

Rust Report

Views and news of the action in Australia's IT industry this week

May 2, 2003

THE RUST BUCKET

Ignorance ain't bliss

HAVE YOU EVER TRIED to contact a vendor via their Web site or completed and submitted an online form and met resounding silence? Recent research into the subject by Jupiter (see page 7) and Summit Strategies was eye-opening, especially in light of the current industry downturn. The results appear to be damning.

Some companies were singled out for their slow responses, while some failed to respond at all.

Which begs the question, is business so good that prospects or customers can be ignored?

Across Australia, advertising agencies, public relations companies, analysts, vendors, venture capitalists, exhibition and conference organisers, Web site organisers, and the mass media all talk about the big picture. Ask them to show you a customer copy of it.

If prospects are not returning your call whose fault is it? I appreciate our world is full of distractions. Yet, we must still keep our eye on the ball — and that means staying very focused. Far too many organisations are now inwardly focused.

In an economic downturn, people still do business, just less of it. And the businesses that survive will be those adopting the shrewdest marketing strategies, using the most creative approaches to customers and prospects, offering the highest perceived value, and giving the greatest service during and after the sale — all coupled with the fiercest sales force.

Adding value

Now is the time to invest every single dollar available in value propositions and to provide an incredible service. What's needed is an intensive PR campaign so that existing customers will stay and new customers will be attracted.

We've all spent a lot of time sitting in meetings, sipping cappuccinos, talking about how bad things are and discussing "the brand", but now it's time to move and — for some — to move on!

We do live in new times. Call it the time of the CFOs: they're tough, they're cranky about overspending and non-delivery, they're looking for a return on everything, and they don't care that it's the end of the quarter.

Somewhere right now, out there are major projects that need your technology. So how are you going to find them?

The companies that are growing are adopting aggressive, systematic methods for finding new customers and expanding relationships with their current user base.

Make no mistake about it, industry analysts and the media can do great things for IT vendors with a strong story. They rank near the top of the inducer chain, reporting on who's who and what's what — and who's going to survive.

— Len Rust RustOz@bigpond.com.au

Irish search group adopts Aussie YourAmigo system

Irish company MakeMeTop, which is described as a search engine optimisation company, has been appointed a certified integration partner of South Australian company YourAmigo. Barry Lloyd, managing director of MakeMeTop, said the YourAmigo products and technology, which was spun off from research at Flinders University, will be used to increase search engine visibility of its client sites and to provide more raw material for consultants to use for natural optimisation.

"Our clients are leading international companies with huge Web sites," Lloyd said. "The problem is, as a result of the need to keep these huge sites maintainable and up-to-date, they are typically dynamically driven via a database and hence significant portions of them are invisible to the Internet search engines." MakeMeTop is using YourAmigo's Spider Linker product to make additional content available. www.youramigo.com

Qantas considers outsourcing IT

Fiona Balfour, CIO of Qantas, has launched a 12 month review of the airline's data centre in Sydney, during which the ins and outs of outsourcing will be thoroughly examined.

"As part of a review of IT services we have reached the conclusion that our current infrastructure and equipment no longer meet our continually growing IT needs," Balfour said. "We have therefore begun looking at possible alternative arrangements for the future."

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INSIDER EDITION

VeCommerce extends UK deal

Ladbrokes, the betting and gaming arm of British company Hilton Group, has launched the second phase of the implementation of the VeBet voice-enabled wagering system from Australian company VeCommerce. The first phase went live a year ago in time for the FIFA World Cup. The second phase has added support for horse and greyhound racing, and 11 different types of bet, each of which can be recognised from colloquial speech.

Paul Magee, managing director of VeCommerce, claimed that the VeBet systems helped Ladbrokes to service more than 100,000 calls on Grand National Day, an increase of 43 per cent on the number of calls handled a year earlier. www.vecommerce.com

Publisher takes home-grown app

Publishing group Pearson Australia has selected the Bookmaster publishing system developed by Australian company TMS Tailor Made Systems for use in its Australian operation. The software has been used by the Pearson Education operation for some time, but its use will now be expanded to other Pearson businesses, including Penguin Australia and NZ, and Dorling Kindersley.

Peter Field, CEO of Pearson, said a tight implementation schedule requires the software to go live in September, before the start of the pre-Christmas peak.

Maxamine updates RSB site

Maxamine, a company founded in Australia but now headquartered in California, has enhanced the Web site of the South Australian operation of the Royal Blind Society for use by people who are blind or vision-impaired. A spokesman said the use of Maxamine's site analysis software reduces the time required to ensure the site conforms to standards set by the World Wide Web Consortium. www.rsb.org.au

Westpac offloads online broking

Westpac has offloaded its online stockbroking operations to Western Australian company Hartleys, which is attempting to move into technology outsourcing through its JDV business. Through a deal negotiated late in 2001 JDV already provided some technology and back-office outsourcing services to Westpac Broking.

"With the exit of Hartleys from wealth management activities, the objectives for the company are clear: JDV will now concentrate on building a sustainable, profitable business from a proven technology and outsourcing platform," explained Tony Howarth, interim CEO of Hartleys.

Ballarat implements AXS-One

After finding that support for its legacy financial system was to be halted, the City of Ballarat decided to implement a total financial and e-business system from AXS-One. The system is scheduled to go live on July 1, 2003.

The City of Ballarat will implement the AXS-One Financial Suite, AXS-One Enterprise, business process automation solutions, and e-business components covering procurement, as well as partner and vendor management. A spokesman said the council had considered bids from six suppliers.

Sound archives go on StorageTek

StorageTek has won a contract to provide ScreenSound Australia, the national screen and sound archive, with automated tape libraries to support a digitisation project.

A spokesman said data is now the preferred storage medium for all recorded sound. ScreenSound is using seven purpose-built studios to convert audio into digital formats at the rate of 2T-bytes a year. A StorageTek L700 tape library will be progressively expanded to cope.



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INSIDER EDITION

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Utility takes Aussie contact tech

Tasmanian energy supplier Aurora Energy has enhanced the operations of its 75-seat call centre with the implementation of workforce management software from Australian developer Premier Technologies. A spokesman said the Blue Pumpkin Director Enterprise system allows Aurora Energy to forecast accurately how many call centre staff it needs each day and what particular skills they should have. "The system has overhauled our rostering practices and made call centre operations much more transparent and manageable," the spokesman added.

Clearswift defends ADO messages

The Australian Defence Organisation has selected the DeepSecure messaging gateway from Clearswift to provide e-mail security. The deal involves software and development, plus an enterprise licence, to a total value of about \$A5 million.

The contract was negotiated by eB2Bcom, an Australian messaging security specialist that is a partner for Clearswift's DeepSecure technology in Australia. www.eb2b.com.au

Sirius picks up BHP deal

Sirius Telecommunications has won a \$A3 million four-year contract to supply and manage communications for BHP Billiton's new global headquarters. The services will include telephony, unified messaging, and reporting and billing to cost centres. Sirius will act as sub-contractor to CSC.

Intellect bulks up St George deal

St George Bank has increased a contract with Intellect to include a further 5000 EFTPOS terminals. The initial deal involved Intellect's Tempo 510p transaction devices combined with a range of services from Touchcorp, which allowed merchants to offer a variety of additional EFTPOS services, like road toll passes, fishing licences, and pre-paid telephone services.

i-Health of NZ wins Victorian sale

Kiwi developer i-Health has won a contract to develop a Web-based patient referral system for Melbourne Health, which includes the campuses of the Royal Melbourne Hospital and the Melbourne Extended Care & Rehabilitation Service. The new service will become an enhancement to an existing Clinician View application and, it is claimed, will be the first of its type in the Asia/Pacific region.

LEN's SCENE & HERD

Good times, bad times

IN INDIA, Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (CGE&Y) is aiming to increase its headcount from 600 to between 1500 and 2000 by the end of 2003; EDS is targeting growth from 900 to around 5000 employees by 2004; and CSC plans to add 1400 software engineers and two new development centres to its 700 strong operation over the next two years.

Accenture employs approximately 1000 staff in India, although it has not yet formally announced its strategy in the market. IBM Global Services has the largest presence; it employs some 4700 staff and expects to increase that number to about 10,000 by the end of this year.

Meanwhile, US Bureau of Labour Statistics found that unemployment among US IT workers rose from 3.72 per cent in 2001 to 5.23 per cent in 2002, a record for the industry.

Furthermore, the IT workforce shrank over the same period — with the vast majority of those abandoning the profession being under the age of 40. Although the overall workforce shrank, the 40-and-over crowd grew.

All this comes at a time when other published reports claim that burn-out among IT workers in the US is increasing across the board.

Savings

A recent report from Deloitte Consulting highlighted that the world's top financial institutions can achieve annual cost savings totalling \$US13 billion by 2008 by moving operations to cheaper offshore locations such as India.

But savings of 39 per cent and more will mean the loss of some two million financial services jobs in developed western countries, according to the survey.

India is likely to continue as the key offshore destination, but other countries such as South Africa, China, Malaysia, Australia, and Ireland are becoming increasingly popular.

Growing competition between Western and Indian offshore outsourcing firms has also seen several leading Indian vendors making investments in China. Leading offshore companies Wipro and Infosys have already made tentative investments in China, although staff numbers measure only in the hundreds.

Intel also plans to triple its headcount at its Bangalore India Development Centre as the facility steps up its involvement with the vendor's mobile and server processor lines. The company will increase its Bangalore headcount to 3000 and spend \$US100 million in India over the next three years.

Convergys the world's largest contact centre will be hiring 20,000 contact centre employees in India by 2007.

According to a recent study by Ernst and Young, companies that are outsourcing their requirements to India will end up saving 30 to 50 per cent per employee compared to the US.

DEAL MAKERS

IBM backs Aussie research centre

IBM is to set up a centre for advanced studies to undertake research into open source software in collaboration with the National ICT Australia (NICTA) research organisation. The three-year project will be undertaken at NICTA's site at the University of NSW.

A spokesman said the research into methods of increasing the performance of open source software like Linux will initially involve seconded IBM staff as well as PhD and honours students from the university.

"NICTA PhD students will benefit from the experience of IBM researchers both in Australia and the United States and use highly sophisticated equipment loaned by IBM. IBM in turn will benefit from the innovative research which will be undertaken by NICTA as a result of the partnership," explained Professor Brian Anderson, acting CEO of NICTA. Details from <http://nicta.com.au>

ERG capital restructure approved

A capital restructure of smart card specialist ERG has been approved by the company's shareholders. The move will lead to the conversion of convertible notes worth \$A250 million into ordinary shares, effectively giving control of the company to the note holders.

Shareholders also approved a 10-for-one share consolidation and the terms for a possible rights issue in preference shares.

Sandy Murdoch, ERG chairman, said the changes will support ERG's success at winning large-scale urban transit ticketing contracts. "The company is now in a much stronger position to exploit its technology," he claimed.

UXC buys security consultant

Corporate Network Solutions, which is a business unit of UXC, has acquired Information Technology Audit & Consulting. Geoff Lord, chairman of UXC, said the deal gives UXC a solid foundation in IT security, which is "an area of increasing importance both nationally and internationally".

Integrated Research finds US ally

Listed software developer Integrated Research has entered a partnership with US company EPIQ Systems, which supplies software solutions for data centres. As a result of the deal the Prognosis systems management software from Integrated Research will be combined with EPIQ's DataExpress back-end infrastructure products in value-added IT management solutions.

"The relationship will allow EPIQ Systems to link its DataExpress directly with Prognosis across the HP NonStop, Windows, and Unix platforms, and create an integrated systems management suite," a spokeswoman explained. Details at <http://www.ir.com/page.asp?id=465>

QPSX licenses tech platform

Technology commercialisation group QPSX has launched a global licensing program for its enterprise data management (EDM) technology portfolio. A spokesman said the program will focus on users of large, mission-critical EDM systems, such as financial institutions, as well as US vendors like IBM, Microsoft, and Oracle.

"We have initiated discussions with a major company in the market, and approaches to other target licensees will begin in earnest in May," explained QPSX CEO Graham Griffiths.

Qld group launches messaging

Brisbane company Wireless International Systems (WISYS) has launched its Short E-mail Messaging Service, which provides e-mail services for mobile phone users. "With the SEMS service you can send an e-mail from your mobile phone to any e-mail address anywhere in the world. You can also receive messages from any e-mail address directory to your mobile phone in any one of 63 countries worldwide," a spokeswoman explained.

WISYS has already signed up 400 health care service providers in Queensland, and claims that its technology is being assessed by the Queensland State Government.



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DEAL MAKERS

Continued from page 3

Webpay adopted by eFunds

US company eFunds has released the Secure Data Exchange (SDE), which is an Internet data exchange system based on technology from Australian company Webpay. A spokesman claimed that SDE is the first data exchange solution that runs on a common platform and provides banks and financial institutions with the ability to run all authenticated payment and secure messaging, as well as transaction switching, on a single secure platform. www.webpay.com.au

— BUSINESS BRIEFS —

☞ **KAZ Group** has been named **IBM** eServer iSeries Partner of the year for the second year in a row.

☞ **Chaos Group**, which has agreed to sell its entertainment operations and name to founder **Rob Appel**, intends to undertake a rights issue to raise funds to support its — now core — data management business.

☞ Asset-tracking specialist **Startrack Communications** has acquired **Medepartner**, which has developed an integrated patient care system that is seen to have synergies with Startrack's own technology.

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LEN BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Aussie technology roadmap

THANK YOU for joining us this week. We wanted you to be among the first to hear about TRR's new "white paper" on "where next". We are also looking forward to receiving recommendations from you.

For more than a decade now we have been advocating transformational change in Australian society. Because the IT industry has been driven by the imperative to innovate or perish, we understood the demands of the global knowledge-based economy long before many of the other industry sectors. We've considered ourselves to be with the vanguard in the transformation from an economy based on primary resources and industrial processes to an economy where knowledge is the best currency.

Back in 1993 we envisioned a bold and bright future for Australia in a paper called *A Knowledge-Based Australia*, (revision 10 or 12). In that paper, the IT sector called on government, industry, and the academic community to join a common cause to transform Australia, before somebody else did, into a society where knowledge and innovation would drive the economy and enrich people's lives as was occurring in many other emerging countries around the world.

The "commoditisation" of computer power — combined with the effects of a global recession in 1993 completely changed the face of the computer industry.

Is might right?

Beverly Head reported in the *Financial Review* that "IBM was staggering around the ring like a punch-drunk heavyweight, dodging sharp jabs from nimbler competition that were honing their muscles in a world where margins were razor thin. The competition had to duck the blows or be carried out of the ring". Has anything changed?

Trevor Robinson believed the writing for Aussie battlers was on the wall back in the 1960s, but no-one paid any notice. Trevor was also a long-term adviser to the Government on IT and in a former life had been MD of Control Data Corporation of Australia.

So moving on 10 years, following several more papers on "where next" TRR invites you to participate in our continuous work to keep up with the technology advancements in the world. During the course of your daily engagements you may come in contact with new technologies and IT companies you might like to share with us.

We need to focus our resources and efforts to ensure that our IT industry is developed to compete against today's intense global competition. Hence, by focusing our resources on strategic technologies that are carefully evaluated, we can bring about more impactful benefits to better our economy, lifestyles, and work productivity.

There are many components that contribute to the "where next" roadmap, including capital, enterprise, discipline, agility, and collaboration. But the key ingredient is people.

Rust e-Research Roundup

Knowledge of market position vital

It is potentially one of the most critical errors a vendor can make, yet it is widespread across the IT development industry — software companies are failing to understand the true business needs of their customers. Worse still, those customers do not believe they gain the promised return on their investments.

Research conducted by Ovum, in conjunction with Taylor Nelson Sofres, has unearthed some startling findings from the software buying community.

The pilot analysis focused on business intelligence (BI) in the UK, revealing some sobering truths for vendors. “The vast majority of BI users don’t believe that vendors understand their needs, nor are they convinced that the products will provide the promised return on investment. This leaves some software vendors with a big hill to climb — or risk losing the market,” an analyst explained.

The data contained powerful messages for some of the pure-play vendors that consider themselves to be highly regarded market leaders. For example, IT decision-makers have quite vague and undefined perceptions of vendors such as Informatica, SAS, and Hyperion Solutions in comparison with IBM, Oracle, and Microsoft.

This year, BI is tipped to emerge from boffin status to become a far more stable and practical technology with the capacity to supercharge real-time applications. But best of breed specialist vendors appear to be losing ground to the dominant players and could lose out on this resurgence of interest.

At least 50 per cent of corporate e-mails are actually internal messages

Ins and outs of business e-mails

Thirty-eight per cent of companies in North America have experienced a 50 per cent increase in e-mail volumes over the past two years, according to studies carried out by Osterman Research. The company also found that 30 per cent of North American companies experienced a rise of between 26 per cent and 50 per cent in e-mail over the past two years.

Osterman surveyed 285 companies in North America for Legato Systems and supplemented these surveys with 20 more conducted among Legato’s online newsletter subscribers. The

median number of e-mail users at the companies surveyed was 1600.

Interestingly, the study determined that at more than half of North American companies, at least 50 per cent of the e-mails sent and received are actually internal e-mails.

The report also mentioned that 79 per cent of companies in North America said that e-mail is an accepted form of written confirmation for approvals and orders, for example.

At the end of 2002, Net Future Institute Research surveyed 2500 executives worldwide and found that cutting down the use of e-mail was the second most popular reason given by respondents as a benefit of office instant messaging, cited by 38 per cent of respondents. This reason was second to “getting answers faster”, which was cited by 52 per cent of executives.

Business intelligence gets united

The latest Butler Group *Integrated Business Intelligence (IBI) Lifecycle Positions Report* will make difficult reading for many of the long established business intelligence (BI) vendors currently dominating the market.

Butler Group sees integrated BI (IBI) as an advanced, strategic view on the deployment and use of BI technologies. It combines the necessary technical components, including query, enterprise reporting, and analysis, with vital business elements, such as the need to focus on the development of a supportive culture and the importance of collaboration within a BI context.

A somewhat unusual aspect of this market sector is the presence of many highly competent BI vendors but no single market leader capable of delivering integrated end-to-end IBI-driven solutions. Consequently Butler Group defined the IBI space as currently being in the Early Adopter phase, which is expected to stretch until the end of 2004.

In this initial period the market leaders commanding the dominant market position as part of Butler Group’s analysis in the *Outperform* category, are Business Objects, Information Builders, Oracle, and SAS. The success enjoyed by these vendors at this early stage of IBI roll-out comes in spite of delivering mainly traditional BI solutions.

The *Perform* grouping comprises Cognos, CorVu, Hyperion, Informatica, MicroStrategy and Sagent. The *Under-perform* sector contains Brio, Hummingbird, Microsoft and SPSS.

As the market moves into the 2005-2007 *Market Adoption* phase, Butler Group sees the battle lines being drawn.

➤ [Rust e-Research continued on page 7](#)

RUST e-RESEARCH

Continued from page 6

The authors of the Butler Group report expect hard times for Brio, despite best-of-breed (BI) technology, as it struggles to turn things around during a particularly torrid time in the market. Hummingbird, CorVu and SPSS will sink to the *Under-perform* sector, continuing to service niche markets, but making little impact on IBI.

Customer service lags badly

Outline customer service has not met expectations, according to findings from Jupiter Research, but projections of increased CRM spending through 2003 may aid the market — and ultimately, the customers.

Jupiter's 2003 report on the state of customer service revealed that only slightly more than half (56 per cent) were satisfied or very satisfied with help via e-mail, and that phone contact has become increasingly important to online consumers.

A large proportion of customers who have expectations of responses within 24 hours are left disappointed

A staggering 88 per cent of the 2734 interview respondents indicated that they expect a response to their customer service e-mail within 24 hours, with an impatient 13 per cent of them expecting a response in less than an hour.

Unfortunately, a large proportion of customers who have expectations of responses within 24 hours are disappointed, according to Jupiter's analysis. Only 54 per cent of the sites that Jupiter sampled responded to e-mailed customer service requests within that time, resulting in lost business and/or increased call centre activity. Nearly 88 per cent, on average, of shoppers who experienced poor customer service said they were less likely to buy from that company online again and 11 per cent said they would report their experience to a consumer protection agency.

Ted Codd

Edgar (Ted) Codd, the father of the relational database, passed away last week aged 79. Born in Britain, Codd had a genius for mathematics that was accompanied by a reputation for being totally unmanageable.

In the 1970s Codd proposed the now famous 12 rules of relational theory, which set IBM and the University of California Berkeley on the development of the first relational database management systems. IBM's project was known as System/R and culminated in the DB2 database, while the university's INGRES project spawned the Ingres company in 1980. Despite the intellectual backing of those two projects, it is believed that the first commercial RDBMS was the Multics Relational Data Store, which was released by Honeywell in 1976. Oracle followed within two years.

Codd had studied mathematics at Oxford and served in the RAF during the second world war. He worked with IBM from 1953 until 1984, when he formed a company with long-time friend and database expert Chris Date. It is believed he never gained materially from his genius or from his industry-shaping invention.

Dr Lee Loncasty

Industry personality Lee Loncasty died tragically over the Easter weekend in a skydiving accident at Nagambie in Victoria. Born in England in 1959, Lee completed a bachelors degree in physics at Manchester University, a masters in computer science at Belfast, and her PhD in robotics at Oxford.

In Australia she worked in the IT industry for many years. In her own words she was "sometimes a managing director of a company, sometimes unemployed". In November 2002 she was appointed managing director of Axway.

Skydiving had long been her passion and she held numerous world, country and state records, as well as one Guinness World Record. She also owned two aircraft. With a self-proclaimed love of "airplanes and anything that flies", Lee also professed to be a keen bird watcher.

Lee is survived by her husband David, and will be missed by very many people.

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REVOLVING DOORS

Intel rings the changes

Intel has made a number of changes to its enterprise and communications division.

○ Corey Loehr has been appointed business development manager for Intel Australia and New Zealand. He joined the company from Sun Microsystems, where he was manufacturing industry manager.

○ Leighton Phillips has been promoted from manager of Intel Australia's business division to manager of the solution and strategy group.

○ Sean Casey has been promoted to area sales manager for Intel's Communications Group in Australia and NZ. He was previously a field applications engineer in the group.

Casey replaced Perry Blackney, who has been given the role of regional marketing manager for the Intel Communications Group based in Taipei.

New head for Sophos

Sophos Anti-Virus has appointed Rob Forsyth managing director for Australia and New Zealand, replacing Stuart Palmer, who has resigned from the company.

Forsyth was previously the company's sales director for Australia and NZ. He joined Sophos 18 months ago from the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games, where he had been program manager for workforce planning and industrial relations.

Virgin nabs a new MD

Jonathan Marchbank has been appointed managing director of Virgin Mobiles. In order to avoid conflicts he will resign from the board of Mobile Innovations, where he was most recently non-executive director.

Marchbank had been CEO of Mobile Innovations until March 2002, when he moved to his non-executive position. He was replaced by CFO Ikka Tales.

Borland boosts sales

Peter McAlpine has joined Borland Australia as sales director for Australia and New Zealand. He will be based in Melbourne.

McAlpine joined Borland from PeopleSoft, where he was southern region CRM manager. He has also held senior positions with PictureTel and Novell.

Kennedy quits Beyond

Tom Kennedy has resigned from the managing director's job at Beyond Online as the company undertakes a major restructure. Kennedy said he will now be focusing his energies on Brainwaave Interactive.

Ian Ingram will take up the reins as interim managing director of Beyond Online, as well his role as executive chairman.

— Around the traps —

⇔ **Adacel** has appointed **Craig Simon** sales manager for Australia north. He has previously worked for PeopleSoft, Sun Microsystems, and Apple.

⇔ **Alleyne Ski** has been appointed manager of sales and marketing at **CompuCraft**.

⇔ **Tony Shepherd** has been appointed a non-executive director of ERG. He is deputy chairman of Transfield Services, and is on the boards of NSW State Transit Authority, and ADI.

Networking & leadership

Effective leadership in management is to be the focus of an ACS networking event in Sydney on May 21. Speaker at the "elite dinner" is yours truly and my theme will be 2003 and Beyond.

The function, at the NSW Leagues Club, costs \$A40 for members and \$A50 for non-members (prepaid). Register online at www.acs.org.au/nsw or send an e-mail to acsnew@asclink.net.au