

Three graduate trainees have recently joined Manweb - Lisa Sidoli in Human Resources, and Georgina Baggot and David Rodger, the first to be recruited by Customer Service in recent years. Here, we discover their first impressions of working for Manweb.

Value 5: Teamwork and Leadership



David Rodger
Glasgow-born David Rodger graduated from Manchester University with a degree in Modern History with Economics. He is enjoying his new role in Customer Service at Warrington, in an area which he sees as crucial to the success and future of Manweb.

Georgina Baggot
Born and bred in Stockport - Deep in Norweb territory - Georgina Baggot graduated in International Business and French from Aston University in 1995.

Georgina was previously employed by a firm which manufactures and supplies raw materials for contact lenses, and was mainly responsible for the company's French market customers. While there on an unpaid placement, she replied to a Manweb advert which appeared in a University vacancy bulletin and joined the company as a graduate management trainee on 23 September. She hopes her three-year traineeship will be the start of a successful career with Manweb.

"I believe we must compete in the area of customer service as much as on prices which, these days, may not vary much from those of our competitors," he said.

David previously had a brief spell with the Inland Revenue in a clerical and customer service role. He joined Manweb after spotting an advert in Manchester University's Careers Bulletin.

"As a Manweb customer myself, I was aware of the company's reputation for customer service and so had no hesitation in applying for a post."

When not working, David's interests are travel, swimming, mountain biking and football - he's a Liverpool supporter since moving there from Scotland.

At the end of her first week, Georgina described her new colleagues in Customer Service at Warrington as quick to help and very friendly. She was also impressed with the speed and efficiency of the staff in the call centre.

In her free time, she enjoys socialising with friends and playing netball.

NEW FACES AT MANWEB

Lisa Sidoli



Lisa graduated in 1994 with a BSc Honours Degree in Economics from the University of Bath. That September she joined a small team in the University's Accommodation and Conferences Office as the Conference Co-ordinator. In this role she used her skills to sell Bath as a conference centre.

Her involvement in setting up a training programme for colleagues sparked off Lisa's interest in the staff development aspect of Human Resources, prompting her decision to pursue a career in this area.

During her first week as a graduate trainee in Human Resources at Manweb, she learned about the various roles of the staff within the department and familiarised herself with the Company Agreement.

"Over the next two years I am looking forward to learning in depth how each department within Human Resources functions and the role of other departments such as Customer Service, Information Systems and Finance," said Lisa, who will also be attending the Institute of Personnel and Development Stage Two course at NEWI in Wrexham.



Taking the pledge

The first intake of apprentices since Manweb became part of the ScottishPower group are pictured signing their 'Modern Apprentice' pledge at the Technical Training Centre in Hoylake.

Seated are (l-r) John Bell, Cewtec's Employer Training Adviser; Dave Winter, Manweb's Technical Training Services Manager; apprentice Stephen Jones, and Non-Technical Training Manager Glyn Jones, watched by the 11 other modern apprentices.

One of them, James Poynton, said: "I'm very proud to be offered the chance to become a Manweb apprentice."

CONTACT

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

OCTOBER 1996

A BETTER DEAL FOR CUSTOMERS

Manweb marked its first anniversary as part of the ScottishPower group by regaining the highly-valued Charter Mark, continuing to improve customer service and reducing electricity bills for small customers.

There were over 740 applications for the Charter Mark this year, with the standard being higher than ever, and Manweb's success reflects the company's excellent customer service achievements.

Figures just out comparing performance in the six months to September with the same period last year show that total customer minutes lost - the key measure in distribution - has almost halved, falling from 52 to 28.

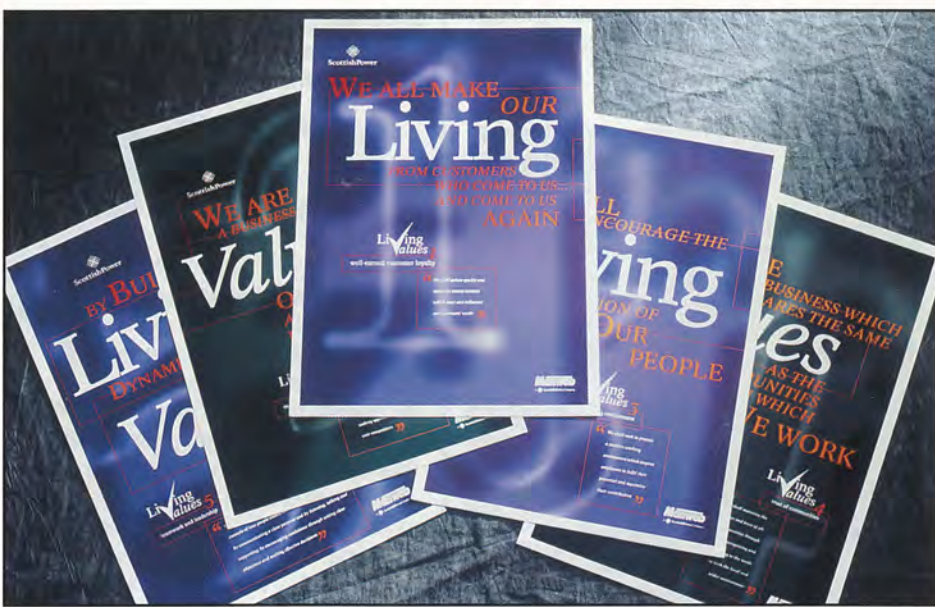
There has also been an encouraging increase in the percentage of restorations completed within the three-hour standard - 89.96 per cent against 83.35 per cent - and a fall in the number of faults per 100 km, from 8.72 to 7.03.

Impressive

The results in Customer Service are equally impressive. Payments for failing to meet guaranteed standards have plunged from 117 to just 38 - a record low - and the company has met targets in all but one of the eight performance categories.

Although there has been an increase of 6 in the number of complaints to Offer, recent trends are showing a marked reduction and, with continued effort, should see a full year improvement.

Continued on page 2.



Vision is 'clear and simple'

No-one in Manweb can have a better appreciation of the new group mission statement and values than Chief Executive Charles Berry.

For Charles was one of the leading players, along with Bob McMahan (currently on the Southern Water transition team), in the process from which the new values emerged. Now one of his key responsibilities is to instill them at Manweb.

"The values are very important as a guide to determine what sort of company we are going to have in the future. A clear and simple vision helps us work better as a team," said Charles.

He added that although he had been in post for a relatively short time, he had been encouraged to meet staff who were examining the values in relation to their own work.

In this issue of Contact we concentrate on that very point - how Manweb staff are contributing to the business along the avenues defined in the group mission statement and values.

We look at the benefits of integration, particularly what Manweb people here and in Scotland are doing to help the business prepare for the challenges of 1998, and how the new Network Management Centre is likely to make for improved investment decisions and customer service.

We also follow the latest developments in customer service, report on how staff are responding to development opportunities and outline the work being done to ensure that Manweb continues to enjoy the trust of the community it serves.

Special 16-page 'Values' edition

Better deal for customers

Continued from page 1.

News that the company is cutting the price of electricity to its small business customers by up to 10 per cent provided another boost for the Manweb area. The reduction stems from the company's commitment to pass on to customers a share of the benefits which have arisen through improvements in the efficiency of the business over the past 12 months.

The 10 per cent cut for those on quarterly small business tariffs and a 7.3 per cent reduction for businesses billed monthly demonstrates the good progress which has been at Manweb since last October. The company's quarterly small business tariff remains at 1990 level, a 17.3 per cent reduction in real terms.

Manweb is also introducing a reduction in bills with effect from 1 October 1996 - a month earlier than scheduled. The cuts, made possible by a cut in the fossil fuel levy, represent an average reduction of 4.5 per cent for domestic and small business customers and 5.7 per cent for monthly billed business customers.

-Our mission-

We are committed builders of businesses, in electricity and utility-related markets, determined to deliver outstanding performance.

-Our values-

WELL-EARNED CUSTOMER LOYALTY

We shall deliver quality and value for money services which meet and influence our customers' needs.

ENHANCED SHAREHOLDER VALUE

We shall create shareholder value by building businesses and continuously seeking opportunities to gain advantage over competitors.

POSITIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

We shall seek to provide a positive working environment which inspires employees to fulfil their potential and maximise their contribution.

TRUST OF COMMUNITIES

We shall maintain the respect and trust of all communities through recognising and responding to the needs of both the local and wider environment.

TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP

The ScottishPower group will be led by management who:

- Have a passion to deliver
- Are ambitious, honest, frank and ethical
- Share a common sense of direction
- Manage change and have the courage to confront difficult decisions and situations
- Are able to take, and encourage others to take, considered and acceptable risks
- Never forget that people do it all.

Value 1: Well-earned customer loyalty



Supervisor Vicky Kelsall (3rd left) with the out of hours team (l-r) Stuart Jones, Candice Povey, Nicola Jarvis, Terry Morris and Kim Cross.

OPEN ALL HOURS

They work at night to avoid leaving customers in the dark...

Based at Rhostyllen, they are the shift teams who work 'out of hours' to keep Manweb's new centralised single telephone number 24-hour service function ticking over.

Now, a single call is all that's needed to contact them. All the customer - industrial or domestic - has to do is ring 0345 112211 - to obtain information or advice regarding no supply or network related matters.

Rhostyllen has become the reporting centre for emergency calls, rationalising the way they are handled. This releases the 'DOC' staff, who previously handled calls, to concentrate on getting engineers out to put customers back on supply.

Already 18 staff have been recruited from Contracting to work in teams of five in shifts covering the periods 5pm to 12.30am Mondays to Fridays; 12.30am to 8am Thursdays to Saturdays; 8am to 4pm and 4pm to midnight Saturdays and Sundays; and midnight to 8am Sundays and Mondays. Bank holidays, including Christmas Day, are covered by part-time weekend staff.

Calls received on all depot emergency numbers will now be re-routed throughout the 24 hours and answered in the appropriate regional call centre during normal hours and

by Rhostyllen call centre outside normal hours.

Senior team leader Vicky Kelsall - herself on call around the clock - praises the system. "We get hundreds of calls on numerous subjects and now there's always someone there trained to respond in the best possible way in the interests of customer service, no matter what the time of day or night."

All shift staff have undertaken a two weeks' intensive training course at Rhostyllen under the guidance of experts from Distribution Operations. They also undertook familiarisation training at Manweb's training centre in Hoylelake.

Customer Service Manager Kate Walker says: "This 24-hour centralised service is an extension of our customer service policy which can be called the voice of Manweb. These 'out-of-hours' teams possess great integrity and have to work independently. Although they face similar problems to those encountered by the day staff, they are under more difficult circumstances - they haven't the back-up of the rest of the office staff when they are working at night."

Keeping up the momentum

As the half-yearly figures reveal further improvements in standards of service, Manweb is keeping the momentum going by revising its Codes of Practice.

New booklets, outlining the company's commitment to customers in areas including paying accounts, services for elderly and disabled people, and using electricity efficiently, have been rewritten and are due for publication shortly.

A new booklet has been written to help pre-payment card customers. It explains how the system works and how to use it properly and beneficially.

Customers will be advised of the increased number of places where meter cards can be bought. The company has made arrangements with third party agents like Spar shops and off-licences, which have longer opening hours, to sell meter cards.

Services to elderly and disabled people include a Carefree Register, which will enable Manweb to pinpoint those with special needs - for example, those on

dialysis machines. More advice will be offered to blind people, with bills in Braille, and to partially-sighted customers who will be contacted by telephone as part of a 'Talking Bill' service. Customers will also be told what grants are available for home insulation and if they are entitled to them.

Community Relations Adviser Peter Simester emphasised that the Codes have been revised in complete consultation with the Electricity Consumers' Committee and much of their advice has been taken up in the new and re-drafted booklets.

Manweb staff will be told of the changes to the Codes of Practice, which should be available by the end of the year, in briefing meetings.

Arrangements will be made for the Codes to be made available in English and Welsh and on audio tape.

Manweb is also arranging to have translation facilities into any language a customer require, on request.



One aspect covered by the new Codes of Practice is that card meters installed in awkward positions - such as the one above - will be moved free of charge on request to an appropriate position for older and disabled customers.

IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE

The improvements in Manweb's distribution performance, underlined by network performance statistics published this month, are a tribute to the commitment of staff and the value of focused investment in the network and supporting systems.

We did not compare too favourably with ScottishPower in 1994/95, but a strong focus on performance brought significant gains last year despite one of the worst lightning storms for many years - on 10 and 11 June there were 21,000 lightning strikes in our region and 120,000 customers affected.

The improvements have continued so far this year, largely as a consequence of continued focus from all our staff in distribution, but also due to the commissioning of our new Network Management System, the expansion of live line working and the continued programme of network refurbishment.

Manweb's target is a 30 per cent reduction in customer minutes lost (CML) by the year 2000, based on the 1994/95 level, and to help achieve this we are investing in eight 160 kW mobile generators, for use during planned outages and to give groups of customers a supply when we can't carry out a restoration following a fault as quickly as we would like.

We will also be adopting ScottishPower's approach of giving greater weight to CML in overhead line investment decisions and adopting the rural protection policy favouring the use of insulated 11kV conductors, improved protection systems for overhead lines and the deployment of automated secondary switching to restore supplies to rural communities.



by Geoff Abel
Director,
Distribution
Operations

Another important measure of quality of supply is speed of restoration in the event of a fault. The OFFER standard of overall performance requires that we achieve an 85 per cent restoration within three hours, but we have set our target at over 88 per cent for this financial year. I am pleased to report that we are currently exceeding this target.

Within distribution, we will also be continuing our focus on building a good relationship with the communities we serve, and in this respect it helps that our new Regional structure takes us closer to the community.

Following the takeover we made a commitment to our customers in North Wales and Shropshire about our place in the community by retaining depots and a significant presence in Aberystwyth, Caernarfon, Oswestry and Rhyl, in addition to making significant investments in our regional offices in Merseyside, Prenton and Wrexham.

Over the last 12 months, with the enthusiasm and commitment of staff, we have improved the level of services to our customers and this is very clear from the indicators of customer performance.

This has been a period of considerable change, and credit must go to staff for the way they have kept a clear focus on the fundamentals of the distribution business - customer service, operating performance and value for money services.

Value 1: Well-earned customer loyalty

MANWEB'S NEW FACES ON THE HIGH STREET

Peter Jones and Gill Reeve represent the new face of Manweb on the High Street.

They are both High Street Customer Service Managers, with Peter in charge of 10 centres and 55 staff covering Merseyside and Cheshire, and Gill

managing the Welsh region, comprising 10 centres and 46 staff.

They come to their new posts from vastly different backgrounds - Gill in customer accounting and Peter in the former retail division.

The fusion of their experience is

the result of Manweb's decision to maintain a strong presence in the town centre through the creation of a new customer service operation.

Not only does this fill the gap that the withdrawal from retail may have created, it also provides the opportunity to provide a more focused service.

"There simply wasn't the time to attend to people paying their bills at the customer accounts desk. Our job was to sell cookers and fridges," said Peter, who began his career at the flagship St John's shop in the heart of Liverpool, which had an annual turnover of £2 million in its prime.



Gill Reeve

The old shop has become a trendy sports outfitters, but in a new location just across the mall stands one of Manweb's new customer service centres - the busiest in our area, with around 1,100 payments and over 150 other enquiries daily.

The 101 ex-retail staff making the culture change from sales to customer service are a new breed who talk now of tariffs, not Toshiba, and new connections rather than



Peter Jones

Creda.

Changing the face of Manweb in the High Street has been a major challenge, and it was important that the notices announcing the closure of 38 shops last September was not taken to imply that Manweb was leaving the area. Surveys subsequently showed that the public did not perceive any reduction in the quality of Manweb's customer service operation during the restructuring.

At the same time, immense thought had to be given to the staff who would be relocating to the 20 remaining centres, taking into account their home location, transport arrangements, family circumstances and numbers accepting VSS, among other things.

The last three retail outlets, Holyhead, Widnes and Norris Green, Liverpool, are scheduled for conversion in the near future to complete the transformation, giving Manweb 11 dedicated Customer Service Centres and nine shared centres (located within local businesses and run by Manweb staff).

Increase

There has also been an increase in third party payment outlets which, alongside the facility to make full/part payments free of charge at the Midland Bank, offer customers around 900 payment points.

"Our customers are being enlightened to the many options available for alternative payments arrangements - though some of them think we still sell appliances," said Peter. "But things are changing fast, largely because of our ability to discuss things with the customer face-to-face rather than on the phone. No other utility offers this, which will be a great advantage when full competition arrives in 1998."

He added: "We are totally focused on customer service and our staff have received high quality training. And we have much more contact with our regional colleagues in Warrington and Wrexham, who make us feel part of the overall customer service team."

Learning all about debt

Many Manweb staff are finding out what it's like to be in debt.

They are also finding out what help is available and what they can do about it, thanks to a sponsorship deal the company has arranged with the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) in Liverpool.

The £10,000-a-year sponsorship provides vital funding for the CAB which, in exchange, provides debt awareness training for our staff.

Manweb Customer Relations Manager John Kennedy, who arranged the two-way initiative with the CAB, said: "Although we have our own debt awareness training specifically related to electricity accounts, we felt that we could offer more advice covering debts in general."

Now, customer liaison officers will be even better equipped to offer help and advice to those who may genuinely find difficulty in paying their bills.

As part of the sponsorship programme, CAB trainers visit Wrexham and Warrington each month for a debt awareness day. Areas covered include: **the extent of debt; why debt happens; liability for debt; income maximisation; realistic repayment plans.**

Judith Riley, Regional Director of the North West National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux based in Liverpool, said: "Our aim is to provide a fun course in a relaxed environment, using enhanced training methods and accelerated learning techniques."

Targeting those most vulnerable

Work started this month to improve the service to customers whose supplies have been identified as most vulnerable to repeated interruption in cold weather.

The problem was highlighted last winter when around 29 pole-mounted transformers (PMTs) faulted as a direct result of the loading imposed on them. Each caused widespread failure of supplies, as in most cases the primary high voltage feeder tripped.

Before any engineering work could start, staff first had to establish the transformers most at risk, a modelling exercise which involved mapping out transformer locations and matching each with specific information about load and customer tariff.

Around 600 PMTs - mostly in North Wales - have now been scheduled for checking from an initial list of 1,600. Most of these will be replaced by a PMT with a rating suited to local demand characteristics. While this will require the purchase of new transformers, others will be swapped to reduce costs.

The installation programme has begun in Aberystwyth and is scheduled for completion towards the end of next year.

Value 2: Enhanced Shareholder Value



RPU Manager Robin Bradshaw and the 'black museum'.

PROTECTION IN PRACTICE

Manweb's Revenue Protection Unit has just had its ISO quality certification renewed for another three years.

And starting this month, ScottishPower will be taking to the streets armed with Manweb best practice which has not only led to a substantial reduction in electricity theft locally and made Manweb an industry leader in the field but also raised the issue of safety being a prime concern in the campaign against electricity interference.

The hope is that ScottishPower's new Revenue Protection Unit will produce similar results. The unit will replace existing arrangements, with staff operating from bases in Glasgow, Motherwell and Edinburgh, where the main administrative office will also be located.

It will become part of ScottishPower's Metering Business with the group revenue protection structures managed by Robin Bradshaw, who has been in charge of the Manweb operation since it became part of the Metering Business two years ago. "Centralising allowed us to devote all our energies to the task of providing 24-hour cover throughout the company and to liaise more closely with the police," said Robin. "We set up procedures to ensure we were doing things as efficiently as possible and have had recent notification that our audit in June was successful and that, as a result, our quality accreditation has been extended for another three years."

Robin sees the unit's purpose of reducing and preventing electricity abstraction as best achieved by working with the police and other agencies.

Joint initiatives have included the insertion of a Crimestoppers leaflet in customers' bills inviting people to tip-off the police on a freephone number and warning them of the dangers of interfering with electrical equipment.

"We have a vigorous approach to meter interference, which means we don't get many repeat offenders," said Robin.

In all large cities there are 'clocked' meters that show a consumption record the equivalent of a 10-year-old Vauxhall Senator with 10,000 miles on the log.

Each year in the UK, electricity worth around £50 million is stolen. In addition to the loss of income, a worry for the regional electricity companies is the risks people are prepared to take for a free power supply - examples of which are displayed in the 'black museum' within Manweb RPU's visitor centre.

Many fires and even deaths have been caused by makeshift circuitry - one victim was a water board employee working in a house where a meter bypass had left the water pipes live.

RPU also has a store where damaged metering equipment is securely held - neatly bagged and labelled - should it be required as evidence of interference.

The visitors centre is also used for training purposes and for meeting agencies interested in the work of the operation. It has proved such an integral part of the revenue protection unit that a similar facility is to be provided early next year in a ScottishPower depot in Glasgow.

Quality drive in top gear

They are eating, sleeping and living quality in Customer Service at Rhostyllen as staff gear up towards potential ISO 9002 accreditation.

Two members of the quality implementation team are Carolyn Yates and Jean Jones.

Carolyn, who has been with the company 10 years and works for the Regional Customer Service Manager and Business Centre Manager at Rhostyllen, hails the accreditation drive as vital to business success. She sees it as a rationalisation of Customer Service into a cohesive structure.

Jean, who works in the Correspondence Unit, says it's good that everyone works in the same way.

Improve

Both Carolyn and Jean have been busy with the team helping to assess ways to improve general organisation in the office, avoiding mistakes and contributing to the manual which will contain the procedures.

"All areas of work will be assessed. We will take account of staff's suggestions and make amendments as we go along - everyone has to agree," said Jean.

Internal audits have been the order of the day to familiarise staff with what to expect, to iron out any snags and fine tune the systems before the real thing - the external audit on 11 November.

Carolyn said: "We are all eager to get the accreditation and are working very hard towards achieving it."

Audits have been carried out at random, which puts everyone on the spot and assures all aspects of the quality systems are checked.

Staff have been briefed and have had regular reviews - they've lived it since January.

NMS GIVES GREATER CONTROL

An investment of £12.5 million has equipped Manweb with one of the most efficient network control systems in the industry, developed over the past four years and completed on schedule and to budget.

It is designed to deliver significant improvements in customer service and more cost-effective investment in system development. In addition, the Network Management System (NMS) will help Manweb to meet regulatory reporting requirements.

The new system allows a far greater degree of control over the 132 and 33kV network through the installation of telecontrol equipment at 650 or so sites - 550 primary substations and 100 bulk or grid supply points.

It will also provide control engineers with better quality information about the state of the network than has hitherto been possible, enabling Distribution Operations to commit its resources more effectively and to restore customers more quickly in the event of a network fault.

Accurate

The high quality information available will also provide a more accurate baseline for improvements in planning network reinforcement and refurbishment works - it is anticipated that the NMS will more than pay for itself within its lifetime.

Previously, investment decisions, often involving significant amounts, had

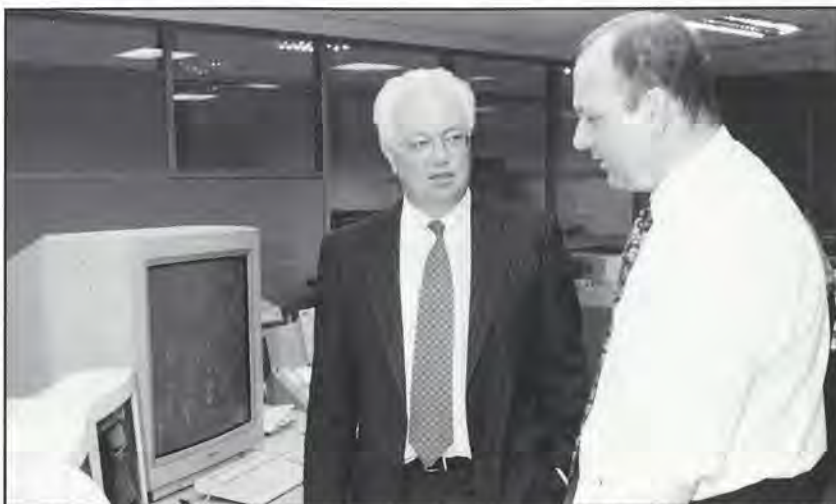
to be taken based on inconclusive network performance data. This often led to the adoption of an approach which erred on the side of caution and led to expenditure which could have been avoided or put off.

The remote terminal units transmit comprehensive data on voltage, current, load, switch status and alarms, which is quickly and clearly represented to the user at the electronic interface in Prenton or any other NMS location in the company.

Steve Chantler, who was in charge of the project, said NMS was a modern and fully integrated system with functions incorporating switching, safety management, event processing, control authority transfer and on-line power analysis software. In fact, it was designed to meet all the needs of operations staff in the day-to-day control of the network.

"Another advantage of the NMS is its capability for future development. At present it is principally concerned with the 132 and 33 kV networks and source infeeds to the 11kV rural network and to switchboards in the urban networks as they are replaced with more modern equipment.

Value 2: Enhanced Shareholder Value



ScottishPower's Chief Executive Ian Robinson, pictured (left) chatting to Senior Control Engineer Tony Hignett, was among the first visitors to see the Network Management System in operation at Prenton.

"NMS could be readily extended to selected points of the 11kV network, either directly or via an interface to other 'real time' control and monitoring systems to provide real benefits," he said.

Steve added that the NMS rivalled anything currently in use or under development in the industry. And it has given him special pleasure to deliver the project on time, bearing in mind

major hiccups en route when the main contractor, Ferranti, went into receivership. There was also the Manweb acquisition and the subsequent decision to close Sealand Road, which for a short period, was the home of the new system!

Benefits

As an example of the operational benefits of the NMS, in the past control engineers at primary sites would only have known that a common alarm had

been triggered. They would have had no knowledge of the cause, which might have been the loss of a 33kV circuit, the loss of a whole substation, problems with the protection, or an 11kV fault.

The distribution engineer despatched to the site would not necessarily have a very clear idea of where to start looking for the cause of the fault. Meanwhile, customers would be off supply.

Now the control room staff can better assess from their screens if it is a case of a circuit breaker remaining open or if there is a genuine 11kV trip. They can also tell from current data available whether fuse trouble on a spur line is a likely cause of any loss of supply.

As a result, customers can have their power restored more quickly, improving the company's performance on the all-important measure of customer minutes lost.

In the event of a large incident, the system's in-built flexibility also speeds up the restoration process as well as providing information to help in the co-ordination of resources to fix the faults.



Senior Control Engineer Tony Hignett in the new Network Management Centre.



Open for business - Don McRae cuts the ribbon to launch the new stores office at Crewe.

IN STORE FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Logistics Manager Don McRae cut the ribbon to officially open the new stores office at Crewe.

This is the second location to benefit from a programme to bring stores facilities up to modern standards, following on from similar work completed in Oswestry.

Peter Gleave, Logistics Team Leader for Warrington and Crewe, said: "The new stores office at Crewe has meant the work area has almost doubled. The old work benches have been replaced by individual desks, an important advantage in view of the recent introduction of personal computers into the workplace. This will ensure we achieve the best health and safety standards for the work stations.

"Another major advantage of the new office is that we now have a meeting area where we can hold planning meetings and team briefings. Prior to this, we had to

either stand in the warehouse to sort out jobs with the engineers, or use an office which wasn't suitable for meetings.

"We are now able to offer a proper working environment for staff."

The new office is also warmer and more energy efficient. The old brick walls have been insulated, and the new suspended ceiling and the flooring have been improved.

The job was organised by Property Services with Maywood as the main contractor, Manweb Contracting carrying out the electrical work, and Information Systems connecting the new cabling and data equipment.

Don McRae was joined at the opening ceremony by Materials Manager Jane Sheppard, Crewe's Construction Manager Huw Thomas, Peter Gleave, Chargehand Sharron Webb, and Storekeepers Philip Hough, Richard Gill and Malcolm Jackson.

Billing project on target for 1997 launch

Work is progressing to schedule on the Multi Service Project, to be fully implemented in Manweb and ScottishPower next year.

Hundreds of computer programmes and millions of words have been written to create the underlying database infrastructure to support a multi service business.

The project is one of the largest of its kind seen in the UK and is designed to smooth the flow of cash through the electricity and gas supply businesses while at the same time offering customers a more flexible service.

During the second phase of the project, new functions will be introduced in line with the requirements of the supply business. For example, if there is a market for annual or quarterly accounts, the system can accommodate it, and if business customers want a four-four-five week payment cycle, that's possible too.

MSP will allow customers to mix and match from a menu of different payment methods.

The system will incorporate a credit management package, called London Bridge, to replace the less flexible follow-up procedures pursued by both companies.

London Bridge provides great flexibility in payment arrangements and will also prove valuable in helping the new billing system accommodate new customers post 1998.

MSP aims to provide the business with the opportunity to secure competitive advantage in the electricity and gas markets by offering a more tailored service than has been possible before.

In the meantime, the priority for the many staff in Manweb and ScottishPower involved in the project is the safe delivery of the core computing structure prior to the introduction of business functions next year and the phased transfer of three million customers onto what will be the most sophisticated billing system in the industry.

New service helps us weather the storm

A new, electronically-based weather warning service is enabling Manweb staff to act lightning fast in the event of a storm.

Daily weather information sent by E-mail from Cardiff Weather Centre alerts Manweb if there is a risk to the electricity network which could lead to customers being off supply.

The information assesses the risk, taking into account factors such as wind speed in excess of 60 mph, the presence of snow and its likely effect on overhead lines and transport, and the likelihood of lightning.

Details are also given about the time the storm is likely to hit and its anticipated duration.

The service is a vast improvement for operations staff who previously had to draft weather warnings based on taped telephone messages and information faxed from Cardiff twice weekly.

Now the E-mail from the Weather Centre can be immediately forwarded down the line if it contains a warning.

This allows individual Manweb managers to make local decisions to prepare for bad weather.

There have been staff moves north and south of the border as part of the integration process since Manweb became part of the ScottishPower group. Here, and on page 10, Contact has been following their progress.

EASTERN PROMISE

It's not every Sunday you get to see the Taj Mahal before embarking on a week's work, but that's what Information Systems Project Manager John Girvan did recently.

Glasgow-based John, who has been working on the multi-service billing (MSP) project alongside colleagues in Manweb, spend five days in India with the software company Wipro, which has been writing programmes for the new system on behalf of IBM.

Although the design work for the new system was carried out by Information Systems staff in Manweb and ScottishPower, for billing data and the other satellite systems fed by the existing system, CAPSIS, it was decided to outsource the building of the software.

Potential

After the first delivery had been made, John, together with Information Systems colleague Frances Mulhall, and Dilip Thaker and Andy Anderson of IBM, went to India to visit the Wipro team. The objective of the trip was two-fold - to improve communication and to identify other potential areas of work which Wipro could undertake for the group.

John said the trip had been very successful, establishing a great rapport with the team of eight who are working on the Multi Service Project.

"Although India itself was a culture shock with the extremes of poverty and luxury we saw, the programmers at Wipro are top quality people and they are doing an excellent job for us," he said. "This is a relatively small contract, but in outsourcing work off-shore we are simply following a path which has already been forged by some very major players."



At home in Chester, Tom Forrest with wife Liz and children Andrew and Morag.

Integration for Tom began 11 years ago

Tom Forrest recognised more than a few colleagues when he moved from ScottishPower to take up the post of Information Systems Manager at Manweb.

He remembered them from his wedding reception in Chester 11 years ago!

For Tom, integration with Manweb began when he met former Manweb Information Services analyst Liz Jones at an industry seminar on information technology. Tom sits in the chair once occupied by her former boss, John Peaker, who hosted the party held to mark her departure from Manweb to set up home with Tom in Scotland.

The couple are staying in Higher Kinnerton with children Andrew, nine, and Morag, seven, who attend the local school. Liz's parents live in Chester, just seven miles down the road.

In another union involving both companies, work is ongoing to link the electronic mail systems, with Manweb's based on Lotus Notes and ScottishPower's on the compatible Lotus CC Mail.

Since computing technology underpins so much of the Group business, the whole integration programme has had a greater impact on Tom's department than just about any other part of the company.

Tom and his team of 80 or so are heavily involved, for example, in the delivery of Multi-Service Project software and a raft of other projects detailed in a burgeoning business plan.

Internally, the department's priority is to deliver stable systems during a time of dramatic change within Manweb and within the department itself, with the closure of the data centre and the decentralisation of Information Systems activities along the lines of the ScottishPower model, which effectively means the creation of a new network.

Mainframe operations became the responsibility of the specialist company CFM with effect from 27 October, and it was a major logistical task when Manweb's entire store of computer data was downloaded as part of the transfer to CFM's mainframe in Salford.

Around 800 Gigabytes of hard disk information was copied during October - that's the equivalent of 200,000 Bibles!

KEY ROLE FOR MANWEB TEAM

Manweb staff will play a key role in retaining and winning customers between now and 1998, when the markets for electricity and gas become fully competitive.

Mark Faucett, Ruth Hughes, Carole Poland, Colin Harrison, Marie Myles, Tony Harper, Andy Butcher and Reuben Perry have relocated to Glasgow as part of the integration process.

They are now part of former Manweb man David Clarke's Consumer Marketing and Sales operation, which aims to persuade residential customers that the ScottishPower group is the number one choice for all their energy needs.

The team is working on a marketing programme which includes pricing, advertising and promotional activity and developing customer loyalty schemes. A major customer research

programme is also under way to establish what specific groups of customers need and want. This initiative will enable marketing activity to be targeted in the most appropriate way.

Winning

There are two groups within the Consumer Marketing and Sales operation - Customer Marketing, which will be responsible for retaining existing customers, and Developing Markets, which will focus on winning new ones.

These key groups are backed by Advertising and Promotions, and Research and Database sections, which also provide services to Marketing's other arm - Business Marketing and Sales.

Customer Marketing is headed by Marie Myles, who is supported by Colin Harrison as Load Development Manager.

Meanwhile, as part of the Developing Markets group, Carole Poland is working on the design of a customer service process for selling electricity and gas to customers outside ScottishPower's area.

Ruth Hughes is currently supporting ScottishPower Manager Willie MacDiarmid in a pilot programme to test how competition in gas

supply will work in the residential market in the south of England.

The Research and Database function is headed by Tony Harper, while Andy Butcher is responsible for database development, and Mark Faucett is working as a Database Analyst, drawing on millions of pieces of information to paint a picture of the group's customers.

The final member of the former Manweb team, Reuben Perry, is working as Direct Marketing and Promotions Manager alongside the team's recently-appointed Advertising and Promotions Manager Alan Beavis, who recently joined ScottishPower from the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Consumer Marketing and Sales Manager David Clarke, who moved to Glasgow in June, said his team intended to establish "a leading customer



Enjoying a new life by the loch

Former Standards Manager Roger Bracey (pictured above) moved to Scotland in May, after 20 years with Manweb, having joined as a graduate trainee.

Although the prospect was daunting, Roger, wife Gaynor and sons Christopher, four, and 18-month-old James have now settled down and are enjoying their new life.

The family's new home is in Lochwinnoch, a picturesque village just under 20 miles away from Glasgow, with a pretty loch and a bird reserve right on the doorstep.

It takes Roger just over half an hour to travel to work in the mornings, whereas in Chester, living just three miles away from Head Office, the journey took 20 minutes.

Roger's main area of work is now in overhead line standards and he is also helping to unify Manweb and ScottishPower specifications.

The Braceys have taken to Glasgow and have found plenty to do in and around the city - enjoying visiting museums and walks in the countryside when they take time off from redecorating their new home.



Consumer Marketing and Sales Manager David Clarke (front, centre) with his team in Glasgow.

interface" between now and the advent of the fully competitive energy markets in 1998, when millions of pounds worth of business stands to be won or lost by Britain's utilities.

In a nutshell, this means providing residential customers with a package of services which can be tailored to their needs, getting the pricing structure right and generally making it easy for customers to do business with ScottishPower.

David said: "Almost everything we do in the immediate future will be focused on 1998, but in the medium term we are training our minds towards developing multi-utility services."

The multi-service approach will involve different parts of the ScottishPower group collaborating in the 'cross-selling' of services, including electricity, gas, water, waste water, telecommunications and retails in the group's three regions and beyond.

Neighbours in the north

The move north to Glasgow from Chester has paid off for Manweb couple Carl and Sue Woodman.

After 20 years with Manweb, Carl was naturally apprehensive about making the change. But not only is he now settling well into his new post with Power Systems' Performance and Development section, his wife Sue has started a new job with ScottishTelecom, the company's telecommunications subsidiary.

Sue, like Carl, used to work for Manweb. But when Carl was moved to one of the district offices, Sue had to give up work to go with him. Having moved to Glasgow, she is delighted to be back in the company 'fold' once more.

Carl's job now involves network analysis and identifying where investment should be made to improve the quality of supply to customers.

The couple are now settling into their new home in Strathaven, south of Glasgow, which is a semi-rural setting - and close to the motorway for making trips back south to visit family and friends.

A near neighbour of Carl's in Strathaven is former Manweb man Dave Fort, who moved to Scotland in June to take up his new post as Network Planning Engineer.

Dave, pictured, will be putting together expenditure plans for the next five years in line with the business plan for the network, to ensure that money is being spent wisely and that the right assets are being replaced.



One of Dave's first assignments in his new post was a three-week trip to Japan to visit the Kuyushu Electric Power Company (KEPCO), with whom ScottishPower has a Friendship Agreement.

The two companies regularly exchange information on technical performance and share best practices.

During the three weeks, Dave spent time meeting KEPCO management and staff to discuss various aspects of transmission and distribution and was shown round several power stations.

He said the Japanese were extremely helpful and friendly and that he had learned much during the trip.

Dave was also treated to the famous Japanese hospitality and attended a number of evening events - including a karaoke session, where he took to the stage and sang the Beatles number 'All My Loving'. He also managed to get tickets to see a Stevie Wonder concert.

"The Japanese work hard and play hard," he said. "They are also meticulous about time-keeping. If an event is informal, it will finish at 8.30pm, if formal, 11pm."

"While we were over there, my colleagues and I attended a baseball game. Suddenly, about half-way through the proceedings, half of the audience stood up and left. The game wasn't finished, but it was 8.30pm and obviously time for some of them to move on to something else!"

Dave said he would be keeping in touch with his Japanese counterparts to regularly exchange information and ideas.

CONTACT 10



FITNESS DRIVE

Chief Executive Charles Berry joined staff on exercise bikes to mark the start of a new fitness drive linked to the Wellscreen programme. Manweb is investing in a network of state-of-the-art fitness centres at its offices in Rhostyllen, Prenton, Warrington and Queensferry, and also at the new Chester office. The first of these new centres was opened at Rhostyllen at the beginning of October, and it is hoped the others will be up and running by mid-December. Charles Berry is pictured cutting the ribbon to declare the new Rhostyllen centre open for business, watched by Fitness Centre Administrator Sue Linton, and some of the users.

Open Learning well on target

Manweb is close to having a landmark one-third of its workforce subscribe to Open Learning.

Staff Development, who run the scheme, expect to reach their first milestone well in advance of the target date of March next year and probably before the first anniversary of Open Learning in December. A driving force behind the success of the scheme is a desire amongst staff for academically-based programmes, made clear at the opening of the Crewe centre.

A subsequent communications exercise inviting staff for their views attracted 260 enquiries about academic and practical courses, with more than 140 people actually signing up.

The result was the recent introduction of largely college-based vocational courses such as an ONC in Electrical Engineering, an HNC in Business Studies, and courses provided by professional institutes for staff involved in areas of Supervisory Management, Accountancy and Personnel.

These and a range of practical courses are offered at the main Open Learning Centres in conjunction with local colleges, to the delight of college administrators who are enthusiastic about having their facilities fully utilised and about sending their lecturers to Manweb's own training centres in Chester, Liverpool and Rhostyllen.

Staff moving jobs or taking on new responsibilities are turning to Open Learning to improve their knowledge of business and finance, while courses on computing remain popular, not just for office-based employees, but also for industrial staff who have never before had access to computer training. Language courses in beginner's French, German and Spanish will start up again this autumn at the main centres if there is sufficient demand, and a new Spanish course is also being introduced in Crewe.

Value 3: Positive Working

NO GAIN WITHOUT

PAIN... By Dave Williams

It is now three months since the launch of Safety First 96 and we are half-way through the financial year. But is the campaign working?

It's said that there is no gain without pain, and I'm sure the managers who are trying to manage their safety performance to the standards of the campaign are now realising that the set objectives will not be achieved without effort.

Operational safety auditing is being carried out in all areas of the business at a steady rate, and some issues are being highlighted which require resolving. This should lead to further long-term improvements in the company's accident performance.

The programme of briefings is continuing, reinforced by articles in Contact. Are we getting any safer? Accidents are down, but there have still been far too many. Are you as aware of the safety of your work surroundings as you should be? How many times in the last month have you thought 'that was a near miss'?

If you are having a lot of near misses in your life, then you need to ask the question 'how safe am I?' Most of us will feel we are not, so what do we do about it?

Hazards

Although many things are put in place at work to reduce the risk of an accident, for example safe systems of work, safe equipment, and personal protective equipment, the only person who can identify many of the hazards affecting an individual is that individual.

When you recognise a hazard, you need to decide if it is going to cause an injury to you and the severity of that injury. This is called risk assessment, and a good example of this in every day life is crossing the road.

You look to see if there is any traffic coming. Is there a hazard? If there is no traffic approaching you cross the road.

But if there is traffic approaching, what type of vehicle is it, how big is it, how fast is it moving and how close is it? How

SAFE WORKING BONUS FOR CHARITIES



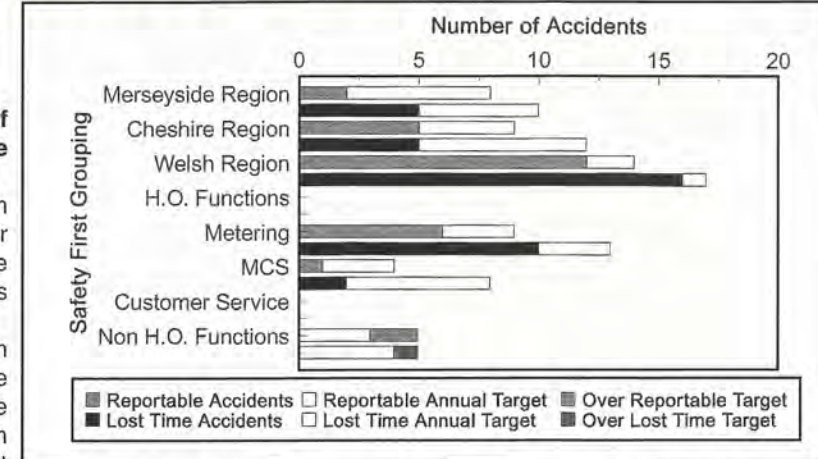
Safe working by staff at Manweb's Merseyside Regional office has paid dividends for local charities.

Cheques for £100 were presented to KIND (Kids in Need and Distress); the Acorn Venture Farm, the Northern Primary Support Centre in Kirkby, and Bodmin Road Play Group, Walton.

The money was donated by Manweb through the Safety First campaign, and from an earlier local initiative to cut the accident toll amongst staff. The staff themselves chose the charities to benefit from their safe working.

ScottishPower's Chief Executive Ian Robinson (3rd left), is pictured during his recent visit to Lister Drive presenting £100 to (2nd left) Pauline Wiseman of the Bodmin Road Play Group. Also pictured are Merseyside Regional Manager Bill Tubey (left), Chief Executive Charles Berry (right), Play Group Leader Joyce Daley and two youngsters from the play group.

Safety



Company Lost Time and Reportable Accidents by Safety First grouping, 1 April to 18 September 1996.

much risk is there in crossing the road and how severe is the possible injury?

If it is a road roller, the potential injury is severe, but it is a slow mover and can easily be avoided. The risk is low. A fast-moving car is assessed differently. The potential for injury is again severe and the chance of avoiding it depends on your agility. The risk is high. To manage that risk you would let the car pass and then cross the road.

This is risk assessment in a nutshell, and you should apply this to everything you do at work as it can have a great impact on the number of accidents that occur. When you have learned the technique, take it home with you. When you can assess risks correctly in the workplace, think how much safer you can make your home and family.

The graph above shows the performance of the staff groups against the annual Safety First targets. Please do all you can to help your group meet both annual and monthly targets.

Manweb has set aside £1,600 each month and there are still seven groups who could each win £3,000 to be donated to the charities of their choice. In addition your staff group may be able to win the Chief Executive's Cup.

You and your managers must work at managing safety and reducing accidents in order to benefit.

CONTACT 11

Satisfaction guaranteed

Customers polled in a survey comparing gas, electricity, telecoms and water companies gave Manweb the best marks in nearly all measures of service, including supply reliability, response to enquiries and ease of payment.

The survey of Manweb's domestic customers, commissioned by the company but carried out by independent researchers, shows an improvement in the level of customer satisfaction with Manweb between September 1995 and April 1996.

While the improvement is in line with an enhanced public appreciation of the utilities generally, it may also reflect the positive effects of Manweb customer service initiatives such as increased supply reliability and the provision of more accurate estimated bills, the survey notes.

Encouragingly, customers have taken into their stride the closure of Manweb shops, which alongside a visit from the meter reader was the customer's most important point of contact with the company.

The closures, offset by the creation of new customer service centres and the expansion of third party outlets for meter cards, for example, has had no negative effect on levels of customer satisfaction.

The research, conducted for marketing purposes during April and involving around 1,000 domestic customers, shows that people have an even more positive attitude to Manweb than they had last year - though not as positive as in 1994.

Manweb emerges from the survey as a well-run, customer-focused company which works hard to make it easier for people to carry out their daily lives and is committed to providing the community with essential services. Manweb is also perceived to be friendly, trustworthy and environmentally conscious.

In fact, the vast majority of customers said they would be staying loyal to Manweb when the electricity market was opened up to full competition in 1998. ScottishPower is the only alternative supplier most would consider.

Another interesting insight into our customers' psyche is provided by the responses from our stoic Clwyd customers whose supplies are affected more than most in bad weather but who are MOST likely within all the former districts to appreciate Manweb's efforts to maintain services.

What our customers won't tolerate, however, is being passed from pillar to post. Though nearly two-thirds of them were very happy with their most recent contact with Manweb, a small percentage expressed dissatisfaction with our service, with "slow and long winded" procedures.

Boost for Wrexham

Manweb is spending over £1 million to boost power supplies in Wrexham. The work will involve renewing and upgrading underground and overhead power lines to meet customers' needs.

Network Operations Manager Andy Lloyd explained: "We are carrying out this work to reinforce and upgrade our 33kV and 11kV network around Wrexham. The scheme is part of our ongoing investment programme and will ensure we can give customers the best possible service. It will also help provide a more secure and reliable supply to the Wrexham area and Wrexham Industrial Estate."

Manweb expects to complete the work by April 1997, when more than six kilometres of power line will have been renewed.

CONTACT 12

Value 4: Trust of Communities



The Maid of the Loch.

Taking the low road to Loch Lomond's bonnie banks

Trenchless technology pioneered by Manweb will be used to preserve one of Scotland's most prominent areas of scenic beauty later this month, when ScottishPower installs a power supply on the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond.

The company is meeting the £20,000 cost of installing the supply, which will make restoration of Scotland's only remaining inland paddle steamer, the Maid of the Loch, a great deal easier.

Built in 1953, the Maid of the Loch has transported thousands of people up and down one of Scotland's most famous lochs. She had lain derelict since 1981 until her new owners, the Loch Lomond Steamship Company, decided to raise £2 million to get her ship-shape once again to transport tourists in style.

Jim Johnson, Business Development Manager in ScottishPower's Power Systems business, said: "Thanks to our new rig - which we took delivery of a few weeks ago - and the assistance we have had from the trenchless team at Manweb under Steve Wilson, we will be taking the low road to Loch Lomond's bonnie banks, causing virtually no impact on the environment."

He added: "We have also used the technology for work at a prominent Glasgow school, where the absence of trenches improved safety for the pupils and caused minimal inconvenience."

The machine is being tested by the Clyde Region of ScottishPower - which is twinned with Manweb's Merseyside Region - and, judging by its usefulness so far, the technique may well be extended to other ScottishPower regions.

Value 4: Trust of Communities

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

The show must go on! We're in the mood for more... That's the message coming loud and clear from elderly people who have travelled down memory lane in song and dance via a Manweb project organised in conjunction with Age Concern.

'In the Mood', performed by Eyewitness Theatre Company of Warrington, is a hypothermia (old and cold) awareness project.

It is a touring show described as 'a heart-warming song and dance spectacular to celebrate the songs and memories of yesteryear, raise the temperature, melt away the blues and get in the mood for Christmas'.

Venues include day centres, luncheon clubs and primary schools - the content is allied to the National Curriculum.

At past performances, facilitators in 1940s costumes like GI uniforms have encouraged the old folk to reminisce - mainly about the cold winter of 1947.

Message

This paved the way for the show and its over-riding message that Manweb helps keep you warm, highlighting the benefits of Manweb support services for older people.

Performances have been staged at 41 venues. Initial feedback through evaluation forms indicates that the shows are well received and enjoyed.

Ninety per cent of those who responded thought that the message was clear and appropriate, and 85 per cent said the reminiscence component was valuable.

Encouragingly, 90 per cent suggested that the project should be ongoing.

"It's all good fun, but with a serious message about raising old people's awareness of the need to keep warm," said Manweb's Community Relations Manager John Kennedy, who has liaised with Age Concern and Eyewitness Theatre to keep the event going.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

The countdown has begun for this year's prestigious Community Champions Awards ceremony, to be held at Chester's Grosvenor Hotel on Friday, 29 November.

All nominations have now been received for the Manweb/Chronicle newspapers-sponsored annual awards, and the judges are now going through the rigorous process of selecting the Man, Woman, Young Person, Group and Environmental Champion of the Year from the hundreds of entrants in the Chester, Clwyd, Ellesmere Port, Runcorn/Widnes, South and Mid Cheshire areas.



Logistics Manager Don McRae, who organised the golfing day, tees off for charity.

Golfers club together for charity

by Jan Cahill

Manweb staff swung into action at Eaton Golf Club, Chester, to raise funds for charity.

They were taking part in the NCH Action for Children Charity Golf Day, which raised a grand total of £4,000.

The 20 teams of golfers who participated consisted of Manweb staff and their business contacts.

The golfing was followed by an awards presentation dinner. Formula Three British racing champion Ralph Firman, representing the ScottishPower-sponsored Paul Stewart Racing team, together with NCH Action for Children Chairman Philip Beresford-Adams, and Manweb Personnel Services Manager Mike Townson presented the prizes.

First prize, comprising a washing machine, dishwasher and two fridge-freezers, went to a team from J. Kennedy and Co, and second prize - a hi-fi system, portable television, video recorder and vacuum cleaner - went to Hawker Siddeley Switchgear. D & A Systems took third place, winning four sets of Edinburgh Crystal glassware.

Success

There was success, also, for two teams representing Manweb. Steve Buswell, Bryn Morris, Mike Edwards and Ian Williams won the 17th hole nearest the pin competition, and Jim McLennan, Simon Lavin, Sue Goodyear and Tony Dowd won the 11th hole nearest the pin competition. All the team members won a bottle of whisky.

Manweb Logistics Manager Don McRae, who organised the event, said: "I would like to thank all our staff and business contacts for their participation on the day."

"The money donated will help provide much needed equipment and funds for the NCH Action for Children Lache Family Centre Project, in Chester, which assists many families in the local community."

CONTACT 13

A GOOD FIRST YEAR

How is the business performing?

"Manweb is still in the process of adapting to its vital role as a member of a big, multi-utility group, but things are going well and I am delighted to be able to report a continued improvement on the main indicators of our performance in distribution and customer service. The April to September six monthly figures show a downward trend in all-important Customer Minutes Lost and in complaints to OFFER.

"Our focus has been on improving the efficiency of our distribution and customer service operations and this is certainly paying off.

"To date, major efficiencies at Manweb and ScottishPower have come about through the two-way process of sharing best practice, and it is encouraging to see just how much we have to contribute to the main business.

"Competitive pressure means we must, of course, continue with this approach, and investigate whether there are any further opportunities for cost-savings, but at no sacrifice to performance and customer service.

What does multi-utility mean for Manweb?

"Manweb is part of one of the largest multi-utilities in the UK. Within the group we have the key skills and expertise in the major utility markets, including electricity, gas, telecoms and water sewerage, and a customer base of five million following the Southern Water takeover.

"We will be in a strong position as these markets are opened up to competition, so long as we stay committed to being 'best in class' on customer service and cost efficiency."

How will competition affect our business?

"There is no doubt that massive changes will continue to take place in the sector. At Manweb we have multi utility neighbours to the north and the south and the group is going to feel competitive pressure no matter what we do.

"But a lot of thought has gone into our strategy and it's a good sign that national and international companies are now benchmarking ScottishPower. Two or three years ago it was the other way round."

How will this affect staff?

"It's almost a cliché, but it's nonetheless true that staff are the key to our success. At Manweb we have introduced Open Learning, an MBA programme and a management development programme to help staff fulfill their own potential and at the same time enhance their contribution to the business.

"These opportunities are a direct result of the fact that we are now part of a growing business determined to succeed in a rapidly changing business environment."

How have you been received?

"My main priority since I got here has been to visit all the company locations and meet as many staff as I can. I have

Almost a year to the day Manweb officially became part of the ScottishPower group, Chief Executive Charles Berry, in an interview with Contact, spoke about his first few months at Manweb, progress to date and the priorities for the year ahead

been very encouraged by their reception and it is obvious to me that we have very skilled and committed staff who continued to give customers value for money during what must have been a very difficult past 18 months.

"Take our former retail staff as an example. In March last year, Manweb announced it was pulling out of that business, then in July the bid was launched, then last autumn ScottishPower came in and now retail staff are part of customer service!

"Distribution was also going through a reorganisation at the same time, but it seems that the new structure for customer service and distribution is a sensible one."

What role will Manweb play in the wider community?

"It has been great to see the very positive way industry, local authority and trade union leaders have responded to the team when we have visited them. It shows they appreciate the fundamental role Manweb plays in the local community and that certainly will continue as a major

priority for me. This month, for example, we are reducing the cost of electricity to small businesses by up to an average of 10 per cent, keeping a promise to share the benefits of cost efficiencies with customers. We are also encouraging economic development through supporting a network of industry partnerships and we continue to be active sponsors of community activities."

The new Values - what do they mean to the business?

"These are crucial to the success of the business because they define what sort of company we will have in the future and how we will get there. The values are dynamic and reflect the group's enthusiasm for a team-based approach to building businesses.

"They also reflect the importance of the customer, something which is already appreciated throughout this company. For example, when I was visiting linesmen in Machynlleth, they talked to me about customer minutes lost and what they were doing to reduce them.

"That was very encouraging because the customer is a very important person, from the point of view of our regulatory responsibilities and also the increase in competition for the customer's signature just around the corner."

On a more personal note, you were already familiar with the area?

"Well there is definitely a link between my family and the Manweb area. My daughter Isla, now 12, was born in St Asaph when I worked for the north Wales operation of Pilkington. Also I believe Clwyd is from the same origins as the name Clyde, the river which runs through my home town of Glasgow, and the road of the factory where I worked in St Asaph was named Glascoed! We have some good friends here."



CAR WARS!

A foursome from Information Systems at Manweb defeated more than 80 teams from throughout the group to win a 'car wars' business game.

Car enthusiasts Steve Sung, Jeremy Lawes, Paul Briody and Dave Williams made a £2.36 billion profit designing and manufacturing the classy executive models to which they themselves might aspire.

Unless the ScottishPower group radically changes its focus, it is unlikely the upmarket Zeon and Nirvana (yours for £38,000) will emerge from the imagination to enter the Manweb contract car lists. However, the team did gain some business dividend for their efforts - a day out at Silverstone as guests of the ScottishPower-sponsored Paul Stewart Racing, the UK's leading Formula 3 outfit.

Teamwork was very much the key to the Daewoo Car Workers Co-operative, with each member sharing the same executive status in the boardroom.

Just before the game started, the four analyst/programmers came together to work on part of the Multi-Service Project. Participation more or less developed out of lunch-time chats about cars.

Mirroring

The game replicates the marketing, manufacturing, human resources and other business processes of a real car manufacturing company. Again mirroring real life, the competitors' decisions, fed into the master computer at the end of each trading cycle, would have an overall effect on the marketplace.

The idea behind the competition is to encourage teamwork and an appreciation of how a company works. What would-be players don't appreciate is just how much fun they will get out of it - weekly strategy meetings are often held in the pub!

The Manweb team proved just about self-sufficient as far as basic accountancy was concerned, though they went scrabbling for help whenever words like liquidity ratios arose. Their winning strength was a street-wise appreciation of computer game logic honed during their long days before the terminal.

Chief Executive Charles Berry told the team he was very pleased the winners of this prestigious competition had come from Manweb, and so too was former Chief Executive Mike Kinski.

But as a former senior manager in the car industry during a time of upheaval, the thought of a £2.3 billion profit after only five years must have brought tears to Mike's eyes!



Information Systems Manager Tom Forrest (right) presents the 1996 Business Game trophy to (l-r) Steve Sung, Jeremy Lawes and Paul Briody of the Daewoo Car Workers Co-operative. The fourth member of the team, Dave Williams, was on holiday.



Trevor's no stranger to transit!

Manweb's new Finance Director Trevor Fenwick has hardly had the opportunity to put his feet under his desk at Sealand Road before having to re-pack for his move to the new head office on Chester Business Park.

Trevor (pictured above) has replaced Bob Green, who has been appointed Group Controller within Finance, based at ScottishPower's Corporate Office in Glasgow.

Manweb's Chief Executive Charles Berry said he was delighted that Bob's new role not only presented him with a marvellous career opportunity but also meant he would be retaining strong links with Manweb.

Trevor, who reports directly to Charles Berry, was previously Head of Internal Audit within Central Finance, a post he had held since joining ScottishPower 20 months ago.

Before that, Trevor, a chartered accountant, worked for the leading management consultancy McKinsey out of their New York office. He travelled all over the world with McKinsey, including North and South America, India and most of Europe.

He spent 10 years with the chemical multinational Du Pont, completing a number of assignments in various divisions including finance, treasury, supply and internal audit. He has also worked for Omnicon, the American-based advertising agency, and the National Health Service.

Trevor's travels have meant a fair bit of upheaval for his family - wife Fiona and son Alex (12), whose two years in his current school in their native Newcastle is something of a record.

Trevor brings to Manweb wide business experience. At ScottishPower one of his main tasks was the reorganisation of the internal auditing function to heighten awareness of internal controls at a business level and assist the group in meeting tightening standards of corporate governance.

Outside work he is a keen tennis player and follower of rugby.

Three graduate trainees have recently joined Manweb - Lisa Sidoli in Human Resources, and Georgina Baggot and David Rodger, the first to be recruited by Customer Service in recent years. Here, we discover their first impressions of working for Manweb.

Value 5: Teamwork and Leadership



David Rodger
Glasgow-born David Rodger graduated from Manchester University with a degree in Modern History with Economics. He is enjoying his new role in Customer Service at Warrington, in an area which he sees as crucial to the success and future of Manweb.

Georgina Baggot
Born and bred in Stockport - deep in Norweb territory - Georgina Baggot graduated in International Business and French from Aston University in 1995.

Georgina was previously employed by a firm which manufactures and supplies raw materials for contact lenses, and was mainly responsible for the company's French market customers. While there on an unpaid placement, she replied to a Manweb advert which appeared in a University vacancy bulletin and joined the company as a graduate management trainee on 23 September. She hopes her three-year traineeship will be the start of a successful career with Manweb.

"I believe we must compete in the area of customer service as much as on prices which, these days, may not vary much from those of our competitors," he said.

David previously had a brief spell with the Inland Revenue in a clerical and customer service role. He joined Manweb after spotting an advert in Manchester University's Careers Bulletin.

"As a Manweb customer myself, I was aware of the company's reputation for customer service and so had no hesitation in applying for a post."

When not working, David's interests are travel, swimming, mountain biking and football - he's a Liverpool supporter since moving there from Scotland.

At the end of her first week, Georgina described her new colleagues in Customer Service at Warrington as quick to help and very friendly. She was also impressed with the speed and efficiency of the staff in the call centre.

In her free time, she enjoys socialising with friends and playing netball.

NEW FACES AT MANWEB

Lisa Sidoli



Lisa graduated in 1994 with a BSc Honours Degree in Economics from the University of Bath. That September she joined a small team in the University's Accommodation and Conferences Office as the Conference Co-ordinator. In this role she used her skills to sell Bath as a conference centre.

Her involvement in setting up a training programme for colleagues sparked off Lisa's interest in the staff development aspect of Human Resources, prompting her decision to pursue a career in this area.

During her first week as a graduate trainee in Human Resources at Manweb, she learned about the various roles of the staff within the department and familiarised herself with the Company Agreement.

"Over the next two years I am looking forward to learning in depth how each department within Human Resources functions and the role of other departments such as Customer Service, Information Systems and Finance," said Lisa, who will also be attending the Institute of Personnel and Development Stage Two course at NEWI in Wrexham.



Taking the pledge

The first intake of apprentices since Manweb became part of the ScottishPower group are pictured signing their 'Modern Apprentice' pledge at the Technical Training Centre in Hoylake.

Seated are (l-r) John Bell, Cewtec's Employer Training Adviser; Dave Winter, Manweb's Technical Training Services Manager; apprentice Stephen Jones, and Non-Technical Training Manager Glyn Jones, watched by the 11 other modern apprentices.

One of them, James Poynton, said: "I'm very proud to be offered the chance to become a Manweb apprentice."

CONTACT

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

OCTOBER 1996

A BETTER DEAL FOR CUSTOMERS

Manweb marked its first anniversary as part of the ScottishPower group by regaining the highly-valued Charter Mark, continuing to improve customer service and reducing electricity bills for small customers.

There were over 740 applications for the Charter Mark this year, with the standard being higher than ever, and Manweb's success reflects the company's excellent customer service achievements.

Figures just out comparing performance in the six months to September with the same period last year show that total customer minutes lost - the key measure in distribution - has almost halved, falling from 52 to 28.

There has also been an encouraging increase in the percentage of restorations completed within the three-hour standard - 89.96 per cent against 83.35 per cent - and a fall in the number of faults per 100 km, from 8.72 to 7.03.

Impressive

The results in Customer Service are equally impressive. Payments for failing to meet guaranteed standards have plunged from 117 to just 38 - a record low - and the company has met targets in all but one of the eight performance categories.

Although there has been an increase of 6 in the number of complaints to Offer, recent trends are showing a marked reduction and, with continued effort, should see a full year improvement.

Continued on page 2.



Vision is 'clear and simple'

No-one in Manweb can have a better appreciation of the new group mission statement and values than Chief Executive Charles Berry.

For Charles was one of the leading players, along with Bob McMahan (currently on the Southern Water transition team), in the process from which the new values emerged. Now one of his key responsibilities is to instill them at Manweb.

"The values are very important as a guide to determine what sort of company we are going to have in the future. A clear and simple vision helps us work better as a team," said Charles.

He added that although he had been in post for a relatively short time, he had been encouraged to meet staff who were examining the values in relation to their own work.

In this issue of Contact we concentrate on that very point - how Manweb staff are contributing to the business along the avenues defined in the group mission statement and values.

We look at the benefits of integration, particularly what Manweb people here and in Scotland are doing to help the business prepare for the challenges of 1998, and how the new Network Management Centre is likely to make for improved investment decisions and customer service.

We also follow the latest developments in customer service, report on how staff are responding to development opportunities and outline the work being done to ensure that Manweb continues to enjoy the trust of the community it serves.

Special 16-page 'Values' edition