

engage

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Welcome

I am particularly pleased to welcome you to this edition of engage which follows hot on the heels of the launch of our new service "Dains IT Solutions".

Dains has invested and partnered with Midlands based Grade Computer Solutions Ltd under the new direction of Andy McDougall. Many of our clients may know Andy from his previous business - Burton based Central Telecom Ltd, but after a few years break, Andy is back to lead the charge in this growing and ever changing industry.



Spencer Wright

You can read in more detail about the service offerings and support that Dains IT Solutions are able to provide, however, by way of general introduction, our decision to invest in this area comes about simply from our own experience of trying to keep up with advances in IT whilst managing costs. At Dains we saw the benefits of outsourcing our IT support function a couple of years ago. This not only saved us considerable costs but also came with better service, out of hours cover, access to best of market solutions and the added confidence that our systems infrastructure was fit for purpose. Dains IT Solutions will be offering all this and more to clients and I would encourage anyone with questions, issues or concerns around their current IT and/or telecommunications (mobiles and desk phones) or their roadmap for the future IT strategy to take advantage of a free consultation. We are glad we did!

Introducing Dains IT Solutions

These are interesting times for the ever-changing and evolving world of IT and Comms technologies, however a few things remain consistent and that is products and services continue to converge, line speeds continue to increase and user expectations continue to rise.

Having a robust IT infrastructure and flexible Comms strategy is a key part of underpinning a successful business. Helping to empower your people and provide them with the best tools available to enable them to compete is a key part of today's competitive business environment.

Here at Dains IT we are engaging with business to help address IT and Comms strategies. We can start with a simple audit to review current costs suppliers with a view to making improvements and recommending cost savings to providing a complete strategy for a scalable IT and Comms solution to suit your business. We can:

- Provide a full managed service to become your IT Service team or act as an extension to your own team giving predictable and controllable costs.
- Make recommendations for your business continuity planning or disaster recovery which is a lot easier to achieve than most people realise. The thought of having a "What-if" plan usually gets pushed right down the management agenda, but we can help put a simple plan in place to give you a fall-back strategy to keep your business protected and trading if the worst were to happen.

- Create a scalable IT and Comms strategy that can help to move your business forward, by taking down barriers and enabling quicker decision-making resulting in increased competitiveness. Software, hardware and support services are all available on a cost per user per month model which makes for far easier financial planning, avoiding the unwanted surprise expense.
- Provide practical advice on the benefits of a Cloud solution for your business, and demystify the many offerings out there whilst working with you to migrate to Cloud and realise all the benefits that come with this.
- Offer a range of security options to protect your business from SPAM, Viruses, DDoS attacks, Worms etc. These can be Cloud based or premise based to suit your requirements.
- Ascertain whether your business qualifies for a current government backed scheme designed to encourage organisations to adopt Superfast Broadband. Qualifying businesses can apply for a connection voucher of up to £3,000 through the Government's Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme. The scheme is active in 50 cities across the UK and is administered by each city through over 839 registered suppliers.

If you would like to discuss any of our services, please contact:

Andy McDougall on 07565 111111 who will be happy to help you.



Meet our IT Solutions team

Andy McDougall



Andy McDougall

Andy is a Director of Dains IT Solutions and has 25 years' experience of managing businesses in the communications industry. Andy has a proven track record of growing successful businesses through the development of lasting customer relationships; achieved by delivering excellent customer service and having an ethical approach to business.

Andy managed Central Telecom in Burton upon Trent between 1993 and 2009 at which time Vodafone acquired Central to spearhead the expansion of its portfolio into the Enterprise Unified Communications market. In that period Central grew from an organisation serving its local community to a £50M company supporting many central and local government organisations as well as national blue-chip companies, whilst maintaining many local clients and support for the local community. This was testament to the lasting customer relationships forged over this period, a visionary technology portfolio and excellent strategic partner choices.

Andy's mission as Director of Dains IT Solutions is to add value to Dains existing client relationships by bringing to bear his knowledge of the IT and communications industry, aligned with the Dains service commitment and culture. Dains IT Solutions will design robust and reliable solutions; with no compromise on quality or enhanced risk, and through the use of Cloud solutions with utility based pricing models delivering reduced and predictable costs.

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Adrian Jukes

Adrian is a founder member of Grade Computer Solutions and has been a Director since 2002. He has a varied role and is enthusiastically involved in all aspects of the business. Adrian spends much of his time with clients and enjoys developing new services and products to meet customer requirements and deliver excellent service.

Adrian has spearheaded the initiative to bring the value delivered by Microsoft Office 365 to Dains IT clients, and is a great advocate for this and other Cloud computing solutions.

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Adrian Jukes

Graham Coleman

Graham's is a founder member of Grade Computer Solutions and has been a Director since 2002.



Graham Coleman

Graham has more than 35 years in the IT industry and has built enduring relationships with his clients; some of which span over 25 years. Graham is committed to excellence in customer service and sees this as the major strength of Dains IT Solutions to date and will continue to be a recipe for success.

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Shaun Burton



Shaun Burton

Shaun has worked in the IT industry since 1986. Witnessing many changes over the years he has a vast experience with a wide range of complex technologies and varying operating systems including Microsoft Windows, Novell and SCO Unix.

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Rich Kirby



Rich Kirby

Rich has a Consultancy role within the Dains IT team. Rich spends most of his time with clients to help identify areas to which they could reduce cost and adopt better solutions that help free up valuable time for them to focus on what they do best. He enjoys helping clients understand new services and products and putting together strategies that meet customer requirements and deliver excellent service not just in the now but in tomorrow's world. Rich has a wealth of experience in connectivity and the pull through solutions such as VoIP, which he is keen to introduce to Dains clients.

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Sharing our client successes

Since the last edition of engage, our clients have continued to enjoy more notable successes and we would like to showcase just a few.

General Building Plastics Ltd

2015 is a milestone date for General Building Plastics, a specialist supplier of quality PVC building products to the trade and DIY sectors, as it marks the start of the 25th anniversary year for the company. The Midlands-based family-run and owned business has its head office in Rugeley, Staffordshire. It was founded in 1990 by Janet Sutherland and has grown over the last 25 years through adding key locations to the operation to include trade counters and offices in Shrewsbury, Walsall, Banbury, its most recent addition in Kettering, with plans to open its sixth trade counter in Oswestry later this year.



The GBP Team - Janet Sutherland, Alan Sutherland and Wendy Hill

Abacus Lighting Ltd

Nottingham-based Abacus Lighting has won the Export Award at the 2015 'Made in The Midlands Awards'. As one of five companies shortlisted for the award, Abacus proved themselves to be a leading example of a local business making waves in international markets with its strong export business. Recognising Abacus' hard work, this award allows Abacus to progress further by representing the Midlands with an entry into the national Made in the UK event.

Free VAT Compliance Review

We see our VAT Compliance Review as the first step on the road to providing you with some comfort that your systems (either manual or automated) are sufficiently capable of calculating the correct amount of VAT in accordance with current VAT legislation and industry practices.

In the new era of significant penalties for any behaviour that HMRC regard as "careless", regularly reviewing records for compliance with VAT obligations is a vital tool in demonstrating that a business has taken their VAT responsibilities seriously.

Chemique Adhesive & Sealants Ltd

Aldridge based Chemique Adhesives & Sealants Ltd has been accredited overall winner at the 'Made in the Midlands Manufacturing Achievement Awards'. The awards provide recognition for investment, innovation, growth, export and diversity among manufacturing firms in the Midlands region. Chemique also celebrate 30 years in business this year.

Derby Museums

Derby Museums has received over £800,000 funding to help develop a bid for nearly £10m of Lottery money. The £817,300 funding will be used to progress Derby Museums' project to sustainably redevelop Derby Silk Mill, the site of the world's first factory and part of the Unesco Derwent Valley Mills World heritage Site.

Derby Museums has been told it has Heritage Lottery Fund earmarked funding of £9.38m available for the project. The full bill is expected to be about £16.4m, of which £4m will come from Derby City Council. If the bid is ultimately successful, the new museum is due to open in 2020.

Carol E. Wyer

And finally, longstanding client Carol E. Wyer scooped the prestigious 6th People's Book Prize award at a glittering ceremony held at Stationer's Hall in London and broadcast live on Sky News. Her book 'Grumpy Old Menopause' has enjoyed much success since its release, but as Carole said: "**Winning this award has been one of the greatest highlights of my career to date.**"

Carol has been writing humorous novels and non-fiction since 2010 and has enjoyed much media attention. She now also contributes articles to magazines including Woman's Weekly and online sites such as The Huffington Post where she blogs regularly about ageing issues.

Congratulations.

Our approach

Our VAT Compliance Review is tailored to the specific requirements of each business. In general terms, however, it is designed to:

- Highlight the most common errors that the VAT inspectors look for.
- Statistically analyse your completed VAT returns.
- Compare your VAT returns against your annual accounts.
- Check the VAT treatment of your sales.
- Consider whether you are making best use of relevant VAT schemes.
- Ensure you are correctly applying the rules of VAT schemes.
- Identify possible VAT planning opportunities to mitigate any VAT costs.

Get in touch

We aim to leave you with either the comfort that there are no hidden issues or with an action plan to address any issues we discover. Please contact us to arrange your free non-obligatory review.

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