactive demonstrations of graphics algorithms and used excerpts from movies to illustrate particular techniques. In all this, his aim has been to make the underlying concepts memorable and comprehensive to students, and his courses are very popular.

## Samurai swordsmanship

Dr Frank Stajano, senior lecturer at the Computer Laboratory and dojo leader of the University of Cambridge Kendo Society, has secured a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery, in addition to two £1,000 grants from Toshiba and the University's own Societies Syndicate.



Thanks to the National Lottery grant and sponsorship the society will hold its summer training camp, known as a gasshuku, in the Lake District. The camp will give participants a rigorous schedule of 5 hours of training a day.

Three high-ranking sensei (masters) are flying in from Japan for the week.

Kendo is not yet widely known in the UK, with only several thousand registered practitioners. However, it is widespread in its native Japan, where all schoolchildren practice either kendo or judo in their PE classes.

It is practised with a bamboo sword and a lightweight armour that allow safe full-contact sparring.

Frank Stajano started kendo in Japan under Naganuma-sensei and is a licensed kendo regional coach. He has been in charge of the Cambridge dojo since 2002 and is very proud of his kendo students. "You really see them grow as people, gaining confidence and good manners and taking on responsibilities to help the progress of their juniors. The way of the sword brings out their chivalry and the most noble traits of their character. And several of them even take a healthy interest in Japanese culture.

"My master Naganuma-sensei was very happy to witness the sincere dedication of my Cambridge kendoka in previous years. I am glad he can visit us again this year, cross swords with them and witness their progress.

"Holding the gasshuku in the Lakes instead of in Cambridge will make a big difference not only because of the inspiring scenic beauty of the surroundings but especially because all the participants will live, eat and sleep together for the whole week instead of going back home after each practice. For the first time they will fully experience the true live-in spirit of the gasshuku."

If you are interested in finding out more about kendo, visit the British Kendo Association Web site. For those in Cambridge, go to [www.srcf.ucam.org/kendo](http://www.srcf.ucam.org/kendo). You should aim to join in October, at the start of the academic year.

## CL volleyball team wins the summer league

Congratulations to the Computer Lab volleyball team (captained by Silvia Breu) which won its division's summer league.

The team's success was all the more impressive as it faced opponents made up of players from both the blues and the University's second team.

## 2007 Supporters' Club recruitment fair

The 2007 recruitment fair will take place on November 15th 2007.

More than 50 recruiters from software, animation and gaming companies as well as representatives from some of the major names in finance, defence, communications and commerce will be attending.