

also online at [www.timesonline.co.uk](http://www.timesonline.co.uk), click on the link to 'Games'. The Times games page also includes the Polygon puzzle, as well as the Bridge and Chess challenges. There is more information at [www.sudoku.com](http://www.sudoku.com).

#### The Polygon puzzle

The aim is to create as many words as possible using the letters in the Polygon, but the highlighted letter must be included in each word.

#### An 'Audio' Crossword

Radio 4 has an audio crossword, which is available online, and plays audible clips to supplement the text based clues. It can be filled in online and is available at [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/comedy/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/comedy/) select the 'Try the Radio 4 audio crossword' link under the 'Useful BBC Links'.

#### Puzzles to enhance skills

I've also been looking at sites which use puzzles as a way of enhancing different skill sets, such as problem solving skills or your creativity.

One site, Creativity Unleashed, which is primarily supporting a business creativity training organisation, does offer some interesting puzzles on its site at <http://www.cul.co.uk/creative/puzzles.htm>. They also have interesting links for further exploration of creativity.

Aha! Puzzles is another interesting site, found at <http://homepage.nflworld.com/atalanta/home.html>.

There is an extensive range of puzzles at the main [www.puzz.com](http://www.puzz.com) page, which also has a large number of links to all sorts of other puzzle type websites. If you're after some really challenging logic puzzles, you might want to try out this page within the web site, <http://www.puzz.com/lloydkingpuzzles.html>.

Another large site is at [www.puzzlemonster.com](http://www.puzzlemonster.com), with sections for logic puzzles, trivia puzzles, visual puzzles and word puzzles. Again, many puzzles to choose from to revive those flagging grey cells! Edward de Bono, regarded by many to be the leading authority in the world in the field of creative thinking and the direct teaching of thinking as a skill has his authorised website at <http://www.edwdebono.com/index.html>. Amongst the resources there are full descriptions of two of his games – the L game and the 3 spot game, described as a 'social justice' game as sometimes the winner is in fact the loser! <http://www.edwdebono.com/debono/gamesi.htm>

#### Maths

If you're a maths puzzle fan then this site might be one to visit, <http://www.counnton.org/>. It is produced by the University of York for the DES and includes a wealth of maths based information. It also includes the wonderful 'Who wants to be a Mathonaire?', to

see just how good your maths skills are!

Many of these sites have pages with links to many other sites. Trying out a few games and puzzles from each one could provide some interesting material to add a different challenge to team building events, as well as sharpening our individual problem solving strategies.

Have fun and puzzle away!

## **Intranets and Content Management**

**Column Editor: Martin White**

**Intranet Focus Ltd;**

**e-mail: [martin.white@intranetfocus.com](mailto:martin.white@intranetfocus.com)**

By the time this column is published we will be well into 2005, but at the time of writing I am still in 'what will happen in 2005' mode. So here are some thoughts on trends and issues that I think will occupy your attention in the year ahead.

#### CMS applications will offer better price/performance

One of the most encouraging aspects of the Online Information exhibition last year was the number of UK CMS vendors who were offering some really well-developed products, and were demonstrating them with flair and enthusiasm. Although a number of US-based CMS vendors are trying to enter the UK market the lack of local support has been a major consideration for many organisations. I have recently been working with a client where the absolute limit for the CMS was around £40k (including VAT!) and they received a number of excellent proposals.

As always you need to read the proposals carefully as there will always be a requirement for some professional service support for installation, training and template development, for example. But certainly if you have £60k or so in the budget you will find an increasing range of products at this price level. Amongst the companies that have impressed me recently have been Contentis ([www.contentis.net](http://www.contentis.net)), Goss ([www.gossinteractive.com](http://www.gossinteractive.com)), iLevel ([www.ilevelsoftware.com](http://www.ilevelsoftware.com)), Immediacy ([www.immediacy.co.uk](http://www.immediacy.co.uk)) and Terminal Four ([www.terminalfour.com](http://www.terminalfour.com)) though I do find the Terminal Four pricing structure somewhat difficult to understand.

#### Migration issues will continue to plague CMS implementations

The paradox about migration is that there is very little that can be done about migrating pages from one system (typically Front Page) to a CMS

application until the software is installed and stable. However if you leave it until this point to start thinking about the issues and planning for them you will find you have a major problem on your hands and a lot of dissatisfied users. Many vendors offer some form of automated process for migrating pages, but you do need to read the small print! It is all very well being able to migrate 80% of the pages across using a software application but invariably the really important pages need to be migrated manually. The problem becomes substantially more complex when metadata has to be added to each page, and then the process really does become very slow indeed.

Migration needs to be considered right at the outset of the relaunch or redevelopment through the means of a detailed (and we are talking page-level!) audit of the site. Apart from understanding the scale of the problem you will also be able to identify ROT (Redundant, Obsolete and Trivial) pages that have no business being on the web site at all. An important element of the planning process is deciding who is going to do the migration. It could mean a very significant workload for an individual web manager or department.

#### Intranet governance will be seen as an important success factor

When you start to dig into the reasons for intranets failing to meet success criteria it almost always comes down to governance. No one is really in charge, there is no mechanism to set standards and good practice and monitor conformance, it is unclear whether intranet contribution should be an element in a job description, and overall everyone assumes that the intranet is someone else's responsibility. The fault lines really start to appear when a CMS implementation is planned.

Many organisations have encouraged individual departments or subsidiaries to set up their own intranets on the basis that in that way the intranet will meet the needs of a specific user group. All that then happens is that information silos are created and overall the organisation probably has reduced access to information and knowledge. One pharmaceutical company I know has around 700 intranets, but no one is sure how many, and of even greater concern no one is sure which sites are spidered by the search engine. The result is that no one really trusts the 'intranet' to deliver, and the road to information perdition becomes a six-lane highway.

Many organisations are now starting to consolidate their intranets, and there was an excellent example of this given by Helen Day of Boots at the Online Conference. Indeed the example was so good that

Helen won the Online Information 2004 award for the best intranet project. The basic concept is one of federated intranets, where there are some common standards relating to information architecture etc and a degree of conformity at the top levels of each intranet, but without strangling the enthusiasm of individual intranet teams to provide solutions for their specific users.

## **Public Sector News**

**Column Editor: Jane Inman,**  
**Warwickshire County Council and Chair of the**  
**Affiliation of Local Government Information**  
**Specialists (ALGIS in LARIA).**  
**E-mail: [janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk)**

Another year begins and in the public sector it brings the beginning of the Freedom of Information Act and the beginning of the year in which we should be fully e-enabled.

#### Freedom of Information

As I write it is still too early to know what impact the Freedom of Information Act will have. Predictions of demand assume use by journalists, campaigners and those who are not happy with the way a local authority or government department has handled an issue. In other countries huge departments have evolved to manage the workload and horror stories abound. Will it be the same here?

After some very last minute decisions the question of fees was finally settled and a Statutory Instrument laid before parliament on 9th December 2004, Statutory Instrument 3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees Regulations) 2004. In local government we are required to supply up to £450 worth of information retrieval before we can begin to charge and in central government the figure is £600 and is based on costs of £25 per hour. It will be interesting to see if anyone is prepared to pay this to obtain the information they want. Is it possible that there may be times when paying us to do the research at this rate may be a cheaper option than doing the research themselves for firms of consultants or similar?

Press coverage since the beginning of the year has included news of the Conservatives submitting questions to the government in areas where they would hope to cause serious embarrassment as a minimum and discredit if possible. Local elections will take place in May and will local politicians do the same?