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Welcome to Issue 4!

Within you'll find updates on the Yagya's current IT projects and reports on IT retreats held in the last 6 months. You'll also learn about our newest undertaking, the Global Image Project, which will provide a wealth of useful resources to all centres. Please do consider joining our global team! (See page 3)

Also in these pages: an IT, behind-the-scenes view of the international J-A-M launch; part 1 of an article on spyware that will increase your ability to protect yourself; and the final segment of *Software & Soul*.

The underlined, italicized words in the text are hyperlinked to the Glossary. Previous issues, in pdf format, may be requested from connections@bkinfo.net.

• Greetings of love to all readers,
 • The subject of IT is vast—beyond beginning and end. It's a very good tool for sharing our message with the world and also for staying connected and communicating regularly.



• Every creation of science comes from the power of the soul. How long does it take to create a thought? Just one moment! But it is so powerful. It can change one's inner world and create activity in the outer world also.

• Just as it's important to check the quality of our thoughts so that they create positive vibrations, in the same way we should consider it our moral responsibility to use every word on the internet, in emails, etcetera, in a constructive and positive way. There is lot of information to communicate, but we must be careful to share the right kind of message, using the right quality of words.

• Our Supreme Father is the World Benefactor; therefore we should share whatever is of benefit to the world. Our service should be altruistic and come from an honest heart.

• I want to congratulate all those who have been contributing to the different projects. Everyone has been dedicating valuable time to each endeavour. I have good wishes for each one of you. Together we will continue our efforts to accomplish the task.

• With Love, Sister Mohini ☺



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In all of our IT efforts, let us keep following BapDada's guidelines as we continue

• to serve the world. We have to increase the speed of our transformation and then the speed of world transformation will automatically increase.

• Bapdada is always with us as our companion. When we experience His company, we become the

destroyers of obstacles. By becoming the embodiment of knowledge and with constant remembrance, both self and world transformation will definitely occur very soon. BK Karuna ☺



PMO Perspective

By Br. Shashin

The Global IT Team has accomplished a great deal over the past four years. We began with a vision of using technology for internal Yagya use as well as for serving the world, and have made tremendous progress in both areas.

Key achievements include:

- Development and implementation of a new Murli web site;
- Launch of a new international web site;
- Installation of equipment at Data Centres to support and maintain the Yagya's computer infrastructure;
- Rollout of consistent email IDs globally;
- Utilization of VoIP to reduce telephone costs; and
- Better internet connectivity with our sweet home, Madhuban.

The dedication and uncompromising commitment of a small group of individuals has made all of this possible. Apart from the projects themselves, we have a truly international team that works well together. This in itself is a major achievement that continues to inspire me.

During the penultimate meeting with Baba last season, Baba inspired us to start a new project focused on self-efforts. During the Indian IT meeting that followed, we came up with a weekly programme of synchronised yoga to help develop the concentration

and silence power of the team. Using the chat feature of Skype to conduct this programme on-line, extracts from Baba's Murli and points from the 'drills' Baba has conducted are uploaded to the chat screen at 3 minute

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intervals. Participants silently read these points and make effort to adopt and stabilize their stage accordingly. We are pleased to report that we have consistently held two, half-hour sessions (at 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. UK time) every Saturday for the past 6 months.

In the coming year we are looking at:

- 1) Speeding up the migration of all BK websites to the new international model;
- 2) Completing the rollout of the new Murli web site;
- 3). Rolling out a new web site called "Global Image of the BKs" which will serve as a portal for international, regional and team use. It will be a repository of our 'best practice' materials, i.e., brochures, flyers and other

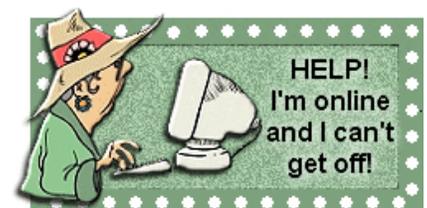
materials which are well designed and have proven effective in our outreach efforts. This repository will be accessible by all centres and will allow any centre to create high quality printed and electronic media with a consistent branding, for use in their local service activities;

4) Providing web based learning on some of our key courses, with the first one covering "Positive Thinking";

5) Continuing the rollout of VoIP across all major centres;

6) Deploying new technologies such as Blogs and Podcasting to help the different projects.

Most organisations having global IT operations of the same scale as ours have dedicated, full time teams. We have part time teams working on all of our projects. The biggest challenge we currently face is the limited availability of qualified people in each of our project areas. We urgently need to build a larger global team so that we can complete our projects more rapidly and respond quickly to new developments in the fast-paced IT environment. We have come as far as we have with the commitment of a few, with the support and blessings of Bapdada, Dadis, RCOs and the family around the world. With courage, Baba's help and everyone's good wishes, we will continue to find ways of overcoming our challenges. ☺



Make a Difference!

Help the Yagya, Serve the World & Create Your Fortune!



The Global IT Team is recruiting volunteers: IT professionals, writers, editors and researchers who are looking for ways to increase their Godly fortune.

Of course the benefits are unlimited, the blessings range in the multimillions and the return on your investment of time and energy is out of this world!

SKILLS NEEDED

Analysis and technical design: for databases and other systems including websites/ web applications.

Content writing and editing: Journalism background preferred.

Content Management Systems (CMS): Zope/Plone* especially.

Database development: Postgress* or other mainstream development experience (not MS Access).

Generic research: Google search & RSS.

Programming: using Ruby on Rails*, Python*, Shell scripting, cross browser support (primary development on Firefox*, also support IE* and Safari*).

Project management and leadership: seasoned BKs who, as IT professionals, have at least 5 to 6 years experience in the listed areas. They are needed to

lead various projects, coordinate programming efforts and prepare well-thought-out proposals for presentation to the seniors.

System administrator expertise: to help manage our data centres.

Techwatch: An eye for latest developments in the field of IT (or any other technology) that could 1) benefit the Yagya by making existing tasks easier, cheaper, more efficient, effective or sustainably better; 2) offer new forms of service able to reach untapped audiences with minimal expense

Web design: Photoshop*, stylesheets

Web scripting: animation artists/designers (especially skilled in *Flash**), HTML, XHTML with CSS, Java

COMMITMENT REQUIRED

Individuals who have deep love for the Yagya, maintain a balanced lifestyle, are reliable and self-starters, who can work individually or in teams.

There is an immediate need to identify souls who are prepared to make a firm commitment, for at least 6 months, to help a minimum of 2-8 hours a week,

although less time may be needed in some areas, and although their particular skills may not be needed immediately, ☞

*Company and product names used in this newsletter are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies

Top Ten Signs

That You're An Internet Geek

- 10 When asked for your driver's license number you give your IP address.
- 9 You no longer ask new friends what their astrological sign is, instead you ask "What's your URL?"
- 8 Instead of calling you to dinner, your spouse sends an email.
- 7 You're amazed to find out that spam is a food.
- 6 You "ping" people to see if they're awake, "finger" them to find out how they are, and "AYT" them to make sure they're listening to you.
- 5 You search the Net hoping to win every free T-shirt contest.
- 4 You introduce your wife as "my lady@home.wife" and refer to your children as "client applications".
- 3 At social functions you introduce your husband as "my domain server".
- 2 After winning the office cricket pool you blurt out, "I feel so colon-right parentheses!"
- 1 Two Words: "Pizza's Here!".

IT Retreat Gyan Sarovar, March 2006

40 BK IT professionals from India participated in this retreat from 11th to 13th March in Gyan Sarovar. All of the global IT projects and internal Yagya service projects were overviewed. Topics specific to service in India, such as the Om Shanti Help Line, Madhuban requirement projects and training and orientation of Indian IT team members were discussed. Several outcomes from the meeting were planned, including:

- Installation of additional infrastructure (an intranet, file servers and centralized backup facilities);
- Rollout of new software for use in the accommodation department of all Madhuban campuses;
- Assessment of accounting department software and training requirements;
- Improvement of connectivity between audio/ video departments across Madhuban campuses;
- Development of synchronized yoga and self-progress plans;
- Preparation of a VIP database
- Integration of the Indian and International websites. ☞

Retreat Inspirations from Seniors

Dadi Janki: “in Baba’s work it is important to listen with respect and value the other’s viewpoint. Karma is subtle, but powerful. If I don’t listen to someone, tomorrow others won’t listen to me.”

Dadi Gulzar: “Baba has said that your service will grow when you do four types of service at the same time: thoughts, words, activities—and your face should also do service...If someone comes upon you suddenly they should see a good stage, a smiling face.”

Didi Nirmala: “The more you take responsibility, the more you become mature.”

Sr. Jayanti: “Keep the Madhuban timetable: Amritvela, Karma Yoga during the day, Evening gyan chit chat and yoga, then pack up the day and go to sleep in Baba’s yaad.”

Sr. Mohini: “Being a world server does not mean travelling around the world. It means sharing an idea that goes around the world. Think internationally. Everything we do should have an international touch.”

Karunabhai: “Charity begins at home (Madhuban). Go around all the departments and see what we, the IT team, can do to help their activity. Also see what we can do to help each Wing.”

Ashokbhai: “We are truly working at Godspeed. What has not happened in the last 70 years will happen in the next 7 years.” ☞

Participants in the March IT Meetings held in Gyan Sarovar





1st Australian IT Retreat

It was the middle of winter, but souls shook off the urge to hibernate, put their service commitments on hold, and came together for the inaugural Oz IT Retreat from 14-16 July 2006 at Inner Space Retreat Centre on the outskirts of Sydney.

A group of nearly 40 local BKs with IT experience gathered to learn from members of the Global IT team—Br. Shashin, Sr. Vasanti, and brothers Allan, Janardhan and Jeff Nielsen—about the many wonderful projects underway internationally.

Topics covered included the new international website, the global image project, inbound linking/search engine optimisation, VoIP technology, Traffic Control application (designed by Sydney based BK Florian) and multimedia content creation. The retreat closed with local project teams being formed to utilise IT in creative applications and for the day-to-day support of Baba's service.



1st ASEAN IT Retreat

The first ASEAN regional IT retreat was held in Kuala Lumpur from 21st to 23rd July, 2006. There were 22 participants from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia; Regional Technical Coordinators (RTCs) Br. Vinu from Australia and Br. Sanath of Malaysia; and four core Global IT team members: Br. Shashin, Sr. Vasanti and Br. Allan from the UK and Br. Ajay from India.

The sessions comprised an overview of global IT projects, an IT Marketplace which demonstrated some projects in greater depth, a question and answer session exploring issues and challenges, and other planning/discussion sessions. Development of country websites received top priority as an action item.

A detailed country website development workflow was worked out with assistance from Sr. Vasanti. Each country, as an initial step, was to define the main theme/ message that each country wants to convey. Country representatives were to meet monthly via *Skype* for updates and reporting.

A CD and booklet containing the retreat presentations were given to all the participants at the end of the retreat.

Progress has been made by all countries in the region since the retreat. Several countries have started creating content for their respective websites and have initiated the design process. In each country, IT teams have been setup to coordinate and solve IT issues. These teams will provide technical support and assistance to centres. In addition to technical support, a number of project teams have been active, for example VoIP, IWebsite, and Database.



Participants at the first ASEAN regional IT retreat, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



Can IT enhance your Amrit Vela? Sister Vasanti trys Skyping Baba to find out.



*IT meeting in Wilton Retreat Center, Australia:
Global team members enjoy moments of
celebration and sharing.
From left to right :
Sr. Kim (Singapore), Sr.Vasanti (London),
Br. Anoop (Atlanta), Br. Shashin & Br..Allan
(London), Br. Janardhan (San Francisco)*

Current Project Updates

IWebsite Update

The first phase of the International website went live in January 2006. Since then several other facets of this project have been initiated.

The International website itself has been amended and augmented with additional features, including a new version of Virtuescope. In the background we have been developing an interface which will allow editors to update the site directly, rather than via the technical team. This is now in its pilot stage. We are also in the discussion stage of developing the News/Media section of the site.

Concentrated effort is being made to translate the site into as many languages as possible. Korean went online in June, Italian in September, and Spanish, French and Danish languages should be available soon. In the coming months, we will upload languages of other countries as soon as the site content is translated.

As an extension of the international website, we will help redevelop all other official BK sites. This is part of the Yagya's move towards standardisation and a single global image reflecting the unity of our organisation. On the direction of the RCO's, the IWebsite team is creating a model country website as well as a model retreat centre site. We recognize the important differences in current country sites and are creating flexible models

which will assist countries in arriving at something that suits them.

MODEL COUNTRY WEBSITE

The UK site, which went live in September, 2006, has been developed as a model which other countries can use in designing or redeveloping their sites. In arriving at this model, the team analyzed over 100 BK websites to identify the key functions in current use. Having gone through the process of then developing the UK site, the team was able to put together some guidelines which countries can now use to start work on their own websites. As of July 2006 Malaysia and Australia have started using the model to recreate their websites. In October we will get their feedback and updates, which will benefit other countries as well.

MODEL RETREAT WEBSITE

The Peace Village website is being developed as a model which will enable the rapid development of other BK retreat centre sites. It will contain the unique functionality required by retreat centres, such as an on-line registration system. The design phase of the Peace Village site is underway. The site content map as well as the content for the site has been produced, and the colour scheme and styles have been defined. Now the process of designing each page on the site is underway. Programming of the site will follow. If things go well, the site will be functional by the end of October 2006. ☞

Murli System

In the last 2-3 months, two upgrades of the Murli system have been released. These versions addressed the printing issues that some of you had been experiencing. On top of that, the following functionalities have been added:

- printing of odd and even pages;
- duplex or double-sided printing (if your printer supports it);
- upgrading of the integrated pdf viewer.

In the coming months we will focus on:

- improving the back-end to allow better integration with other services (ie. LDAP);
- getting the translation part ready for use;
- putting in place some minor security features which have been postponed in the past year;
- adding features to facilitate Africa, where centres don't have internet access and are dependant on internet cafes. ☞



VoIP

The internet-based free telephone system referred to as VoIP has been adopted very well by the BK family around the globe. This system lets you communicate between centres and Madhuban, with RCO and NCO offices, and between other centres free of charge. The project was initiated in 2004. The current network includes about 700 locations.

CURRENT STATUS

All RCO offices are online except Nairobi. Their exception is due to local bandwidth problems.

14 new countries have come online: Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia, Spain, New Zealand. VoIP presentations in the Australian and Malaysian IT meetings and the European teachers meetings in GRC received enthusiastic response.

Conference numbers have been issued exclusively for use on international projects, including Global IT, Images & Voices of Hope, Peace of Mind, BK Media, BK 70th and Internet PR. VoIP connections have also been issued to project team members for communicating with peers on some of these projects.

There have been short intervals when users experienced a lapse in service due to the VoIP server being switched from Miami to the Atlanta data center.

FUTURE PLANS

We are in the process of ordering about a 100 new VoIP units that will be distributed

among the RTCs in all the 5 regions. All centres will be given the opportunity to join the VoIP network before the end of December 2006.

GET A VoIP CONNECTION!

If your centre is interested in acquiring the system, please contact your local VoIP coordinator. You will need a high-speed internet connection with a network router. Then you just plug a phone into a small adaptor that connects to your computer's existing high-speed network and place a VoIP call by picking up the phone and dialing someone, anywhere on the globe, who is also on the same VoIP system. Then you talk for free!

The VoIP adaptor costs about \$50. A limited number of VoIP units will be available for purchase in Madhuban during BapDada's season starting in October 2006. The IT meeting market place (27-30th October) would be a good time to pick up a unit.

Here are your local VoIP contacts:

Europe: voip-support@eur.bkwsu.org

Australasia: voip-support@aus.bkwsu.org

Africa: voip-support@afr.bkwsu.org

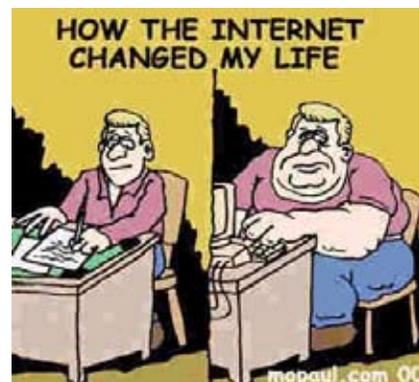
Russia: voip-support@ru.bkwsu.org

Americas: voip-support@ame.bkwsu.org



BLOGS & PODCASTING

In the October 2005 issue of *CONNECTIONS* we introduced you to blogs and in the last issue, March 2005, we introduced podcasting. Blogs and Podcasting are now being developed for use with the Call of the Time (COTT) and the Peace of Mind (POM) retreat.



Blogs will engage prospective and current COTT and POM participants throughout the year, keeping them up-to-date with changes and new initiatives. They will provide a platform for interactive communication between the participants and the organizers of both initiatives.

Podcasts will enhance the experience of both COTT and POM participants, who will be able to download their classes and sessions in audiovideo format. They will be able to share their experiences and listen to those of the organisers via 'experiential diaries', and access interviews with seniors and other relevant sources on the themes and topics of their respective events. A 'Thought for the Day', spoken by a powerful voice, will be daily podcast to participants, along with meditation commentaries on de-stressing, how to become peaceful, etc.

Also in the pipeline are blogs which will publish BK content on a variety of topics such as science and spirituality, religion, health and well-being, etc. As the use of podcasts expands, retreat centres and large service centres will be able to use them to broadcast audio newsletters. ☞

Inbound Linking Campaign

Estimates put the number of souls online this year at 1 billion, and the number of websites also at 1 billion. With the emergence of mobile and TV internet access, the convergence of technologies could result in 2 or 3 billion souls online within 2 to 4 years.

Traditional methods of promoting our programs—which include newspapers, yellow pages, magazines, putting up flyers in local shops, etc—can be expensive and time consuming. These traditional advertising methods last only for a limited period of time, whereas a link from another web page to Baba’s web site, can theoretically ‘last forever’ at no cost! Last year in Denmark, 50% of all new souls that booked into the introductory course came exclusively via the Denmark web site: www.brahmakumaris.dk.

The IT team has undertaken a comprehensive plan to bring Baba’s web sites to the pinnacle

of visibility in cyber space, like a light house in the darkness.

For a basic explanation of Inbound Linking, please see our March 2006 issue. Briefly, an inbound link is a selection of words on a web page (such as meditation, positive thinking, stress-free living) that contain a *hyperlink* which, if clicked on, will take the reader/viewer to our international web site (target website). Adding to other BK or non-BK web pages such text-based inbound links, which point to Babas web site, will increase visitors to our international site as well as to your local BK site.

Our Inbound linking campaign aims to bring the largest possible online audience to Baba’s web sites by making our sites the most visible (top of the search results). The effort at present is to increase links to our international website and other BK sites, which increases their rankings on major search engines. This can be done by increasing the positive BK related content (with *hyperlinks*) on our BK web sites, on BK

managed web sites, on contact or cooperative souls web sites and on other appropriate web sites/pages.

If you would like to see Babas web site rank number one for search terms such as meditation, meditate, positive thinking, stress free living etc., you are most welcome to join us on our quest. Creating links to the international web site www.bkwsu.org and your local BK web site can also save time and money.

It is easy to learn how to find and implement new links. You just copy and paste some code, or send an invitation to a contact person who manages a web site.

You may have some talent writing articles or have some time to source relevant BK articles from our various publications. Any informative classes or articles are potentially useful for adding positive content to a website, and a link to Babas site will add extra value to the additional text. ☞

eLearning

Our eLearning project will offer people the ability to learn spirituality at their own pace, and at a time and place of their choice, by leveraging the internet. The eLearning team is responsible for creating online and interactive versions of the various courses offered by the Yagya.

An open source learning management system called ‘Moodle’ has been chosen for

providing the courses. The content will be web based and have *Flash* content that provides interactivity for quizzes, assignments, meditation commentaries, etcetera. A *proof of concept* using this technology platform is underway.

The ‘Positive Thinking Course’ will be the initial course offering. The team aims to have a demo version of this course completed by October 2006.

Team members comprise content developers/reviewers, graphic and web designers and IT administrators spanning South Africa, UK, USA and India. ☞



Techwatch

Project Techwatch started a couple of years back to monitor emerging technologies that can be used to serve the Yagya. Such research has helped us understand the current IT product market and save time in finding the right software for our projects.

The focus of our search is to find Open Source software that is available for free. However, software that is available at a price will be considered when necessary.

The team uses the internet as the primary source of information. RSS (Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication) feeds and Search engine alerts on specific topics are used to gather information on the latest technologies and tools. Team members update their findings on a free group web log (blog) at <http://techpositive.blogspot.com>

Examples of our research includes:

QEDWiki - develops small utility applications very fast

OCW - Open Courseware from MIT offers hundreds of high quality study materials

Ruby on Rails - develop applications with less coding and minimum configuration

Collabware - Software offering online collaboration over the Internet

Viewlets - software now widely used for online publishing, e-learning content and demos

To date we have prepared several proposals that have become ongoing independent projects.

The Techwatch team consists primarily of souls from India and USA. Team members continue to scout for new technologies and information that may be useful, and to document them for review and creation of project proposals where suitable.

Clearly the more eyes the Techwatch team has, the better it will be at identifying useful technology or software for the Yagya. So join us! ☞



"He saw your laptop and wants to know if he can check his Hotmail."

Other projects

The Application Development team has been training a few souls on Plone/ Zope, PHP and other technologies. Presently we are using or are considering using the following Open Source collaboration tools:

E-Mail: Thunderbird and Zimbra
Mailing List: SurgeMail, PHP List
Instant Messaging: [Skype](#)
VoIP: [Skype](#) or BKWSU VoIP Server

Project Mgt: MS Project and hopefully Project.Net
Doc Mgt: Plone and Twiki are current contenders
Calendaring: Zimbra
Desktop Sharing: WebHuddle
Online Document Sharing: writely

LDAP related projects have been dormant during this reporting period due to team members' engagement with other projects, namely a prototype for the BK registration system and testing for the JAM registration application.

There are no new Madhuban enhancements, however work on the current systems is ongoing. ☞



New Project

Global Image

The ‘Global Image of the Brahma Kumaris’, or simply ‘Global Image’ project was initiated to provide a set of tools that will enable centres worldwide to access consistent, high quality, online and print media materials—such as logos, leaflets, flyers, brochures, handouts, visiting cards etc.

The aim is to *leverage* the *best practice* material available and share it with centres that do not have the expertise to create such quality content locally. An equally important aim of the project is to present ourselves as a unified

organization across the globe, while providing location-specific information where required.

The technology platform for the Global Image project has been decided and the materials for the *proof of concept* are in place. The team has chosen the open source platform ‘Plone’ as its primary content management system. It will also use some proprietary 3rd party technologies to allow local content to be merged with global templates as well as be available for downloading and printing at the local level.

The team is currently working towards having a *proof of concept* website available by the end of October and aims to have this basic website, which will be accessible only to BK centres, live by January 2007.

The team consists of members from Canada, UK, Australia and India who are graphic designers, IT administrators, content experts, programmers, and stakeholders that review the content from a perspective of global acceptability. ☺

Word Search Game

Find the listed virtues among the letters.

Virtues To Find:	I A R T N A R E L O T G G V G
BRAVE	M R X Z C D H Q C D N R N C L
CHEERFUL	K R H I S O O H Y O D U I U N
CONTENT	G O W E B U N Z R B E Z V D G
COPERATIVE	F K F H V M O T G C H G O Y E
DETACHED	U U E H E I S R E I C N L U N
FLEXIBLE	R J F W A L T A E N A I U K T
FORGIVING	F T W H C R B A U N T V F K L
GENEROUS	P N K Q H R M I R P E I R E E
GENTLE	K E S J A G A O X E D G E D W
HARMONIOUS	G I U V T G F N N E P R E X J
LOVING	N T E D K P O E L I L O H J B
PATIENT	I A I U H H O F Q E O F C V Z
SERENE	I P R D X R B B M L X U M N H
STRONG	B R P K V Y P E N E R E S O S
TOLERANT	



Tania Bryer introducing links from 118 countries at the Just A Minute International Launch, Wembley, UK

IT Behind the J-A-M *by Br. Simon*

Originally, JAM was to have people at 100 places around the world connecting to Wembley via teleconferencing which would flash their pictures on the large screen and provide the ability to interact with them. The first step towards this was to phone British Telecom to find out what the cost of such a large teleconference would be. 300 thousand pounds! And that was just London! What about the cost/ logistics of setting up professional teleconferencing equipment in 100 other places?

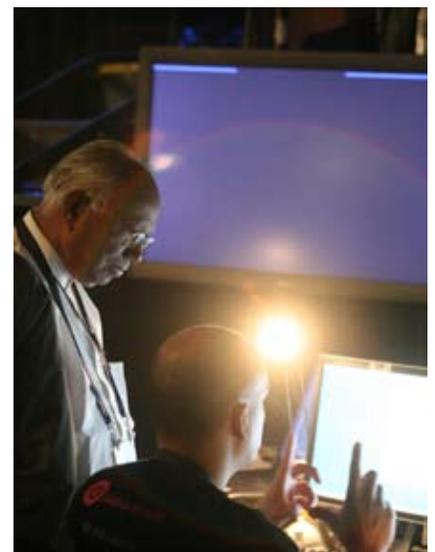
When I recovered from the shock and got up from the floor, we hit upon the idea of using a “consumer” grade solution: webcams! We knew that most people in the 100 places already had computers, webcams were cheap and the whole process would be simplified. Brother Allan

wrote some software that could select the best webcam pictures and display them one on top of each other. Unfortunately, due to time constraints and artistic pressures on the day itself, we weren't able to use as many webcam pictures as we would have liked.

Fast forward to the actual event. We were to provide the webcam images, a Powerpoint presentation for titles, various animated slide shows and some video clips—via our computers—to a professional video team. Compared to industrial roadshow equipment, desktop computers are really tacky and unreliable. For this reason we brought in two computers for each task, ten in total. If one computer crashed then we had a panic switch that would select the other computer. The professional video team got

nervous when they learned they had to work with inexperienced non-professionals and they got even more nervous when they heard they had to work with our computers. The IT team,

Br. Allan explains his webcam programme to Karunabhai



which consisted of Simon, Rajesh, Minesh, Sasha and Allan, succeeded in making the video team quite nervous indeed! (I hope they got the JAM message...)

The material we had to play on the computers still wasn't ready the day before the programme. Frantic, last-minute efforts were made to create the Powerpoint presentations and slide shows, to plan which computer would do what, and to decide who would operate which computer based on the material we had and the script. The script itself was interesting because the video or graphics cues were right *at the end* of each scene. This meant we knew what needed to be shown



Br. Sasha reassuring Sr. Vasanti that all is well.

I didn't see much of the vans. They just connected themselves to the video equipment and made themselves at home.

Just before the show many frantic phone calls were made

to happen at the right moment. Confusion was evident via the headsets that connected us all together: "Where are we now?", "What page are we on?", "What's happening?" Apparently from the front of the stage everything looked as if it was going really smoothly. Somehow we managed to ride out the detour and get back on track without anyone noticing.

Our final test paper happened suddenly, without warning—in just a second: our headsets went dead. No communication. This happened just as Robin Gibb was singing "Tragedy". We had to run back and forth behind the stage carrying messages



Brs. Sasha, Simon and Minesh averting a technical 'tragedy'.

on the screen too late—just in time to move on to the next scene! Sr. Nicola from London, who had assumed the role of video coordinator just two weeks before the event, did a heroic job of pulling the video and graphics elements of the show together in an impossibly short time.

Two satellite vans arrived at Wembley on the day: one for the webcast and one for Sanskar TV.

to ensure all the webcast stuff was working the way it should. There were some initial problems with the Spanish and English translations when Dadi first spoke.

When the show started we finally felt we had a plan and knew what we were doing. However part of the programme ran late and the script had to be re-arranged on the fly to get the "world minute"

between those who still had working headsets and those that didn't. I'm not 100% sure we got all the cues in that time but we did our best. Since we couldn't see or hear much where we were located, I look forward to seeing the show one day. All in all, as our first attempt at this sort of thing, it was a great success. ✨

SAFE COMPUTING

Spyware: Be Aware & Beware — Part 1

By Amrinder Singh Deol, Mauritius

In the field of computing, the term spyware refers to a broad category of malicious software designed to take partial control of a computer's operation without the informed consent of that machine's owner or legitimate user. While the term taken literally suggests software that surreptitiously monitors the user, it has come to refer more broadly to software that subverts the computer's operation to benefit a third party.

In simpler terms, spyware is a type of program that watches what users do with their computer and sends that information over the internet. Spyware can collect many types of information about a user. The most benign programs track the types of websites a user visits and send this information to an advertisement agency. Others simply launch popup advertisements. Malicious versions intercept user passwords or credit card numbers.

ROUTES OF INFECTION

Spyware does not spread directly in the manner of a computer virus or worm. An infected system generally does not attempt to transmit the infection to other computers. Instead, spyware gets into a



system by deceiving the user or through exploitation of software vulnerabilities.

The most direct route of infection involves the user installing the spyware. However, users tend not to install software that they know will disrupt their working environment and compromise their privacy. Thus many spyware programs deceive users, either by piggybacking on a piece of desirable software (such as *Kazaa*), or by tricking users to do something that installs the spyware without their knowledge.

Classically, a Trojan horse, by definition, smuggles in something dangerous in the guise of something desirable. Some spyware programs are spread in this way. The spyware is

presented as a useful utility—for instance as a “Web accelerator” or as a helpful software agent. Recent “rogue anti-spyware” programs do damage while masquerading as security software!

Users download and install such software without immediately suspecting that it could cause harm. For example, Bonzi Buddy, a spyware program that targets children, claims that:

“He will explore the Internet with you as your very own friend and sidekick! He can talk, walk, joke, browse, search, e-mail, and download like no other friend you’ve ever had! He even has the ability to compare prices on the products you love and help you save money! Best of all, he’s FREE!”

Spyware can also come bundled with shareware or other downloadable software, as well as music CDs. The user downloads and installs a music program or a file-trading utility for example, and the installer additionally installs the spyware. Although the desirable software itself may do no harm, the bundled spyware does. In some cases, spyware authors pay shareware authors to bundle spyware with their software. In other cases, spyware authors repackage desirable free software with installers that add spyware.

to be continued in Issue #5...

RTC Contact Details

The PMO Team works with the RCOs via Regional Technical Coordinators (RTCs). The RTCs who have been appointed for each region are:

- Africa: Br. Vinai (vinai.shah@bkinfo.net), Sr. Divya (divya.shah@bkinfo.net)
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Software & Soul—Part 3

By Br. Vivek Kashyap
(based on an article by Br. Kehm Jokhoo)

This article concludes our exploration of the computer as a metaphor for a human being. In the past 2 issues we've examined software, hardware, information processing and positive/ negative network phenomena from a gyani, IT perspective. We've seen how the soul's original powers are a natural 'anti-vices' programme, defending against the vices of greed, anger, lust, attachment and ego as well as their gross and subtle manifestations.

SUPER COMPUTERS

In a computer network, there is a master or super computer, a 'server' computer which services all other computers in the network. This network server upgrades the other computers with new software, assists them in accessing information from the World Wide Web and offers protection with antivirus programmes that work round the clock protecting the network from viruses.

SYSTEM STABILITY

However, in the computer world, no hardware components, programmes, or super computers provide permanent improvements or solutions to networked computers, or guarantee system stability.

The good news is that this is not the case with souls. All a soul needs to do is to go offline from this always-connected world, search

its 'hard disk' (soul searching) and connect to its original nature and powers. In other words, the solutions to all problems are embedded within the original nature (the motherboard) of the soul itself.

SUPREME SUPER COMPUTER

Raja Yoga meditation also allows one to connect with The Supreme Super Computer, i.e., God, and download the resources which replenish the soul's power, activate its innate qualities and virtues and guarantee system stability. This Supreme Computer (God) is always 'On', continually caring for souls by sending vibrations of peace, love and bliss in an incognito form. However only those who have a direct connection to the Supreme Computer's communications network receive help in removing obstacles and in making the journey of life easier.

Just as a super computer upgrades networked computers with new software, the Supreme Soul upgrades connected souls with new knowledge and instructions. Just as the super computer facilitates information sharing via the World Wide Web, the Supreme Soul helps Godly networked souls manage their relationships and sharing of resources with others happily and effectively. Finally, just as when any type of virus surfaces on a network, the antivirus programmes of the super computer raise the alarm and warn its users to remove them and save the system, similarly, when souls are connected to the Supreme Soul through the 'fire-wall' of Raja Yoga meditation, the

Supreme Soul's power and wisdom empowers and protects them from the vices, enables them to remain light while executing important tasks, and facilitates their functioning with constant peace and happiness.

The Supreme Soul is such a super computer that all souls are potentially able to belong to His network, i.e., to be connected to Him, attain protection from the vices and upgrade to their original state of peace and power through meditation.

POSITIVE NETWORK PHENOMENA

Souls communicate with other souls through the powerful network of their own thoughts. However only when the intellect is clean and the mind is full of pure thoughts can a soul discern the true thoughts of others. Otherwise many packets of information get lost, distorted or fragmented in communication.

When self aware souls on the Godly network come in contact with the world wide web of society, such empowered souls send out their vibrations of peace and happiness and help other souls remove vices and traces of negativity. All other connected souls benefit from the powers of self-aware souls, from whom they can receive a taste of true bliss and peace. This experience encourages discovery/ recovery of their own treasures. A positive network effect follows and gradually society becomes vice-free, stable and able to function harmoniously and efficiently at its full potential. ☞

Glossary of Terms

[Note: Please refer to previous issue of CONNECTIONS for definitions of other terms in this newsletter which may be unfamiliar to you.]



ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations): Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore.

A *best practice* is a technique or method that has been proven through experience and research to consistently lead to desired or superior results.

Bundled is a marketing term that refers to the practice of selling one or more products together for a single price. For example, several software packages might be bundled and included in the purchase price of a personal computer.

Flash in the computing world generally refers to multimedia/ animation technology developed by Macromedia. Flash allows web developers to incorporate colorful animations with text, shapes, and images into web pages, while maintaining a relatively small file size. To view Flash content, your browser needs to have a Flash 'plug-in' which is built into most browsers today. However should you need to install it you can obtain it from Macromedia at www.adobe.com/products/flash/flash-pro/.

Hyperlink (often referred to simply as a link), is an icon or highlighted word in a document that refers and navigates to another section of the same document, or to a web page

that automatically launches, bringing the referenced information directly to the user's screen. It provide automatic instant access to literary citations, definitions, and other resources.

Internet Cafe An Internet café, sometimes called a cybercafé, is a commercial place where one can purchase use of a computer with internet access, usually by the hour or minute. Whole day or monthly access plans are sometimes available as well. Such establishments may or may not also operate as regular cafés serving food and drinks.

Kazaa is a controversial but popular user-to-user (peer-to-peer) file sharing application. It is commonly used to exchange MP3 music files over the Internet, however it can also be used to exchange other files types such as videos, applications, and documents. The official Kazaa software can be downloaded free of charge and is financed by bundled adware and spyware (despite the "No Spyware" claims found on Kazaa's website). Kazaa has been the target of many copyright-related lawsuits in recent years.

Leverage is a term used as a verb to mean gaining an advantage through the use of a tool.

Proof of concept refers to evidence that demonstrates that a business model or idea is feasible.

Skype is free software that enables free calls to anyone who also has Skype software. Available in 27 languages, Skype is used in almost every country of the world. Founded in 2003 by Niklas Zennström and Janus Friis, Skype is based in Luxembourg, has relationships with a growing network of hardware and software providers and is an eBay company. It competes against existing open VoIP systems and is known for its broad range of features, including free voice and video conferencing, and its ability to use peer to peer (decentralized) technology to overcome common firewall and IP addressing problems. ↻

Feedback Welcome!

We hope you've found this newsletter informative and easy to understand. We welcome your suggestions and feedback. Please submit your comments to connections@bkinfo.net.

You are also warmly invited to submit IT-related articles, jokes, cartoons or other relevant information of timely interest for our next issue.