

22/5/1995



i - contact

The Internal Newsletter of IONATEchnologies

Welcome to i-contact, our new internal company newsletter. We aim to publish i-contact twice monthly, on the second and last Fridays of each month.

The aim is to improve the flow of news, announcements, policy changes and general information amongst all of us. It should be particularly helpful to those of us working outside of Dublin (e.g. Karl in Seattle, Hugh and Charlie in Phoenix, Killian in Dallas, Jim in Mountain View and Kevin in Boston).

IONA now has about 50 people, including contractors, and making everyone aware of the general status of work and of newsworthy events is becoming increasingly difficult. It is important that everyone is a part of our team. It is also very important that everyone's voice is heard, particularly if you have a good suggestion to make on how we can further improve our products and services to our customers.

If you were at April's wine and cheese, or if you read Unigram, you will have heard that we intend to open an office in Boston in the near future. We have been offered space at Stratus' corporate headquarters at Marlborough (about an hour's drive from Boston). The plan is in due course to provide some marketing, telesales, technical support and training and consultancy from Boston : however the core engineering group will remain in Dublin. The current work is to ensure that the office is properly equipped before anyone moves there : computers, telephones, fax, photocopier, administrative support, furniture, partitions, office cleaning.....you get the picture. Dawn Dorchel joins us today in Boston as our first US employee : welcome Dawn! Hopefully we will have most of this sorted out by mid-June.

The Company's AGM was held on 19th May, and the shareholders were asked to accept the last set of audited accounts (to December 1994). We also introduced a share option scheme : the details of this have been approved by the Board, and were put to the shareholders at the AGM.

Finally, a reminder that my e-mail box is always open for new mail, and I don't have a door on my office - if you would like to bring anything directly to my attention, please do!

Chris

i-contact will (hopefully) be published twice a month, and distributed around the office and elsewhere to all of our staff. Please remember it is an internal newsletter for IONA employees only. Obviously i-contact doesn't write itself so input from all the staff is essential. Please mail anything that you think maybe of interest to tfarrell@iona.ie
I hope you enjoy the newsletter.

When Irish ORBs are smiling.....

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Engineering News

Engineering (that's the room with the buttons on the door) are working hard on projects including :

- Windows 3.1, which is now shipping thanks to the efforts of Myles, Stephen, Kevin and Anne.
- VxWorks, the first real-time Orbix to ship on a chip.
- The QNX port, which was shown in Florida last week..
- The feared juggling epidemic, which is now under control.

Meanwhile work continues on Fred++ and multi-threaded code, the new C++ mapping, and of course support for customers. Graham and Alan are being helped out by two new members of the support team, Damian Beresford and James Byrne. Please make them welcome.

Oisin and Sam are heading off to the Solaris Developer's conference, in order to show off their demos illustrating Orbix and DOE interoperating, due for Beta release in June.

Jason Mason's World Of Newsgroups

- `iona.eng.misc` - engineering news-group. Remember, anything posted here is mailed to `engineering@iona.ie` so don't needlessly clutter up people's mailboxes.
- `iona.eng.issues` - for more involved discussion of issues in engineering, these posts won't be mailed, so you can waffle away to your hearts content.

Latest bug fixes - with your host, Bridget Walsh

1.3.3

- Minor bug fixes on the utilities, mainly to do with permissions.
- Putit had a limit of 10 on the number of command line arguments ; this is now dynamically allocated.
- Fixes in the IDL compiler to do with include files.
- Empty sequences can now be passed in the DII.

1.3.2

- A new activation mode, per client process, has been added.
- A new function "noReconnectOnFailure" was added so that client code can specify whether servers should automatically be restarted after a comms failure was detected. The default is that they are.
- Exceptions which were raised by the construction of a `CORBA::Request` were not copied into the environment variable, and thus were not propagated back to the caller. This is now fixed.
- Experimental code for "opaque" types, and initial support for encryption, which may need additional functionality.

1.3.1

- Undocumented supported for passing objects by value.
- IDL compiler has a switch which forces generation sequence of octet and string, needed for Windows NT
- Fixed an infinite loop problem in the IDL compiler to do with "inlined" type definitions.
- The locator now correctly handles '-' in a host name.
- Oneway calls now correctly clean up when system exceptions are raised.
- `String_to_object()` now `_duplicates()` the returned object reference.

Marketing News

The marketing department are, as ever, at 'work' selling Orbix to sites across the globe (preferably with warm sunny climates and great nightlife). Over the last few weeks, on top of all the usual activity, various members of the team have been away spreading the word to the software masses.

- Tom Golden led a group to Boston to unveil IONA's plans for CORBA 2 implementation and the general release of Orbix MT. Annrai stressed the significance of bringing objects to the desktop. Anytime, Annrai.
- Annrai also selflessly drove the company BMW from San Francisco to Boston, sensationally avoiding a single pile-up on the way.
- Paul Hickey spoke to 400 people at the QNX conference, introducing them to Orbix and explaining it's benefits in a real-time environment. He now has customers breaking down his door, apparently.
- Sean O'Sullivan has travelled to Fairfax Virginia, home of TRW, to help out on a major proposal.
- Colin recently went to Israel to work on contacts in that part of the world, and returned with a bundle of business cards with 'had lunch - nice bloke' on the back.

In the Sales department Orbix is still being sold faster than we can ship it. Unsurprisingly, there has been a great response to the Windows mailshot, and with Paul Lowry away for the week on a course, heroics have been the order of the day for Margaret. Inroads have been made recently into the previously uncharted UK market, with some excellent results - a case of ORB Limey. Fortunately increased volume is set to be met by increased staff in the near future - watch this space.

Distribution wise, procedures are still being finalised with Valtech, although Barry informs me that they will imminently become our agent in France

In the near future is the trip to Object Expo NYC, organised by the redoubtable Lean Doody - good luck to everyone going.

Training and Consultancy News

Training and consultancy continues to go from strength to strength. Public courses have recently taken place in New Jersey and Dublin, and more are scheduled for San Francisco, London, New Jersey and Dublin later in the year.

Furthermore, the one-day CORBA seminar in London on 22nd June is creating "tremendous interest", said a visibly elated Ross O'Crowley. "Extra dates may have to be added" he boasted.

Consultancy-wise, IONA employees Hugh Grant and Charlie Watson remain with Motorola in Phoenix, whilst Karl McCabe has travelled to Seattle to help out Boeing, and Killian Murphy is with BNR in Texas. Come home soon boys.

Staff News

Thanks to Iona's rapid expansion a steady stream of new recruits are joining us here in Dublin. On top of this, Dawn Dorchel is hoped to be the first of many employed in our new Boston office. Please make all our new staff welcome and introduce yourself at the first opportunity.

Recent Recruits

James Byrne started in the support department on April 18th, and was joined on April 24th by **Damien Beresford**.

Lean Doody now works full time in Marketing, as of May 2nd.

Ken Knox joined the Professional services department on May 15th.

Joining Today

Fergal McDonnell joins the Marketing department, working with Barry on the administration of sales channels

Dawn Dorchel begins work in the Boston office in an Operations / Administration role.

Tom Farrell starts full time in Marketing.

Coming Soon....

Mark Dunleavy will join Marketing, in the Sales department on May 29th.

Here's hoping all our staff enjoy their time at IONA. Good luck everybody.

More Handy Hints with Jason Mason

- Check out the IONA internal web site at <http://www.iona.ie:8000/www-int> for useful and useless information. Now you will always know whether or not it's raining in Tralee.
- Don't call me Jason

The Social Whirl

The IONA social club continues to flourish under Oisin's sage-like leadership. Last month's trip to the theatre to see 'Bouncers' was a great success. 11 people went first to the Old Dublin restaurant, and on to the Tivoli for the performance, which allegedly consisted of "two hours of humour, shouting, sex, violence, dance music, innuendoes, Swedish porn movies, eating pizza and vomiting in taxis". Lovely.

On the 10th of June 14 brave men and women will defend IONA's honour in a battle to the death with the evil Sunsoft, across the hillsides of Wicklow. Armed only with paintballs, they will risk their own lives for this company that we hold so dear to our hearts - a fine example to the rest of the staff.

"If I should die think only this of me, that there is some corner of a faraway field that is forever Orbix....."

We still await the go-karting 'grand-prix', to be organised in the near future. Keep those diaries blank (if you like driving small cars. If you don't then make your own arrangements).

Don't forget the wine and cheese this Friday - 26th May. I'm sure no-one will.
