

CONTACT

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

MAY 1998

Strong financial performance in year of major progress

RESULTS SHOW VALUE PLEDGE

MANWEB has made a strong contribution to ScottishPower group's annual results, after building on opportunities offered by energy markets opening up to competition and making major improvements in customer service.

The results show group pre-tax profits of £640 million on a turnover of £3.1 billion with a final dividend of 13.6p per share, resulting in a full year payment of 20.4p per share.

The figures include Manweb's performance, with operating profits of £131 million.

Manweb is meeting the challenge of competition head-on, with more than 75,000 customers in the region now supplied with gas by Manweb. The company is also one of the first to be ready for competition in the electricity sector which opens in the Chester area in September.

Outstanding

Bill Landels, Manweb Managing Director, said: "Manweb's performance reflects our pledge to give outstanding value for money to our customers. For instance, last month's 3.5% price reduction was the fifth consecutive cut since Manweb joined the ScottishPower group two and a half years ago. In real terms this is equal to 11 weeks free electricity for householders.

"We are also planning further price reductions in the near future plus an extra discount for customers who choose to buy both electricity and gas from us."

The results also show that Manweb exceeded its targets in meeting guaranteed standards for customer service with an improvement of 23% coming on top of a 67% improvement the year before.

In addition Manweb became the first regional electricity company to gain the quality award ISO 9002 for the way in which the company reports its performance against these standards.



Ready for knockout challenge

PREPARATIONS are underway for this year's "It's a Knockout" challenge to be hosted once again by Manweb.

The competition will be held on the afternoon of Saturday, June 27, at the Sports and Social Club, Thingwall Road, Liverpool, and is open for entries from 18 teams, each of six people with at least one female, from throughout the

ScottishPower group. Last year fun was had by all (see picture) in the water-based team games.

Entry is free to the event which will raise funds for the Alder Hey Hospital Rocking Horse Appeal, although each team will need to support their application with a minimum backing of £100. For registration details contact Phil Cato on (internal) 720 2251.

Badminton team court success in championship

THE Manweb team performed well in the Electricity Industry Badminton Championships held at Doncaster, reaching the quarter finals of the plate competition. Back row left to right: Derek Robinson, Damian Evans, John Ashton, Dave Raiswell Front row left to right: Jenny Ashton, Helen Jones, Helen Paddock, Ruth Raiswell.



Daredevil brothers have different views of the ground

Sport takes them over and under

NEIL Caton aims to avoid the ground – while his brother John loves going under it. The pair, who both work for Manweb, are judo expert and underground caver respectively.

Neil, aged 37, a Customer Services representative at Warrington, has been an

exponent of the Japanese martial art since his boyhood days in Liverpool.

He learned judo at his local youth club and moved up through various junior and adult grades to win his black belt at 21, and then improve further to 1st Dan.

These days he coaches Liverpool



Sporting brothers – caver John, left and judo expert Neil Caton.

University's judo squad. "It's enjoyable and a great way of keeping fit," he said. "Though it looks dangerous, you're probably more likely to get hurt on a cricket pitch than a judo dojo (hall.)"

His favourite throw is a Harai Makikomi and his biggest achievement so far is winning the Staffordshire Open Championships.

Brother John, aged 39, who is over 6 feet tall with a 44 inch chest, is a natural adventurer and he has been caving for 10 years.

Nerve

The 14 and a half stone Wrexham-based Customer Liaison Officer delights in crawling along narrow passageways 500 feet below ground in north Wales.

He explores cave systems armed with a lamp, hard hat, climbing harness, ropes and a walkie talkie.

"After that, all you need is nerve," he said. "But claustrophobia isn't a problem. Caving's a very sociable sport and we take our flasks and sandwiches down."

Plans to improve golfing figures

MANWEB Financial Accountant Eifion Jenkins is to retire at the end of his 12-month secondment as Group Financial Accountant in Glasgow, finalising the ScottishPower group year-end accounts.

Throughout his 27-year career with Manweb he has been in the Financial Accounts Department, based mainly in Chester but with a two-year secondment to Corporate Strategy in the Liverpool office.

Eifion - pictured with a pipe band just before he left for his Scottish posting - will continue living in Rhos near Wrexham and aims to improve his golf handicap.



Corporate working group ensuring smooth transition

THE Manweb logo is all set to change, and a corporate identity working group comprising representatives from each area of the business is meeting monthly to bring about a smooth transition.

The main task is to ensure that any items currently showing the Manweb logo are being reviewed and that plans are in place for the change.

The areas identified and plans made so far are:

- Billing, follow-up and correspondence for 1.3 million customer – currently being redesigned, to be implemented in July

- Workwear – currently being reviewed, and some new items will be phased in as soon as they are available (estimated from July onwards)

- Vehicle livery – due to be implemented area by area from June onwards

- Site signage – all sites audited, new site signage to be applied from June onwards

- Internal and external forms – being audited and rationalised

- Templates and design guidelines for presentation slides and OHPs – group style to be adopted from late June onwards

- Macros and style sheets for letterheads, faxes and memoranda – in production, to be applied with new stationery from late June onwards

An important element of the corporate

Manweb logo set to change



Manweb

A ScottishPower Company

identity change is the rationalisation and management of items that have to be branded. While a new identity has been announced, it will be a few months before it is in place everywhere.

In the meantime, it is crucial that one does the conversion from Manweb's red logo to the new "Powermark" themselves. A corporate identity manual is currently in production and will explain

the new identity and exactly how to use the logo.

Style sheets are also currently being designed and will be available via the computer network in late June. Briefings will be provided to staff in June.

A separate circular will be produced which will highlight the change-over dates from old to new stationery and explain how to dispose of old stationery.

Stationery

A separate group of representatives is currently identifying stationery requirements. Your local representatives are:

Ian Williams – Customer Service, Wrexham; Lesley Webb – Power Systems, Wrexham; Janet Ford – Power Systems, Prenton; Dawn Hart – Power Systems, Liverpool; Janet Cahill – Manweb House, Chester; Claire Dodd – Contracting; Paul Parry – Metering.

If you have any queries about the new identity, please call Janet Cahill on 700 2091.

S N B R O A D W A Y W I G Q F M V C L L
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WORDS TO SEARCH FOR: Box office; Tosca; Puccini; Llandudno; Beethoven; Paul Young; Sunday in the Park; Llangollen; Broadway; Workshop; Boris Godunov; La Traviata; Verdi; Handel; Grosvenor Park; Welsh National Opera; Summer Pops; Jools Holland; Choir.

Magical musical mystery teaser

SEARCH for the 19 musical names and events hidden in this grid and win tickets for concerts in the Welsh National Opera's Manweb North Wales Summer Season.

There is one pair of tickets available for each of the following concerts at Llandudno: Puccini's Tosca on June 16; Verdi's La Traviata on June 17; and Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov on June 18. Send your completed grid to Wendy Ellison, Manweb Corporate Communications, Manweb House, Kingsfield Court, Chester Business Park, Chester, CH4 9RF, to arrive no later than Wednesday, June 10.

Name:

Address:

Work location (indicate if retired):



THERE are a host of special offers this summer for Manweb staff and their families, thanks to the company's sponsorship and community funding programme.

There are free tickets to be won in competitions, plus big discounts for *Contact* readers for events across the region which should appeal to all musical tastes.

The fun begins on June 12 with the Crickieth Festival, where *Contact* readers can get a 20% discount on tickets for all events. Manweb is supporting the National Jazz Youth Orchestra's performance in the town's Memorial Hall on Friday June 19. **Tickets from the Festival Office on 01766 522778 and quote 'Manweb Ticket Offer'.**

From June 16 the Welsh National Opera's Manweb

Special offers for concerts

North Wales Summer Season begins, and *Contact* readers can get £5 off selected tickets. **Contact the Box Office on 01492 872 000, quoting 'Manweb Ticket Offer'.**

Free tickets for three events can be won – see this month's wordsearch competition.

Manweb is also sponsoring the Summer Pops which run from July 1-19 at Sefton Park, Liverpool. There's a 20% discount off all concerts (except Michael Ball) with free tickets for one concert to be won in a competition on this page. **Tickets can be booked on 0151 709 3789, quoting**

'Manweb Ticket Offer'.

The International Eisteddfod at Llangollen, where Manweb is sponsoring the Choir of the World Competition, is offering two tickets for the price of one for all competitions and events on Thursday July 9 and Friday July 10. **Contact the Box Office on 01978 861501, quoting 'Manweb Ticket Offer'.**

There are two pairs of tickets to be won for five concerts - Jools Holland, Paul Young, John Lill, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and the Firework Spectacular – at this year's Chester Summer Music

Festival, which is celebrating its 21st anniversary. Enter the competition on this page and there is also a 20% discount for all tickets. **Contact the Box Office on 01244 320700, quoting 'Manweb Ticket Offer'.**

Manweb is again sponsoring the "Sunday in the Park" event, providing free entry to an afternoon of varied music, including the ScottishPower Pipe Band, on July 19 in Chester's Grosvenor Park.

Adults' and childrens' picnic packs are again being provided for current Manweb staff and their families.

To book your picnic packs fill in the voucher on this page and send it to Wendy Ellison, Manweb House, Kingsfield Court, Chester Business Park, Wrexham Road, Chester, CH4 9RF, to arrive no later than Friday July 10.

Festival fun

SIMPLY answer the questions below and win tickets for one of five concerts at this year's Chester Summer Music Festival.

They are the Firework Spectacular on July 10, Jools Holland on July 11, Paul Young on July 17, John Lill on July 22 and BBC Philharmonic Orchestra on July 18. Send your answers to Wendy Ellison, Manweb Corporate Communications, Manweb House, Kingsfield Court, Chester Business Park, Chester CH4 9RF, by June 30. Please stipulate your first and second choice concert. Tickets will be allocated on a first out of the hat basis. Staff and retired employees are entitled to enter.

1. What birthday is the Summer Music Festival celebrating?

2. What is Jools Holland's TV music show called?

3. In which park is the Manweb-sponsored Sunday in the Park event held?

Sunday in the Park

Name:

Address:

Work location:

Tel:

Use the boxes below to indicate the number of picnic packs required, and the number of vegetarian packs, if required.

Adult Child
 Vegetarian Vegetarian

Return by July 10 to Wendy Ellison at Manweb House, Chester.

Summer pops

THE Summer Pops, in Liverpool's Sefton Park, returns to a Russia, theme following last year's sell-out concert.

There are two pairs of free tickets to be won for the 'From Russia With Love' concert on July 9, which will feature the 1812 Overture, plus Rachmaninov's romantic Piano Concerto No 2, played by Martin Roscoe. Answer the three questions below and send them to Wendy Ellison, Manweb House, Kingsfield Court, Chester Business Park, Chester, CH4 9RF, by June 30.

1. Who composed the 1812 Overture?

2. Which fictional spy featured in the film *From Russia With Love*?

3. In which park is the Summer Pops held this year?

Opportunities for youngsters

A new training facility for unemployed people is to be opened by ScottishPower Learning on the Hoylake training complex.

A successful application for Objective One funding from the European Regional Development Fund has helped refurbish the old "streetworks" building into new mechanical workshops, electrical fitting and electrical installation facilities.

ScottishPower Learning helped develop the

bid with the local Training and Enterprise Council, CEWTEC, as part of its commitment to train local unemployed people over the coming years.

Neil Hunter, Development Manager, ScottishPower Learning, said: "These new facilities and equipment allow us to deliver quality training and enhance the employability of local people.

"It is vital that we train these young people in the skills that are required by local employers."



Employees Mark Hughson, Louise McMillian and Claire Field pictured during activities.

Trainees solve problems in the great outdoors

A party of 34 craft trainees recently visited Anglesey Sea and Surf Centre for a residential week as part of their two-year training programme managed by ScottishPower Learning.

The week allowed trainees to take part in activities such as rock climbing, sea kayaking, abseiling and orienteering which helped to develop their team working and problem solving skills, and other outdoor activities.

"These 'outward bound'-type programmes help the trainees develop their self-awareness, confidence and understanding of the importance of team-working," said Neil Hunter, ScottishPower Learning Development Manager.

"The week complements the 'lifetime skills' section of the training programme, which is



Craft trainees taking part in a residential weekend at Anglesey Sea and Surf Centre.

about increasing those basic skills which are required by today's employers."

● A number of employees have just returned from a ScottishPower Learning-sponsored development week with the Outward Bound Trust in

Ullswater, Lake District. This is the second programme in the Manweb area to help young people with learning difficulties benefit from a programme designed to realise individual potential, communication skills and teamworking.

EXCITING changes are underway at the Manweb training complex in Hoylake, where a "Centre of Excellence" is being created by Powerlearning - the banner under which Power Systems delivers its many training and development initiatives. In the words of John Edgar, Training and Development Manager: "Powerlearning epitomises the ScottishPower training ethos. It is synonymous with a dynamic, professional and practical approach to training and development." CONTACT visited Hoylake to learn more about the £1 million investment.

Powerlearning

New centre will equip staff for challenges

THE creation of the new centre at Hoylake will ensure staff are trained to meet the many new challenges ahead.

Building on the training expertise, progress and administrative support already very much in evidence at Hoylake, a whole new range of training initiatives are planned.

Additionally, without compromising internal needs, there will also be a major focus on providing training to outside companies - typically in HV Safety training.

Whilst the quality of training has always been high, the interior fabric required reinvestment.

When the present refurbishment is complete by the planned launch date of September 11, the old-style interior will have been completely revamped to comprise a new reception area, Open Learning facilities, seven workshops including a basic skills workshop, classrooms including four computer training rooms, conference facilities, meeting rooms, a lounge/breakout area and a superb restaurant.

Benefits, as well as the obvious improvement in surroundings, will include an undoubted boost to staff morale.

"There is no doubt this will be a leading UK training complex," said John Edgar. "I know we will all really enjoy our learning experiences in the new surroundings."

John added that Powerlearning is more than just a training complex with distinctive packages of training and



The new team at Hoylake House training centre

development involving advanced learning techniques and professionally-designed programmes geared towards business and individual needs - it is also a culture which is rapidly becoming woven through the fabric of Power Systems.

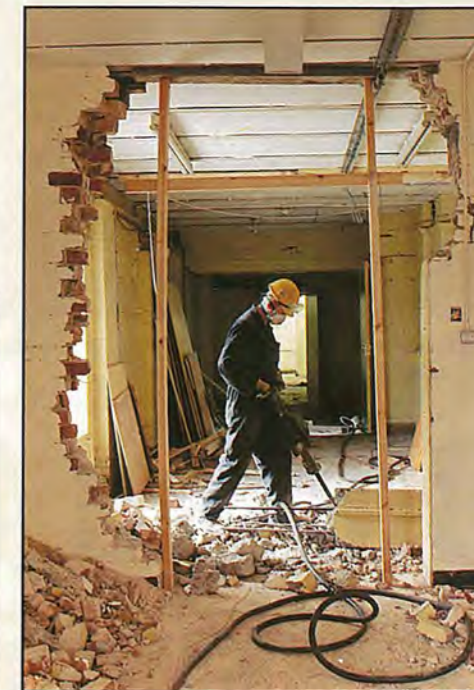
Share

There is also a major drive to achieve Investors in People at Hoylake. "Anything that Dealain House in Scotland can achieve, we can too!" says Nigel Mills, Training Co-ordinator.

Finally, Powerlearning at Hoylake is very keen to share the facilities with other divisions, outside companies, the trade unions, and the community.



Refurbishment is underway at the Hoylake training centre in preparation for the new Powerlearning facility.



Extensive improvements will transform the existing Hoylake training centre.

Ex-apprentice is new training co-ordinator

NIGEL Mills, Co-ordinator at the Hoylake training complex, has turned full circle in his job.

Almost 25 years ago he was taken on by Manweb as an apprentice from school - now, among other things, he is responsible for starting trainees and apprentices on the road to success.

Along the way, Nigel has been commissioning engineer at Heysham Power Station, Assistant District Engineer on the Isle of Skye, and Project and Planning Engineer for the former South of Scotland Electricity Board.

In 1996, after gaining an MBA at Durham University, he moved to Powerlearning at Dealain House, near Glasgow, as Training Engineer, before being offered responsibility for co-ordinating activities at Hoylake last June. "I've recently met people I've not seen for 25 years, but it's as though it were only yesterday," said Nigel.

"The new apprentices, taken on last October, will learn the same basic skills as we did, but now the centre has more state-of-the-art training facilities and concentrates not just on basics but technical and personal development as well."

Similar terms - but quite different

Powerlearning is the banner under which Power Systems delivers its training and development whereas ScottishPower Learning is a division in its own right, offering training and development opportunities to the community, especially those who are most disadvantaged. ScottishPower Learning's training programmes, which include Customer Service, Craft and IT, give youngsters the chance to gain vocational qualifications, quality work experience and increased self confidence. It is responsible for "Open Learning" and also manages the North Wales franchise for the Prince's Trust Volunteers programme. In addition it has extensive links with local schools and community projects.

Cable installation team take on challenge under River Dee



The special boring rig in action drilling steel rods under the River Dee to create a five inch bore hole.



Cable Installation Co-ordinator Derek Edwards, right, with Tom Lane looking at plans for the River Dee job.

Boring technology is so exciting

MANWEB'S pioneering skills in trenchless technology were recently demonstrated to the full, during an unusual job at Huntington in Chester.

The challenging mission was to install a 125-metre long duct under the River Dee, on the Duke of Westminster's land. With the Duke's permission gained, the 'trenchless tech' experts were called in from the Cable Installation Section at the Merseyside Regional Office, Lister Drive, Liverpool.

Pressed into action was a special boring rig which has been used by Manweb for four years and still never ceases to amaze people when they learn about it for the first time.

It drilled steel rods under the river two-and-a-half metres below the water to create a five-inch bore, with

its route tracked from a boat above, using electronic monitoring equipment. The bore was then 'pre-reamed' to a size of 12 inches so that it could receive the duct.

Two men worked on either side of the river during the enlargement (pre-reaming) of the bore and the insertion of the duct, which was achieved by attaching it to the reamer by means of an 'in-line swivel' and pulling it back into the bore. They were chargehand Dave Robbins, Andy Cuddeford, Jason Jones and Richard Tinsley.

Target

Their machine has a rock-boring facility which enabled it to penetrate sandstone encountered in the middle of the river.

Using the Jet Trac 8/60 Horizontal Boring Rig saved almost £29,000 on the job which was carried out to provide a 33kV circuit to a water plant, said Cable Installations Co-ordinator Derek Edwards.

He added: "As from April 1 this year cable installed by the Cable Installations Section will be a Key Performance Indicator with each region having a target.

"The aim is for engineers and team leaders to start asking themselves - Can this job be done by trenchless methods? Every metre of cable laid by trenchless tech saves the Company at least £10 on contractor costs."



Members of the cable installation team pull rods back during the pre-reaming.

Caenarfon staff move downstairs

THE Caenarfon depot offices have moved from the first floor to a refurbished ground floor. Staff are welcoming the much-improved working environment - on the upper level half their office space was occupied by empty tables and cupboards, because several staff had moved on.

The first floor is now available to let and enquiries are being taken from a number of interested parties.

Smoke emission sparks fire alert

SMOKE issuing from the ceiling cavity at the AM2000 Project office in Bootle prompted a fire alert on April 29.

Staff were evacuated, and the fire brigade quickly dealt with a leak of refrigerant from an air conditioning unit. There was no damage.

Contact readers had news for us

HUNDREDS of readers replied to the questionnaire in the March edition which aimed to discover what staff and retired employees thought of *Contact*.

The majority of returned questionnaires came from retired employees and this reflects the fact that they form the majority of *Contact* readers.

Most of those who replied - 75% - said they were happy with receiving *Contact* at home. Changes in how the magazine is produced should mean that readers receive it faster.

Most also said they wanted *Contact* to remain as a monthly publication - which it will, except for summer and Christmas

specials - and it seemed that the format of the magazine is popular.

The majority of those who replied believed there was about the right amount of information in the magazine, although about a third would prefer it to contain more pages.

Coverage

The areas where readers wanted more coverage were:

- Special offers
- Social events
- Job moves and achievements
- More about readers' hobbies
- Readers letters
- Local news
- Puzzles and competitions

- Items for sale and adverts
- EEIBA monthly draw winners
- Articles about retired employees
- Obituaries

The main note, from the replies, is that readers would welcome an increasingly "people" and social oriented magazine.

To achieve the points raised will involve more information from readers - such as what they are doing which might be interesting to other *Contact* readers.

Letters from readers will also be welcome.

Some of the suggestions will be introduced over the coming months and writers for the

magazine will soon be at staff restaurants throughout the region - look out for posters.

News link

Please send news for *Contact* to Jackie Unsworth via Lotus notes or by internal mail to Corporate Communications, Manweb House.

or write to:

The Editor,
Contact,
Manweb House,
Kingsfield Court,
Chester Business Park,
Wrexham Road,
Chester,
CH4 9RF

MANWEB will be leading the field when the electricity supply market opens up in September.

De-regulation dates recently announced show that the Company has been selected as one of the first five to have its area opened up for customer choice.

Chester, Mold and Holywell are the locations within Manweb that will fly the flag. In these locations, as in others to follow later, de-regulation will begin with the opening up of 10% of the customers based on postcode, plus all customers with half-hourly meters and maximum demand meters.

The second phase, scheduled for 13 weeks after the first, will give all business users and a further third of domestic customers in the area a choice

In pole position for open market

The third and final phase will be within six months of the first, with the process due to be completed in June 1999, so that all customers can make a choice. Other Manweb locations will be phased-in during December and March and April next year.

Willie Gallagher, Director of Operations, Energy Supply, said: "Manweb is working

flat out to meet the timetables laid out by Professor Stephen Littlechild, Director General of Electricity Supply, to ensure that all customers can reap benefits, and that the markets open up on schedule."

The introduction of electricity competition means that, for the first time, customers will have a choice - those changing their supplier will be able to choose the package of prices and services which suits them best.

De-Regulation Dates

MANWEB De-Regulation Dates showing main locations (with postcodes):

September 1998

CH Chester, Mold, Holywell

December 1998

L 1-30 Liverpool, Kirby, Litherland
LL Llandudno, Ruthin, Porthmadog

March 1999

CW Crewe, Congleton, Nantwich
L 31-66 Liverpool, Kirby, Ormskirk
PR Preston, Chorley, Longridge
SY Shrewsbury, Machynlleth, Ellesmere
WA Warrington, Knutsford, St Helens

April 1999

ST Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford, Leek
TF Telford, Market Drayton



Play for today

MANWEB encouraged pupils of Bridgewater High School in Warrington to devise and perform a play about the dangers of electricity, when ScottishPower Learning supported the school's bid for college status. The youngsters were given access to the Hoylake training centre, and have performed the hard-hitting play in front of other schools.