

i - contact

The Internal Newsletter of IONATEchnologies

IONA Distributes Its Objects

Three Moves In One For Magnificent ORB Vendor

In what industry pundits are calling "the most significant event in the IT industry since Bill Gates looked at his Macintosh and said 'that gives me an idea'", IONA are set to move across town to luxurious new offices on Pembroke Street. Sources high up in the company claim the move was necessary due to the "space - crisis" which has dogged IONA during the last few months in Percy Place. Chris Horn claims he had the idea to move office whilst relaxing at home listening to Marvin Gaye. "I don't know if you know the song 'Mercy Mercy Me'", he told me, "but there's a line in it which goes 'What about this overcrowding?', and when I heard that I thought 'yes, what about this overcrowding?'. It was then that I decided to do something about it". The new offices, are located at:

The IONA Building
8-10 Lower Pembroke St.
Dublin 2

just in case you get lost on Monday morning .

Meanwhile, staff across the pond are eager not to be outdone, and have announced their own move - which they claim has already happened! Their new address is:

201 Broadway, 3rd Floor,
Cambridge, MA 02139-1955

The team are apparently ecstatic at their move into town. Steve Deane told

i-contact, "I'm ecstatic".

And to complete the hatrick IONA are now set to open up yet another office in Perth, Australia - under the leadership of David Glance. IONA's Australian operation is intended to help us cover all 24 hours of the day, everywhere on the planet. **Orbix finally is everywhere.**

The Name Game

As you may have noticed, and after extensive consultation, our new offices are to be named "The IONA Building". It is hoped this will leave our customers imagining something along the lines of "The Chrysler Building" or "The Empire State Building", however as yet there are no plans for dealing with irate visitors who feel let down when they clap eyes on 8-10 Pembroke St. itself.

Colin Newman, who lost a battle to call the building "Orbix the World's Leading Object Request Broker House" has described the name as "lunacy". He also told us that he still backed the idea of an office in space "in principle". However, focus groups have reacted favourably to the name, with 67% of respondents claiming the name would make them more likely to buy Orbix. Lastly -we are due to move in on April 1st. Is there something we should be told?

As always, don't forget that i-contact is a top secret internal newsletter. All contributions (not that I get any these days) can be sent to tfarrell@iona.com. Our next issue is available "some time in the future"

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Loony Lunny On The Nightshift.

When top pop stars East 17 named their latest album "Up All Night" they probably weren't thinking of System Administration. But IONA employee Michael Lunny has put himself into the IONA book of records with an amazing overnight stint that ended at 11 o'clock the next day.

Said hero Michael, "the network was down - and there's no way a system administrator is going to walk out on a situation like that". Whilst fellow IONians were quick to praise Michael's heroics, fingers were inevitably pointed at half man half computer Justin Mason, who was ski-ing in a luxury Andorra resort at the time of the incident.

A common theory is that Class got lonely without Justin prodding away at it 24 hours a day, and went on strike until he returned. However, as computers are unable to talk, Class was unable to articulate its demands and thus Justin could not come home. However the incident occurred, the company are of course grateful for Michael's persistence. "He reminds me of Objectstore", said an elated Chris Horn, "I might buy him a pint". That works out at about 15p an hour overtime rate during anti-social hours. Nice one!

Orbix v Brit-Pop

The latest round in the continued struggle between distributed object technology and brit-pop for the hearts and minds of today's teenagers was fought out in the Copthorne Tara Hotel in London on Monday.

Whilst the notorious Jarvis Cocker defended himself against charges of assaulting children during Micheal Jackson's performance at the BRIT Awards, Sean O'Sullivan was delivering the gospel on World Objects right next door.

Jarvis, reportedly stunned by revelations that CORBA is now "bigger than Oasis", lambasted O'Sullivan's performance as 'Christ-like' and 'in poor taste'.

However, IONA has hit back, saying that

"Orbix has the power to heal legacy applications that have ceased to interoperate". However, IONA heavyweight Brian Comaskey has since accused Cocker of 'sour grapes' in attempting to undermine CORBA's popularity with 'the kids'.

Meanwhile Noel Gallagher of Oasis has also entered the fray. "I may have told people not to look back in anger", he said, "but I look in anger at what CORBA and Orbix is doing to our fan-base. Nowadays every 13 year old girl has posters of Annrai O'Toole on their wall, which can't be right.

"Hats Are Cool" - Halpin

You've seen him around the office. You've laughed at his ludicrous headgear. But Conor Halpin has a message for you - hats are cool.

It's long been a favourite axiom that "if you want to get ahead get a hat", and Conor couldn't agree more. In fact, he goes one step further and insists that "if you want to get a hat get a head - to put it on".

At present Conor's hat of choice is the Trilby - a model which gives him a faint resemblance to famous gangsters such as Al Capone. However, although Conor always looks cool and casual in his hat, he has had his share of mishaps - including the destruction of no less than two hats in his headgear related career. Unlucky Conor first lost his hat in the canal of all places. "I just couldn't believe it", says Conor, "a gust of wind lifted it clean off my head and into the water below".

Naturally Conor could not be seen without his hat - and he purchased a second, identical, trilby. Tragically this too was to end in disaster when Conor left the hat under his Christmas tree and it became covered in wax. As Sean O'Sullivan commented "it serves him right for having fancy real candles on his tree".

However, the story ends on a happy note, as Conor explains. "I took the hat back to the hat shop and was amazed to discover that he could remove the wax with an iron and brown paper. I had no idea that was possible, but then the hat-man doesn't understand Orbix Enterprise.

Engineering News

A bumper crop of engineering news this month, giving the lie to all those stories of drunken off-sites and lazy summer days sipping gin and tonic on the balcony. I must say the number of engineers who can juggle with four balls suggests that they may have just a little too much time on their hands....

- **Charlie Watson** has been snatched away from Professional Services to work on Any support for IIOF. **Ross O’Crowley** is visibly disgruntled at the news.
 - Thanks to the continued efforts of **Margaret Irish**, the Orbix and Objectstore adapter was shipped on March 8th. Boxes and covers are already in production and look set to do justice to the product.
 - “The first OCX beta has finally gone out the door!” announced an ecstatic **Sam Joyce** on Tuesday. **Paula** confirmed that this was ‘excellent’ news - congratulations to everyone concerned
 - **Austin** has now taken up residence in Birmingham, Alabama, where he is working on the MVS O/E port. Apparently he is making great progress, helped on by BellSouth’s great facilities.
 - **Colm Caffrey** has now finished work on the Solaris MT port and is now leading the Orbix + Java team.
 - **Craig** has put the final touches to the compiler for the Orbix/Ada beta.
 - **James Grimes** has been on the phone to Perth for the last three weeks, all of which has helped him get the alpha release of the Event Server out on HP/UX 10.
 - **Michael Reidy** has moved over to technical support, and has been packed off to Boston to man the fort there. Support themselves are moving onward and upward, led by self-proclaimed prodigy **James Byrne**. 200 prs a week are being dealt with according to official sources.
 - **Oisin** went on holiday, as did **Stephen McNamara** (oh no, he went to the OMG in Australia).
 - Documentation are working away on new manuals covering OCXs, OOSA, naming and events services.
 - **Kevin McGonagle** has now taken over the production system, ensuring that our customers get exactly what they’re looking for. Which is distributed objects in case you were wondering.
 - The legendary **Hugh Grant** has returned from Oracle, and in Justin’s absence he was able to enjoy a return to the world of Systems Administration.
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Declan O’Sullivan - Telecoms Expert?

Questions are being asked at all levels of the company concerning how suitable Declan “the wizard of dribble” O’Sullivan is as our telecoms expert. Declan, now in charge of our business development strategy in the telecoms market, is suspected of having exaggerated his telecoms knowledge in order to land the loadsawonga post.

i-contact was first alerted to the activities of the telecoms bluffer when a message for DOS was left on our newsletter voice-mail. When we suggested transferring this call to his phone he replied “I haven’t got a clue how to do that”. Since then we have also discovered that:

- Dunce Declan doesn’t know the number for directory enquiries
- He doesn’t know the difference between an engaged tone and a dialling tone.
- He shuns itemised phone bills because he has difficulty adding the numbers up.
- He still pays his phone bill in cash - because he doesn’t understand how direct debit works.
- Declan the Duffer can’t understand how mobile phones work without any wires.

When we put these facts to BusDev boss **Barry Morris** he said “We hire Declan for his technical knowledge of leading edge telecommunications systems. How he pays his phone bill is no concern of mine”. With an attitude like that, no wonder the company is going down the tubes!

Marketing News

Marketing may look a little deserted these days, but that doesn't mean they're not doing anything. Far from it in fact - they're all on the beach sunning themselves in some tropical hotspot or other. And in the midst of the fun and games, some work does get done. Try this for size -

- **Orbixwise** is finally off the ground, with at least three (count 'em) members already signing up for the Team Orbix initiative. Jilian assures doubting staff that more will follow, and promises "a marketing coup" for the company. Jilian is also at work writing up a White Paper on the Events Service.
- This last week, the second wave of the IONA blitz hit London, with two seminars and the Objects In Business tradeshow drumming up demand in the English market. Orbix is apparently being sold with teak add-ons to satisfy the UK market's demand for "quality" products.
- **Tara O'Sullivan** has replaced notorious 'loser' Tom Farrell in the trade show hot seat. Tom (recently named the company's hardest working employee) is now 'concentrating on his writing'.
- **Laura** has been working on marketing our new partner products - including design and documentation, and co-ordinating the beta test of the software itself.
- **Lean and Jilian** attended a Cambridge Technology Partners Seminar. They learnt some interesting things about toothpaste apparently.
- **John Maguire** heroically got the Java demo running (with the not inconsiderable help of Colm Caffrey), in time to show it to the London financial wizards.
- **Barry Morris and Paul Hickey** are hard at work looking after our partners and developing the product roadmap. This statement is rather vague due to the top-secret nature of much of their work - best not to ask too many questions....

Staff News

Yes, we're still expanding, so quickly that by the time we get into our new office we'll still be complaining about an impending space crisis. Still, to be philosophical about it, the more the merrier. It also means IONA Rovers have a larger squad (contact football@iona.com for details)

- **John Moreau and Tara O'Sullivan** are getting married, but (and this is the clever bit), not to each other. Congratulations are in order for both of them (though not necessarily their prospective spouses)
- **David Gance and Kylie Bowe** (what next? Sheila?) are at work setting up the Aussie office. Fair Dinkum.
- **John Petrie** officially started 'flogging the ORB' on 5th February.
- On the same date, **Jack Lynch** joined Technical Support, as did **Karen Lavin**.
- We recently saw the return of famous double act **Hugh Grant and Charlie Watson**. Hugh has promised me some 'dirt' on Charlie - so watch this space....
- On 12th February **Geoff Carragher** joined the SysAdmin team in a co-ordinating role. The System administration team has tripled in size in the space of one month, which must be some kind of a record.
- On 19th February **Andrew Coughlin** joined operations as a services assistant, helping out Suzanne and answering the phone.
- And on the same day **Micheal Lunny** joined the SysAdmin guys - and due to a misunderstanding thought his working hours were from 9am to 11am next day. (As opposed to Marcom whose working hours are 9am to 11am the *same* day).
- **Ailbhe Brilley** started work in engineering on 26th February - Ailbhe has joined the Orbix 2.0.1 team and is "running the test suite".
- On 4th March **Annette Whittey** joined the sales crew - whose soap opera "Fair Deal" seems to have died a death....
- Tuesday 19th saw the arrival of **Kilian Heneghan** in engineering and **Roisin McElwee** in technical writing.
- And finally....**David Clarke** (not of the Dave Clark Five) started as a Product Manager in Marketing on the 11th of March. I believe that's the lot.

Time To Learn Our Cricket Lesson, Says Newman

It's time to learn from the world's greatest cricketers. That's the message coming right from the top of IONA's corporate structure. Outspoken Colin Newman has fully backed plans from Fergal McDonnell to base our business plan on a one day cricket innings.

The shock revelation comes as a surprise to IONA watchers - Fergal and Colin had previously fallen out over plans to use Les Dennis in a British Telecom style ad campaign. However, this time they are back on track and preaching their limited over gospel to anyone mad enough to listen.

"It's really very simple", says Fergal. "At the moment we are crossing the chasm - we are on about 100 for 3 with 25 overs bowled. Some would say now is the time to play conservatively and consolidate our good start. However, myself and Colin believe we should strike out in the hope of hitting metaphorical sixes."

We asked some IONians for their opinions on Fergal's analysis - most merely looked at us blankly and said "I don't understand what you're talking about". However, cricket loving Aussie Craig Ryan was enthusiastic about the plans. "We'll have to be careful we don't open the face of the bat and hole out to gully" he warned. "My advice would be to go all out to knock the off-spinner over mid-on to the boundary rope" he enthused. However, he struck a note of caution, telling i-contact that "we must watch out for the googlie - it can be dangerous".

In other sports news today, IONA have confirmed that they will not be sponsoring Chester City Football Club during the coming season. Tom Farrell, a supporter of the sponsorship deal, has expressed his regret at the decision. "Expersoft are sponsoring Crewe Alexandra", he said, "we could find ourselves getting left behind if Post-Modern announce an intent to sponsor a club like Wrexham".

Take That! As IONA Storms Charts

IONA Technologies Ltd. are proud to present Orbzone, the latest in a craze of popular all boy bands sweeping across Europe, and indeed, the rest of the world. Into the gap in the market left by the demise of pop legends Take That comes the dazzling presence of Orbzone, a talented team of likely lads moonlighting from their day jobs in IONA Technologies' engineering department.

Their manager, the inscrutable Paul O'Neill, insists that the boys can program by day and ponce around at night. Whether this actually transpires remains to be seen, yet one cannot help admire the courage (or possibly naiveté) of the soulful software developers in question. As of yet there are no definite plans for release dates - or even which songs will be 'cut' in the 'studio', such is the extent of Orbzone's exciting, refreshing material. However, we were assured the band would "bung out a cover version of some old soul song" before April.

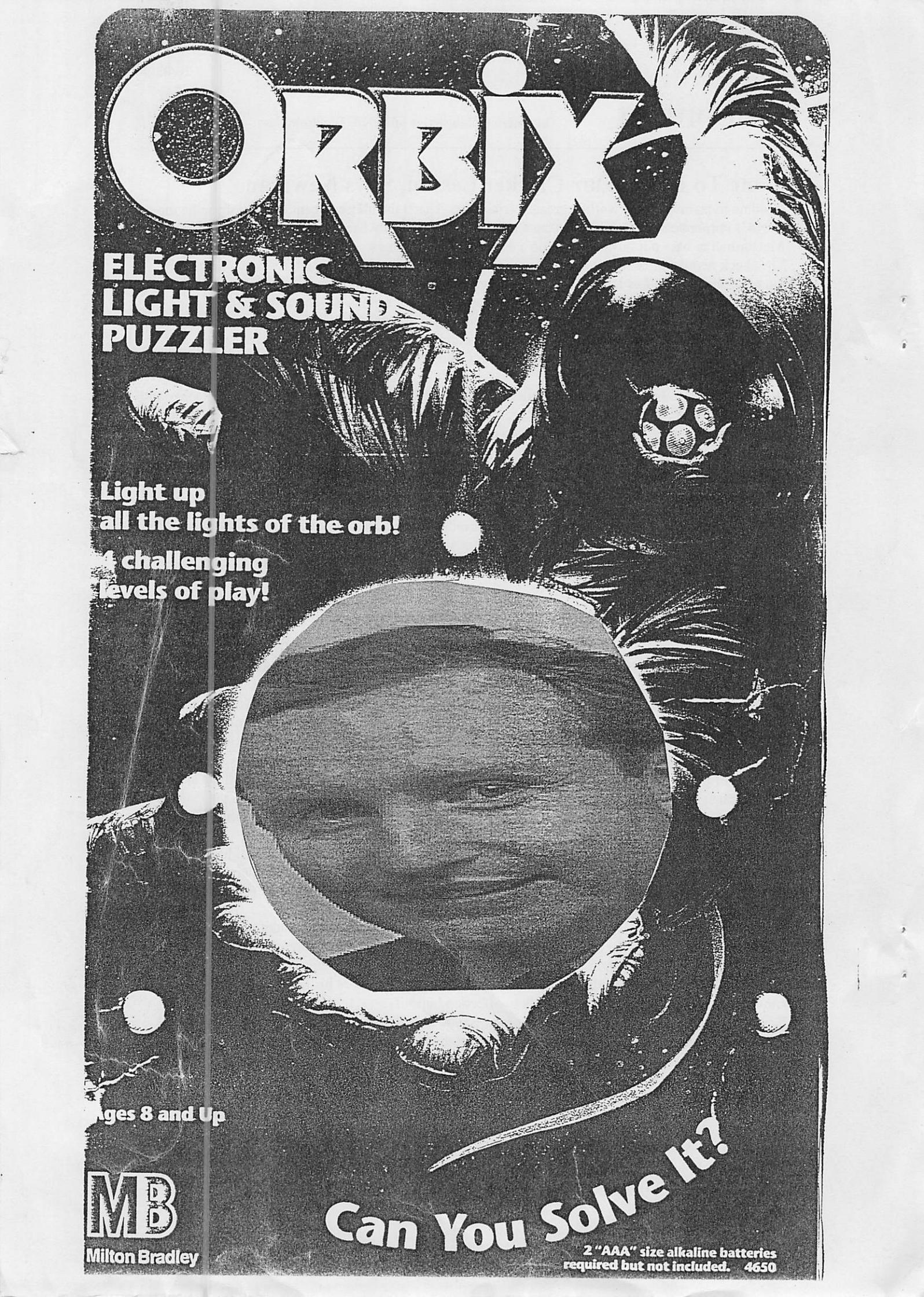
So who is Orbzone? Fronting the band is Colm Caffrey, who is yet to fulfil one part of his contract - dying his hair peroxide blonde. His colleagues include Craig Ryan, who after considerable discussion with his image consultant has decided to trim 2mm off his hair. Orbzone's management hope that Craig's rugged and masculine image will appeal to fans of both sexes.

Oisín "bad boy" Hurley will strive to fill Robbie's shoes. As we have all no doubt noticed Oisín is back from a "holiday" in the States. However rumours abound that Mr. Hurley was actually undergoing intensive laddish lessons, given by bad-boy Robbie Williams himself. Lessons included how to deal with 1000s of hysterical female fans throwing underwear at his feet - although as we all know Oisín is no stranger to such displays of affection himself.

Kevin Sullivan, aka 'The Fourth Man' hopes to entertain the fans by juggling, dancing and rolling a cigarette all at the same time. However, Kevin is no stranger to 'the tears of a clown' - the management insist he will have to die a romantic death after only 6 months in the group. Naturally Kevin is demanding generous compensation for his troubles.

Last but not least is John Moreau, who is intended to be the Gary Barlow of the group, i.e. the only one to have a proper career when they break up. Watch this space for further news on Orbzone....

ORBIX



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LIGHT & SOUND
PUZZLER**

**Light up
all the lights of the orb!**

**4 challenging
levels of play!**

Ages 8 and Up

MB

Milton Bradley

Can You Solve It?

**2 "AAA" size alkaline batteries
required but not included. 4650**