

LEJOG round-up

They made it from Land's End to John O'Groats, via Ipswich, by local bus service. Jeremy and Michael are delighted to report that they have so far raised over £15,000 which, once the qualifying Gift Aid donations are taken into account, will mean that they have raised well over £16,000.

The next step is to start planning Cariad's trip to Disneyland, which is expected to take place later this year. Once the itinerary has been finalised, and the final cost deducted from the total amount raised, they will present a cheque for the rest to Make-A-Wish. As an extra bonus, it is hoped that a Cariad approved celebrity will be persuaded to be there for the handover of the cheque.

Their adventures can still be viewed on their blog <http://lejogbus.blogspot.co.uk/>

Donations are still coming in, so for an up-to-date total please visit www.cariadrose.co.uk

Finally, a second special edition of OmniNEWS was produced, and it contains a very important list of Thank You's. An on-line copy can be viewed at www.omnibus.uk.com

► Presenting Cariad with a bumper cheque are (L to R): Jeremy Howat (Omnibus), First Hampshire's General Manager Chrissie Bainbridge and Michael Meilton (Omnibus)



Welcome to new customers

Last year was a particularly busy one for the team at Omnibus, with lots of new customers enjoying the benefits of Omnibus products for the first time.

Two have been kind enough to share their experiences with OmniNEWS.

Chris Savage, Network Planning Manager for Travel de Courcey in Coventry, had used Omnibus software in his previous job with First Group. He was keen to introduce Omnibus to Travel de Courcey and the company installed OmniTIMES and OmniBASE in November.



Chris explains: "The software is absolutely excellent and I am very glad to have them back. We were using a manual system before the installation and now I can work much more efficiently and am able to respond to changes much more quickly. Further developments we are now investigating are the addition of CrewPLAN for our scheduling and OmniDAS for our depot operations".

One company that is expanding rapidly is WebberBus in the South West of England. Commercial and Operations Director Mark Pedlar explains:

"We recently installed OmniTIMES, CrewPLAN, OmniROTA and OmniBASE, as our previous manual systems were not keeping pace with our growth. The functions that the software now manages for us have allowed us to make the next steps in our expansion plans. We are so pleased with Omnibus that we are already in talks to add more modules."

► Webberbus installed Omnibus software to help it grow



Software for the Quality Line

▲ Quality Line operates 90 buses and 300 drivers in South West London

We have reported on Omnibus's consultancy work in previous issues of OmniNEWS. One company that has used this service in the past is London-based Epsom Coaches.

The company used Omnibus schedules consultancy for its occasional but complex crew scheduling requirements before adopting Omnibus software back in 2007. Epsom Coaches made the investment in the Omnibus technology when TfL introduced the iBus project and operators were required to submit timetables for services and tenders in an electronic format.

Epsom Coaches was already using the system which became OmniDAS, and added OmniTIMES, OmniBASE, OmniROTA and CrewPLAN.

Omnibus developed an easy to use export module to comply with TfL's CAESAR protocol (Central

Automated Electronic Schedules Application and Repository) which Epsom Coaches adopted for its Quality Line bus service operating in South West London.

General Manager Jon Ball has used the Omnibus systems personally at Epsom for many years. He explains: "We needed to move with the times and Omnibus was the obvious choice. They are a fantastic group of people to work with and there is always someone at the end of the phone to help with any problems. We have been so pleased that we have happily opened our doors to other operators to show them how Omnibus works for us."

Apart from the cost savings that the system has delivered, Jon maintains that the main benefit is the confidence that everything is operating effectively and correctly. He explains: "Not only have these systems saved us money, they ensure that duties are paid correctly and drivers' hours are accurate and within the rules."

To further utilise the efficiencies they offer, Epsom Coaches has tested the Omnibus software packages for use with coach drivers and also has plans to utilise the OmniDAS engineers' module for time and attendance.

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Jon Ball, General Manager, Epsom Coaches

Unsung hero – Brian Dawber

As Reading Buses' Network Performance Manager, Brian Dawber is 'the beating heart' of their operations. Because of his key role in overseeing the quality and performance of the network, he has been given the Unsung Hero Award at this year's UK Bus Awards.



◀ Reading Buses' Network Performance Manager, Brian Dawber

Brian played a key role in developing OmniDAS for Reading's operations. A self-confessed 'non-techie' he was project manager, wrote the specification and was heavily involved in testing the new system.

He now loves examining the data and trends to find new ways to make Reading's operations more efficient.

All his hard work saw the reliability of buses running to schedule improve by 82% and Reading Buses operated 99.84% of mileage, although Brian is still striving for nothing less than 100%.

During the heavy snow blizzards of January 2009, when much of the UK's road network ground to a halt, Brian was the 'man who masterminded Reading Buses' services through the snow chaos'.

We think he is a well deserved winner of this accolade. Congratulations Brian.

"All his hard work saw the reliability of buses running to schedule improve by 82% and Reading Buses operated 99.84% of mileage."

Join us at our inaugural 'Rumsfeld Summit' 11th March

Omnibus is inviting all Local Authority Public Transport Teams to a 'Rumsfeld Summit' at Hollinwood – so called because of Donald Rumsfeld's now infamous 'known knowns' speech*.

The development and commercial teams at Omnibus want to make sure that there are no 'unknown unknowns' about our software, from either side of the fence.

The teams will take the time to demonstrate the very latest developments, and a few that are in the pipeline. They also want to find out from users what they want the team to work on in terms of future software development.

The day is also designed to discover how the Omnibus software is currently being used, and to identify any additional features that are under-used or additional areas where the software can also be applied.

Kieran Proctor, the organiser of the event, comments: "We want to really engage with Local Authorities in a way that we haven't done before. This should be a frank exchange of information,

views and experiences that will help everyone to get the best out of the software and for us to develop products that continue to meet everyday needs".

Anyone interested in attending the 'Rumsfeld Summit' can book their place by emailing kieran.proctor@omnibus.uk.com

**...there are known knowns; there are things we know that we know.*

There are known unknowns; that is to say, there are things that we now know we don't know.

But there are also unknown unknowns – there are things we do not know we don't know.





▲ EYMS runs over 300 buses and coaches throughout Hull, East Yorkshire, the North Yorkshire coast and the North York Moors

East Yorkshire Motor Services switches to OmniSTOP

East Yorkshire Motor Services (EYMS) has been an Omnibus customer for many years and has just added OmniSTOP to the list of software products it uses, to design and print bus stop displays.



▲ Displays can now be tailored to EYMS requirements

Bob Rackley, Commercial Manager for EYMS, explains why they chose OmniSTOP: "With our previous system we did not have as much control over the data and it was generating results that were not as accurate as we would have liked. What's attractive about OmniSTOP is that it works directly with our own data and now we have much more control and flexibility and no interface issues. The system can now cope with anomalies such as split routes and connections."

Omnibus has completed the process of creating the EYMS style template and included features such as publicity timepoint names, timepoint symbols, service colours and graphics. As Bob explains: "We are now able to use commonly used names for stops. Also, the system has a range of display designs that we can tailor exactly to our own requirements." Training and installation has been completed and all 1,384 bus stop displays are ready to print.

Support has also been important for EYMS, as Bob explains: "The team at Omnibus have given us excellent support on this project, with training, telephone support and remote access during the implementation and managing our data."

We are now in the process of adding to our almost complete package of Omnibus systems, with the addition of OmniDAS, for real time depot allocation."

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