

# ariel

**THE BBC NEWSPAPER**

**Staff with hidden talents among traders  
at Pacific Quay Christmas Market**

## Quay to a crafty Xmas

page 4



◆ **Victoria Derbyshire  
broadcasts live from  
Zimbabwe** Page 3

◆ **Uploading the 'next  
big thing' with BBC  
Introducing** Pages 8-9

◆ **Cutting red tape –  
is dealing with HR  
easier now?** Page 10





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**MARTIN ASSER**, search engine optimisation specialist, explains how to 'get to the top of Google' Page 7

**SHARIF SAKR** swapped his job as a tv producer and investigative journalist for a six month attachment as *Working Lunch's* web producer Page 15

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**CITIZEN JOURNALISM** POSES CHALLENGE

# Sharper skills needed to sort fact from fiction, says Boaden

by Sally Hillier

◆ **THE RAPID RISE** of user generated content and social media sites promises new possibilities but has also 'opened a can of worms', Helen Boaden, director of news, has warned.

At a White City seminar on Monday, she pointed to the 'huge benefits' of citizen journalism – during the February snowstorms, for example, the BBC received 65,000 pictures – while making clear that there were also significant downsides to this particular media revolution.

Recalling the demonstrations over the Iranian elections, when mobile phones and digital cameras captured images, Boaden said: 'Less remarked upon was the speed of their distribution and the way the social media sites tried to drive the agenda.'

'Much of this activity centred on Twitter, where the hashtag *Iran elections* became the electronic meeting point for those who wanted to share news or to distribute pictures.'

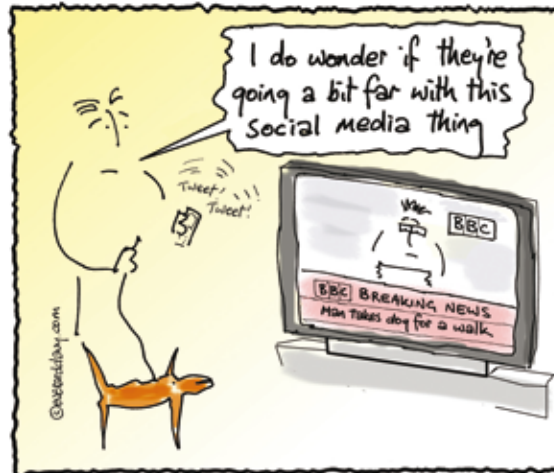
But while UGC had given the BBC's Persian tv service a direct relationship with its audience over that dramatic period, there had been 'real editorial dilemmas', Boaden explained. 'There was little balance on Twitter and the other social networks; they were overwhelmingly in favour of the opposition candidate, Mir Mousavi.'

'And there was a huge amount of false information generated by people who wanted to influence the debate on both sides.'

'Errors which emerged on Twitter included the suggestion that three million people had protested in Tehran in the middle of June when it was probably a few hundred thousand; that Mousavi was under house arrest when he wasn't; that the president of the election monitoring committee had declared the election invalid – which he hadn't.'

Boaden believed that professional journalists needed to acquire not just skills and training in social media techniques, but sharper judgment about establishing facts.

'That's where I think specialism will become critical. In the BBC we will increasingly rely on specialists, to slice through the gossip, trivia and opinion that can find a breeding



ground in the internet.'

It was no coincidence that Robert Peston's blog had attracted up to three million readers a day at the height of the credit crunch 'because people felt he knew what he was talking about even if the bankers, economists and politicians appeared to have lost the plot'.

Social networks might be faster than mainstream journalism, but the latter would have the edge if it could continue to convince its audiences that it was accurate and trustworthy, Boaden believed.

She also wondered about the impact of social media on the system of liberal democracy, at the heart of which was the idea that people could have a shared debate about things that shaped their lives.

'On demand news means that audiences can simply opt out of that shared agenda if they don't like it, can't be bothered or find it dull,' she said. 'I'm not sure that any of us – especially politicians – understand the potential implications of this in the long term.'

On the other hand, she thought that people's 'natural curiosity' about big events – whether in news, sport, or entertainment – would always pull them together to find out more.

'In the future, it may be harder for our original journalism to punch through a welter of information,' she concluded. 'But when big things happen, I suspect people will want proper grown up media they trust to tell them the facts and explain why it has happened.'

## MASSED CHOIRS RAISE THE ROOF

**A THOUSAND** untrained voices in London and 600 more in Glasgow (including this singer, right) united at the weekend to sing Hallelujah, raise the roof – and money for charity. The Sing Hallelujah project, which has already involved 500 choirs around the UK, is a BBC Learning and Radio 3 collaboration inspired by BBC Two's *The Choir*. The weekend's spectacular was an open invitation for amateur singers to mass at The Coli-

seum, London and Glasgow City Hall and master the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*. The results, says learning project manager Ruth Milway, were 'overwhelming': 'Even for someone like me, with no classical music background, the effect was totally uplifting.' Children in Need got a boost with collections after the events. The choirs can be heard in Radio 3's *Performance* on December 10. Visit [bbc.co.uk/sing](http://bbc.co.uk/sing)



## The etiquette of social media



**NICK REYNOLDS**

**SOCIAL MEDIA; WE LOVE IT.** I'm making a very good living out of social media myself.

But if you want to be 'social' it's about more than just starting a Twitter account. For to be social is to be human. As Stephen Fry wisely said recently, Twitter (and he could have easily said all social media) is 'human shaped not business shaped'.

And human beings are strange creatures. Prey to emotions and irrational impulses, yet the only animal that worries 'what's the right thing to do?'

The ethics and morals of social media are still evolving. As everything and everyone goes online, what becomes important is how people behave, not what they're called or what social tool they are using.

Recently two incidents have brought the ethics of social media and publishing online into sharp relief. First Rupert Murdoch described the likes of Google as 'parasites' and threatened to sue the BBC for using his newspapers' stories. A few days later one of Rupert's papers, *The Times*, reprinted a tribute to Edward Woodward from Edgar Wright's personal blog. The trouble was they had not asked Edgar's permission first, nor had they paid him. Edgar was understandably annoyed. So who's the parasite now, cried the blogosphere?

Then the new chair of the Press Complaints Commission seemed to suggest that the PCC could regulate blogs. There was a tart reaction from blogger Sunny Hundal.

Sunny pointed out that when bloggers make mistakes they correct them prominently (one convention is to leave the text online but with a line through the offending section). However one of the long running complaints against the PCC is that some newspapers, when they are grudgingly pushed into admitting error, make sure that any corrections are buried well away from the original story and airbrushed out of history. 'Thanks but no thanks. We behave better than you,' said Sunny to the PCC.

So if you think social media is just an easy way to get a story, think again. One man's story is another man's personal tweet. Ransacking someone's social media to get a news angle is like jumping into someone's garden, stealing their flowers, shouting 'I need this for something important' and then jumping back over the fence again. Bad behaviour, unethical even, and not BBC behaviour I would hope.

You'll also have to behave well while those around you behave badly. Social media can be an emotional and partisan thing. I've been called a parasite, and worse on message boards. Indeed only this week I was dubbed a 'power mad cretin' by some anonymous wit who objected to the fact I removed his comment from the internet blog. Fearlessness, honesty, humility, a sense of humour and a thick skin are all qualities you will need.

And these are not things you will learn on a training course, or through a new application on your iPhone.

Good luck and see you on Twitter!

*Nick Reynolds is social media executive, BBC Online*





Victoria Derbyshire  
meets schoolkids  
in Harare

# Derbyshire in Zimbabwe

by Louisa Compton

'Let's do our programme from inside Zimbabwe' – sometimes you say something and then (almost) wish you hadn't, so impossible did the task initially seem.

Despite the lifting of the reporting restrictions, which had effectively prevented the BBC from reporting freely from inside the country since 2001, trying to get into Zimbabwe to do three hours of live programming still proved a huge undertaking. There were countless times when we thought our plans would fall through, but thanks to great help from our colleagues in the Johannesburg bureau, Victoria, myself and an engineer landed at Harare airport last Monday to broadcast the first BBC domestic programme from the country for almost a decade.

No amount of research, talking to experts or journalists who'd reported from the country, could prepare us for what we found. Zimbabwe has been ravaged by hyper-inflation, food shortages, violence, the collapse of essential services and the intimidation of supporters of Morgan Tsvangari's Movement for Democratic Change. There are still countless reports of human rights abuses.

We expected tension and that people would be suspicious of us, but this was not the case. Everyone we spoke to was friendly and happy to tell us about their lives. It was only when we asked what they thought of President Robert Mugabe that they chose their words carefully. The worst thing that anybody would say was that he 'has his shortcomings'.

The introduction of the US dol-

lar (or Obama dollar as one resident called it) has seen the economy stabilise – supermarkets in Harare are now full of goods and inflation is back under control. We interviewed the CEO of Harare hospital who told us that a year ago his staff went on strike for three months because low wages meant they couldn't afford to travel to work. Twelve months on and the hospital is now fully functioning again.

We were aware that the situation in the rest of the country – outside the capital – is very different. As one guest told us, Harare 'is far from the real Zimbabwe, the poverty is out there, the pain, the suffering, the lack of money'. We spoke to Edith, a Movement for Democratic Change party worker, who was recently attacked in the street by men wielding AK-

47s who she believed were Central Intelligence Officers operating on behalf of Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF party. She wept as she spoke of her certainty that they wanted to kill her.

While in the country, Victoria did several interviews with other parts of the BBC as well as national newspapers but, perhaps, the strangest interview request came from America's Voice of Zimbabwe service who seemed under the impression that our programme was going to be based permanently in Harare. Perhaps there's something our bosses aren't telling us?

● Louisa Compton is editor of the Victoria Derbyshire programme

● You can watch videos made from inside the country on Victoria's blog – [bbc.co.uk/blogs/victoriaderbyshire](http://bbc.co.uk/blogs/victoriaderbyshire)

## Dragon's advice for schoolboy inventor

Hemel Hempstead schoolboy Robert Appleton will be watching the Copenhagen Climate Change conference closely. He won a competition to have his 'green' invention presented to officials there, and then BBC News reporter Maddy Savage picked up the story. She arranged a meeting with Dragons' Den inquisitor Deborah Meaden, who offered Robert expert advice on marketing his idea.

Fifteen year-old Robert came up with the Powerbump, a device which uses the energy created by traffic passing over speedbumps to power street lighting.

Deborah Meaden was impressed: 'I think the idea is absolutely bang on,' she said. 'Some of the green energy ideas are so complicated... this was very easy to understand.'

So would she consider investing in his idea once he's worked on the detail? 'Absolutely.'

Robert said: 'She gave me some really good advice, like approaching car park companies because they're the type of business which might use it [Powerbump]. Did he find her as scary as she appears on the tv? 'No, she's just a really nice person and really friendly.'

Robert's story will be on the News Channel, BBC Revealed and on News Online at the weekend.



## Tree o'clock record

**A Northern Ireland team has broken the Guinness World Record for the most trees planted in a single location in an hour. One hundred conservation volunteers planted 26,422 trees in Gransha Park on Saturday as part of BBC Learning's Tree O'Clock Breathing Places campaign. The previous record was 18,124 trees. Northern Ireland was competing against teams in Hainault Forest in Essex and Heartwood Forest in Hertfordshire who planted 20,312 and 20,326 trees respectively. But organisers fear the bad weather scuppered hopes of breaking the overall record for the most trees planted in multiple sites in an hour. Tree O'Clock photos can be seen here: [flickr.com/groups/bbctreeoclock/](http://flickr.com/groups/bbctreeoclock/)**

## Joining together to train future journalists

by Huw Owen

BBC Scotland welcomed the National Council for the Training of Journalists to its headquarters at Pacific Quay last Thursday, December 3 for their annual conference. The visit coincided with news that the deputy director of news Steve Mitchell is joining the board of the NCTJ to help forge closer links with the body more traditionally associated with training for the newspaper industry.

Around 80 delegates gathered at PQ to discuss how news organisations should approach multiskilling and multi-platform training to properly prepare student journalists to work in the industry in the digital age.

The centrepiece of the event was a 'Question Time' debate



NCTJ delegates  
at Pacific Quay

with a panel that included the editor of the Scotsman, John McLellan, the Guardi-

the need to give students a much wider range of production skills and promote

an's head of multimedia Tom Happold and Alex Gerlis from the BBC's College of Journalism along with representatives from Newsquest and STV. All the panelists urged the assembled university and college trainers to ensure that the core storytelling skills of journalism remained central to their courses despite

a more flexible approach to their careers than in the past. Alex Gerlis said that in an environment where citizen journalism and social media is producing huge volumes of content, investment in quality journalism training gives the BBC and others the opportunity to differentiate their product in a crowded market.

There was also heated debate over 'paywalls' for web content. John McLellan, whose Johnston Press group has just started a pilot charging £5 a quarter for some of its local online content, said now was the time to test the market to see how much the public might be prepared to pay for news. Other panellists thought newspapers would now have to work very hard to persuade their readership

to pay up for a product which many now expect to get free, citing the example of the BBC and other sites which don't charge.

The conference was welcomed to PQ by BBC Scotland director Ken MacQuarrie. He said the move to the new HQ on the Clyde had greatly supported a drive to give staff new skills to provide news on emerging platforms.

He added that the BBC's support for training throughout the industry would be further underlined by the opening up of the College of Journalism's website to the British public on December 14. The move was warmly welcomed by delegates who said that access to the BBC's expertise would be an invaluable resource in helping train the journalists of the future.



# New HQ for Cambridge

by Bryn George, BBC East and East Midlands

The BBC's new broadcasting centre in Cambridge – home to BBC Radio Cambridgeshire and BBC Look East (West tv region), as well as the BBC Local website for the county – is at the forefront of integrated, multimedia news.

The new centre has been specially designed to ensure that the radio news editor, the 6.30pm news programme producer and a BBC Cambridgeshire online bj sit in a cluster of desks in the centre of the newsroom, the editorial hub, within feet of the media hub.

That means that all story commissioning and reaction to breaking news will happen right at the core of the newsroom within ear-shot of all the decision makers on the day. Each story will be cross-platform from the start.

'Stories will have more creative treatments, maximising impact for audiences – however they choose to access the content,' says Jason Horton, outgoing managing editor of BBC Radio Cambridgeshire, who moves to Southampton as BBC South's head of regional and local programmes in the new year.

'The newsroom design means we can adapt to audiences' multimedia consumption throughout the day, and has been looked at by other newsgathering teams as a possible way forward for them.'

The new HQ was a collaboration between BBC



The multimedia operation in Cambridge could be a blueprint for other newsrooms, says Jason Horton (inset)

English Regions, BBC Workplace, Future Media & Technology and Siemens to bring the project in on time and on budget. The completely refitted premises, near Cambridge's Science Park, replaces two separate, outdated leases in the city.

The radio team began broadcasting from the new base two weeks ago with BBC Look East making its first transmission from its newly designed tv studios on Monday (December 7). Lisa Reynolds, tv news editor, expected 'a much more stream-

lined multimedia service', as well as enhanced local content.

Andie Harper was the first BBC Radio Cambridgeshire presenter to broadcast from the new building last month: 'Despite all of the technical advances and brand new equipment, the highlight for me is that I can now see the outside world.'

'For years I have broadcast from a studio without windows not knowing what was going on outside, but now when I say it's a bright, clear day or a wet, miserable one, I can see it for myself.'

## Standards role for Su Pennington

Su Pennington has been named as the BBC Academy's first head of editorial standards. She will step out of her role as head of editorial policy for factual for a year, reporting to Academy director Anne Morrison.

Pennington – a former news and education correspondent on *Today*, *Newsnight* and *Panorama* – will have the job of integrating editorial standards training into the whole Academy portfolio, including what it offers for freelancers and indies.

At the same time, Vin Ray, director of the college of journalism, has announced that he will leave the BBC in early 2010 to pursue a broader freelance career. Among various Newsgathering roles, Ray was the BBC's first bi-media foreign editor before joining Cojo four and a half years ago. His successor will be recruited in the next few weeks.

## BBC Worldwide

In last week's Ariel, we wrongly reported that BBC Worldwide's 2008/09 profits were £36m. The figure should, of course, have been £103m.

## Every one a bargain

Dawn Elrick, BBC Scotland researcher and jewellery maker, plies her wares on The Street at Pacific Quay's Christmas craft market. Production manager Olivia Rodger (knitted hats) and senior trainer Aileen Porter (Xmas wreaths) were among other in-house stall holders, although most were local craftspeople.

It's the third time that PQ's famous landings have hosted the market.

**Cover picture: art director Rebecca Armstrong shops for bargains at PQ**



## 'Cultural cloning' blocks BME careers

by Cathy Loughran

The 'who you know' culture of broadcasting is still blocking promotion of ethnic minority talent.

That was the message from the platform and the floor at a recent highly charged meeting of the BBC Black and Asian Forum, as diversity leaders from the main tv companies were questioned by BBC and independent programme makers.

Even for Channel 4, it was 'phenomenally difficult' to get a more representative mix of professionals behind the camera and among decision makers, said the company's head of specialist factual Ralph Lee.

'We need to break the network,' he argued. 'The industry functions as a business model on a 'who you

know' basis – it's cultural cloning.'

New BBC head of diversity Amanda Rice admitted the BBC was 'way off' meeting its targets for black and minority ethnic (BME) staff at senior level which was why she wanted investment in the mentoring and development scheme – which nurtures BME and disabled staff with the potential to be future leaders – to be 'part of our core funding'.

BBC London bj Evadney Campbell was one speaker who saw the senior manager gap as damaging: 'At BBC London there are few people from any diverse background in management. 'The organisation might recognise what we bring to the table but we're not getting through, even at middle management level. So you lose good staff because of frustration

– and they then tell a poor story outside,' Campbell said.

Michelle Mathers, Vision Productions talent executive, said the progress made on diversity on screen was to be 'applauded', but added: 'Whether you go to *EastEnders* or *Emmerdale*, you see predominantly white production teams. Where is the diversity of people making the decisions?'

For another BBC staff member, authentic tv portrayal was still inadequate. The radical decision to get rid of her tv set was largely due to 'myopic' depiction of black people: 'Where are the black geeks who don't smoke dope and live in the suburbs, or the black professional struggling on their middle class salary to go to the Ivy?'

## Wales roadshow attracts 2000

Doctor Who's Tardis, a chance to read the news, and meeting the cast of popular Welsh soap *Pobol y Cwm* were among the attractions at a BBC Wales roadshow in Pwllheli, north Wales.

Around 2000 visitors enjoyed the activities, which coincided with Green Wales, a season of environment-themed content being run by BBC Wales during December.

'The roadshow gave us the opportunity to showcase [our output],' said Gwenda Richards, editor of communities, BBC Wales. 'It was a learning experience not only for the public but for the staff as well. Face to face activity is two way communication in a fun and interactive way.'

## NEWS BITES

**PANORAMA EDITOR** Sandy Smith has been appointed to the new role of executive editor of *The One Show*, following Tessa Finch's move to Vision Productions as head of development. Smith, who has led BBC One's flagship current affairs programme since 2006, will take up the job in the new year.

**PROJECT CANVAS**, the venture between the BBC, ITV, BT and five to bring catch-up tv to the living room, has launched a website where the partners (as a collective) will publish news and information for journalists, the public sector, the media industry and other interested parties. <http://projectcanvas.info>

**WILD CHINA**, the co-production between the Natural History Unit and CTV in China, was named best natural history or wildlife programme at the Asia Television Awards in Singapore.

**DOROTHY WILSON**, chief executive and artistic director of the Midlands Art Centre in Birmingham, has been appointed chair of the BBC Performing Arts Fund, which helps aspiring music-makers and performers. She replaces Jane Lush, former head of entertainment commissioning at the BBC.

**GABY ROSLIN** is to take over from JoAnne Good as Paul Ross's co-presenter on BBC London 94.9 breakfast show. Good is 'considering other programme opportunities' at the station. Roslin will join the breakfast show in January 2010.

**JENNI MURRAY**, presenter of Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*, has won the NatWest 2009 Spirit of Everywoman Award, in recognition of her position as an inspiring role model to women and a pioneer in her field.

**KEN CROWTHER** of BBC Essex won the local radio gardening broadcast of the year title in the Garden Media Guild Awards. Other BBC winners were *Countryfile* (best tv gardening feature); *Grow Your Own Drugs* (best tv gardening programme); *The Food Programme: Potatoes* (best national radio broadcast); *Gardeners' World* (best website).

**THE MYCHOICES** enrolment window is open again for those who want to participate in the cycle to work scheme, purchase a health assessment or take up childcare vouchers. The window closes on December 31. For more information and to enrol go to: <http://sites.gateway.bbc.co.uk/myreward/myChoices.shtml>

**BBC STAFF** in west London are teaming up with a local school and local church this week for Christmas carols. The services take place on December 8 (White City reception, 6pm); December 9 (St Simon's Church, Rockley Road, W14, 6.30pm); December 10 (St Stephen's Church, Uxbridge Road, W12, 6.30pm). All welcome.



# PIG FARMER TURNS TV CHARMER

**Claire Barrett learns how Jimmy Doherty's raw talent was nurtured into presenter gold**

**'HE WANTED TO MAKE SAUSAGES,'** recalls Jill Fullerton-Smith of her first career counselling session with Jimmy Doherty – the unemployed science post-grad who had come to her office in the early noughties by way of a bit part in a series about bugs.

'I was in the science unit and wondered what I could do for an entomologist who wanted to work with meat products. Then he said he was thinking about getting a small farm. That's when I sat forward – nobody had done agriculture through a scientific prism.'

But it wasn't just that. Fullerton-Smith, then an exec producer, now creative director for specialist factual based in Scotland, had seen something in the funny, passionate, young man with the easy manner. 'Scientists are not usually those kind of people,' she says. 'I wanted to spend more time in his company, and I guessed that viewers would too.'

A few months later Doherty had found his farm in Suffolk, and a taster tape of the zoology graduate pretending to be a farmer had won approval from BBC Two controller Jane Root. The resulting observational documentary series *Jimmy's Farm* followed Doherty and

partner Michaela Furney as they struggled to run their rare breeds piggery. It was the start of a tv career, the latest turn of which has propelled Doherty into the mainstream.

Fullerton-Smith has turned a pig farmer into a hot tv property.

But watching his early attempts at husbandry fall down around him, she did worry he was 'mad'. It



**'Jimmy and I work well together, we see each other often, I speak to his agent, I try to care' – Jill Fullerton-Smith**

made for good telly, though.

When she made the leap to Pacific Quay, she took her farmer with her, nurturing his on-screen naturalism into 'down the lens' presenting poise with the help of expert trainer Ian Blandford. 'He gave Jimmy confidence and helped him understand the crew,' she says. 'Presenters can feel very exposed, but if they understand the fabric of production it gives them security.'

Series producer Jerry Foulkes drove Doherty's move from BBC

Two to 'popular, family viewing' with *Jimmy's Food Factory*, which has been bringing in 5.8m viewers to BBC One, despite a challenging slot opposite *Corrie*. Foulkes, says Fullerton-Smith, drove the use of everyday supermarket foods for the outlandish experiments, used music that played to all parts of the audience and slipped in the science unnoticed, like vegetables in a child's meal.

Her one regret is that she couldn't get her presenter to 'have a damn shave'. 'I'd never insist on it, though; it's who he is.'

*Jimmy's Global Farm* starts in January and will see Doherty 'come of age' as a presenter while discovering how new farming technology could save the planet, while *The Secret Life of ... Cows/Chickens/Pigs* – where he will explain domesticated animal behaviour through scientific experiment – is in production.

'Jill and the BBC Scotland team have taken the idea of talent development to a whole new level,' believes BBC One controller Jay Hunt. 'They identified Jimmy's potential and came up with formats that would play to his strengths.'

But for Fullerton-Smith, it's simply the protective instinct at work. 'If I bring on a presenter, I'll absolutely look after them,' she asserts. 'The BBC is so big, a presenter can get lost within it.'

**Talent factory:** Jimmy Doherty's latest vehicle sees him recreate processed foods in his Suffolk barn

## Biggest Personality will take on The X Factor

by Sally Hillier

**THE 'BIGGEST PRIZE IN SPORT'. That's how Olympic gold cyclist Chris Hoy has described the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year title, which he won 12 months ago.**

Who will succeed him on Sunday night? It's too close to call, declares Carl Doran, editor of BBC One's live ceremony, and in any case he hasn't got it right yet. Last year, for example, he thought swimmer Rebecca Adlington would win the public vote.

This is the fourth year that Doran has been in charge and each time the programme gets bigger and more complex. In a first for Yorkshire, Sunday's ceremony will come from the Sheffield Arena in front of 11,000 people, making it the largest *Sports Personality* ever. Tickets became available in October and were an immediate sell-out.

Previously the programme has been hosted by Liverpool and Birmingham. Going on the road has transformed what had become a rather tired format. 'The show used to go out from a studio in TVC in front of 500 sports people and representatives of governing bodies, when it was crying out for a huge crowd,' Doran recalls. 'Now it's proper event television.'

One of the challenges for Doran and his team (fewer than 20, although extra staff are taken on in the immediate run-up to the OB) is making sure that everyone – ordinary ticket holders and sports stars – is in the right place at the right time. In order to record a separate pre-show, which will go out next year, they must be in their seats for 6.15pm. The details are a surprise, although Doran reveals that tennis commentator Andrew Castle is master of ceremonies

and that the BBC Concert Orchestra is involved. As for the main event, the decision by ITV to move *The X Factor*'s final results show from Saturday to Sunday almost certainly will cost *Sports Personality* some of its audience.

Describing the clash as 'hugely disappointing' Doran says: 'Both shows are similar in the sense that they attract big family audiences, and part of the excitement is lost by watching a recording.'

His own children love *The X Factor* but have promised to 'stay loyal to their dad and watch *Sports Personality* – although it's a shame they have to choose'.

And will dad be putting his feet up once it's all over? Not likely: planning is already under way on *Sports Personality* 2010.

**BBC Sports Personality of the Year, BBC One, December 13**



David Haye



Andrew Strauss



Andy Murray



Beth Tweddle



Jenson Button



Jessica Ennis



Phillips Idowu



Mark Cavendish



Tom Daley



Ryan Giggs



# Recipe for reaching new audiences on mobiles

Online content and peaktime output is being remodelled for a medium that's second nature to sought-after young users



by Sabi Phagura and Clare Bolt

For the unprepared and feckless week-night shopper, the hours spent staring blankly at the deli counter, conjuring a recipe for sea bass roulade, may soon be behind you – if you've got a smartphone in

your pocket.

BBC Mobile has launched a database of 10,000 recipes that users can pull up directly onto their mobile. Stuck for ideas, but know you have three apricots and some pulses in the fridge? Type in the ingredients and, like a virtual Nigella, it produces a recipe for delicious tagine. The mobile team is even working on a 'shopping list' where you can tick off the ingredients as you buy.

'We're repurposing our existing online content so it works better for mobiles,' explains Chris Yanda, portfolio exec for mobile in Vision, who has been taking the BBC's existing online food database and making it work on a web device.

And the new smartphones are now so powerful, his team can do 'funky things just using web browsers, without having to build proper applications'. Take the BBC mobile prototype for *Dreamland*, BBC One's new *Doctor Who* animation for Christmas eve. It's been converted to a comic book for high end phones – with simple pans from one slide to the next, overlaid with speech bubbles.

If the sky falls in and you miss an episode of *EastEnders*, there is a service which allows you to watch catch-up clips on the bus



home, or a preview of the next episode.

It's one reason why you're more likely to find the BBC's 'underserved' teenagers using their mobile phones to access BBC content, rather than their PCs. 'The BBC website has always been the domain of the more mature user,' says Mark Kortekaas, controller of audio & music mobile. 'But for youngsters, the mobile is a necessary accessory. A lot of mobiles now offer internet access, and it's a far more appealing medium to them.'

## SMARTPHONES

Since August last year, the overall number of people surfing the BBC website on their handsets has rocketed from 2.8m to 3.9m – a rise of 74 percent. 'Around two years ago hardly anyone used internet on their mobile phones,' says Kortekaas. 'It's still a new medium, and our team is working hard to raise the profile of the BBC website. At the moment we're in talks with handset manufacturers and network providers to see how we can get the BBC icon and brand name at

the forefront of mobile content.'

The BBC has a big slice of the mobile pie: of the 13.2m people who said they used the mobile web, 5.5m were using BBC Mobile.

While the desirability of the browser-friendly, touch screen iPhone has pushed up the numbers, Apple can't take all the credit, says Lucy Stewart, senior research executive. In the last year the number of people in the UK who own a 'smart phone' – ie a mobile with advanced features like email, internet and e-book reader – has increased by 41 percent. 'People with smartphones tend to use them to access the internet more frequently than non-smartphone users, and for longer periods, as it tends to be much easier to browse the internet on them,' she says.

Content that people check on the move, like news, weather or sport, are areas where the BBC 'does really well', says Kortekaas.

'Being able to access information whenever and wherever you are, is clearly an advantage,' he says. 'Add to this the fact there are more user-friendly handsets around and the number of people using mobiles to surf the net is only going to increase.'



Mark Kortekaas: wants the BBC icon and brand name at the forefront of mobile content

## cutting edge



BILL THOMPSON

## Deeper Meaning

**RUPERT MURDOCH**, Les Hinton and other senior staff at News International have spent the last few months painting Google and other search engines as parasites who live off their expensively created news content, indexing it for their own benefit while driving only low-value traffic to The Times and other newspaper websites.

They threaten to remove their material from view in order to erect paywalls that will generate much-needed revenue, ignoring the fact that it is the collapse in print classified advertising as much as free online readership that destroyed the newspaper model.

In response Google has offered to limit the number of pages from a subscription news site users can see by following links from Google News, a move that BBC technology correspondent Rory Cellan-Jones rightly

describes as 'minor' but which seems to indicate that the search behemoth does not relish this fight.

## Google does not relish this particular fight

Google may be right to back down, because although the argument over linking and indexing looks like a desperate roll of the dice on the part of

those who refuse to acknowledge the realities of always-on networks and perfect digital copying, it also highlights a major weakness in how the web works.

On today's web we need Google to find documents for us because the documents themselves are simply collections of words, images and embedded content. Google uses brute-force methods to index and rank these documents, trying to make sense of the billions of links between them on our behalf, and it does so very effectively, most of the time.

It doesn't have to be this way. On the 'semantic web' links carry labels that tell the user – and their browser – what lies at the other end and what relationship is intended, while every web page incorporates a wealth of information about its provenance, ownership, history, content and, of course, cost. This is hidden from the reader but visible to the browser and other applications. Many BBC pages already carry this information.

The semantic web is really a database that can be queried by any application that speaks the right language. Anyone can search for all pages about a specific subject or covering a particular news story because that information is encoded in the pages and available for inspection, and Google and its famed algorithms become less important. The argument over indexing news sites might encourage content providers to look at the semantic web and decide that it can do what they want. That might worry Google a lot.

Bill Thompson is a technology writer



# week@work

## TRADE SECRETS

# GETTING TO THE TOP OF GOOGLE

by Martin Asser, search engine optimisation specialist on attachment to FM&T Journalism

As journalists at BBC News online, we've always considered ourselves pretty hot at selling our stories, using tight and informative text and compelling images. But what about the millions who rely on search engines or aggregated news pages? Or those following twitter, rather than the BBC? The truth is we've paid little attention to them until now.

The secret of making web content more visible to these burgeoning markets is called SEO – search engine optimisation – and this is how it works.

**1 Anticipate keywords:** Think about the most likely search terms people would use in Google to find your subject matter and make sure they appear prominently in your content, preferably in the headline. Don't use stylistic variations like pig virus if you think people would instinctively set swine flu as their search parameter. Include full names in headlines, if you think searchers will too.

**2 Don't just guess, check:** Free web tools can show if you are targeting the right keywords. Google AdWords tells you the number of times particular search terms have been used in the past two months and compares them with other terms. Google Insights compares search terms as percentages going all the way back to 2004.

**3 Look at Google results:** Find out if the main search engine recognises a connection between keyword variations. For example, does Google realise that Spurs and Tottenham Hotspur are one and the same? (no) What about Man Utd and Manchester United? (yes) In the former, use Ad-

Words or Insights to find which search is more popular and use it.

**4 Title tagging:** The title tag (text displayed at the top of the browser) is the most important factor in gauging the relevance of your page to any given search. Title tags should contain the most important keywords as near as possible to the front. It is also what search engine users see on results pages, so info should be compelling and coherent, not just a jumble of keywords. In the old days (last month!) the BBC's title tags contained lots of irrelevant words – BBC Sport | Football | My club | M | Man Utd, followed by the headline.

**5 Linking:** Google puts a high value on how many links there are to any given URL (web address). It helps hugely therefore, if your page is linked up by bloggers, tweeters and other websites, so do all you can to encourage such activity.

**6 Sitemaps and URLs:** A sitemap shows search engines what's on offer, so it can more easily access the freshest and most relevant information. URLs can be built to include keywords which would add to the link juice accumulated by the page. We need to do more work on these, beyond the quick wins already adopted by the News, Sport and Weather website.

**7 Awareness and journalistic culture:** This is my main job, to put SEO at the heart of our editorial process with advice, feedback and hopefully sharing good news about how many more referrals we are getting thanks to SEO.

## CHANGING PLACES

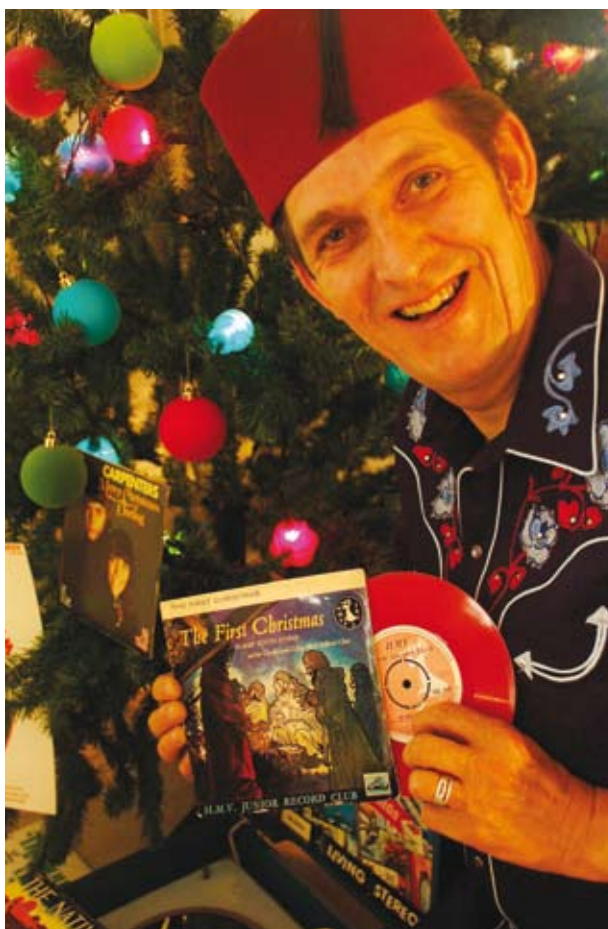
From attachments to each other's jobs, **DAVID ASTON** and **NICK BULL** are to swap places for good – Aston to head of programmes at Radio Bristol, Bull to head of programmes at Radio Gloucestershire... Vision has appointed its first head of content release: 'Troy' – the former business manager for portfolio and multiplatform – will schedule web and short form content.

## REMINDER

Rather than trawling through coat pockets and upturning cushions this January, remember you can apply for a staff loan to buy your season ticket.

You can pay in six, ten or 12 monthly instalments and since train and underground fares go up from January 2, it's worth applying now.

[tinyurl.com/BBCseason](http://tinyurl.com/BBCseason)



## SHAMELESS PLUG

STEVE DRAYTON, AFTERNOON PRODUCER, BBC NEWCASTLE

After six years as part of a double act on the comedy circuit, I quit after I decided I was spending too much time in a car.

My one man show – 'I'm almost a 50 year old bloke and this is what I know about music' – took me to the Prague Fringe Festival and sold out Newcastle's Live Theatre in May.

I've been toiling on a follow up and I'm pleased to say my latest show has once again sold out at the Live Theatre.

Subtitled *Cowell Killed Christmas*, it highlights the dangers of children singing *X Factor* Christmas number ones instead of Merry Christmas Everybody. And that is wrong at every level.

With my role as a bad tempered King Canute, my futile attempt to stop the tidal wave of talent shows taking over will see historians saying 'he was right'.

Maybe.

You can catch the show at Pave in Hull on December 13, but you had better hurry – there are only a few tickets left.

## BBC IN ACTION



Feed your head: chef Gizzi Erskine prepares a Thai curry and cheese cake for St Barts undergrads

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GORDON

**HOW DO YOU GRAB A STUDENT'S ATTENTION?** Unless you're Carnegie UK or you have a fistful of festival tickets, free food usually does the trick. Last week a group of hungry students from Barts and the London Medical and Dental School put cadavers to one side, rolled up their white coat sleeves and made a green Thai curry from scratch – thanks to

lemongrass and a little help from the BBC Headroom's touring Grub Club. Backed by Radio 1's Aled Haydn Jones and chef Gizzi Erskine, the Grub Club is going on the road promoting healthy eating among students, while driving home the message that what you eat can actually influence how you feel. The campaign is inspired by the

Mental Health Foundation, who say that 12 percent of male students and 15 percent of females will suffer from clinical depression at some time. 'We want to improve students understanding of the relationship between food and mood in an informal and fun way,' says Headroom exec Nina Bell. 'It's also about encouraging the social side of cooking.'



# BAND AID

From the Ting Tings to Florence, BBC Introducing has been breaking new acts since 2007. And they're feeling a little overwhelmed... **Adam Bambury** reports

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,** we are floating in MySpace – a world where every young troubadour with a computer, cheap guitar and relationship issues can get their music online and their bedroom video on YouTube. The problem is that everyone's at it – and they're fighting with their contemporaries for the ear of a slowly deafened music industry.

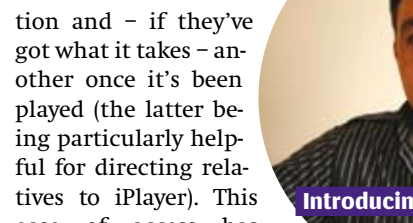
That's where BBC Introducing comes in. 'It's basically a tool for musicians,' explains Jason Carter, editor of Introducing. 'If you're in a band and you want to get your music on the BBC, this is the place you go.'

Launched in 2007, Introducing acts as a 'one stop shop' for bands and artists seeking airtime on their local radio station and the chance to play at a major festival. The website showcases live footage of the acts and has a comprehensive help section where the likes of Foo Fighters' main man Dave Grohl gives tips on everything from playing drums to avoiding drugs.

Links with musical gatekeepers around the BBC has meant that Introducing has always been a 'one BBC' proposition, with local radio teams sifting through torrents of tracks and passing on any golden nuggets to the specialist national shows, who then push the finest gems on to the likes of Radio 1 and the festival stages.



An upward spiral: Tim Bearder at the Introducing stage, Cornbury festival



Introducing... Jason Carter

tion and – if they've got what it takes – another once it's been played (the latter being particularly helpful for directing relatives to iPlayer). This ease of access has meant stations have been swamped with new tracks, making it hard to listen to them all (and you can help – see box) – but the diversity of music that's resulted, the ease with which that music can now be passed around the BBC and the increased brand recognition for Introducing has made it worthwhile.

Then there's the prospect of giving a leg up to the next big thing, who of course won't forget who gave them that helping hand at the start...

'It's a nice thing when they come through and they're successful,' Carter says. 'Of course if they then talk

about their relationship with the BBC at that early stage, then that's fantastic.'

Part of the initial impetus behind Introducing was the feeling that the BBC wasn't getting recognition for its work supporting unsigned musicians. 'There were lots of other media that seemed to get a great deal of credit, but that didn't really compare to the scale of what the BBC was doing,' he says.

And a band's success need not be confined to the corridors of the BBC. With the advent of the Uploader, record labels are starting to sit up and take interest. 'They're particularly interested in the stuff that's filtered by us,' Carter smiles. 'I'm sure they're thinking we can do their job for them.'

## New tunes staff wanted



Indie rockers Airship at Introducing Live in May

Since its launch in February 2009, more than 10,000 artists from across the UK have uploaded their music using the Introducing Uploader. It's a lot of music to listen to, so the team behind Introducing is offering musically-minded BBC staff the opportunity to get involved. They are looking for a team of 20 people every

eight weeks to volunteer a maximum of two hours a week to sit at their desks and listen to music that's been uploaded from across the UK – the perfect chance for music fans to check out and promote new music.

■ To apply to be a volunteer, go to [tinyurl.com/bbcintro](http://tinyurl.com/bbcintro) Closing date is January 5 2010

# INTRODUCING THE LOCAL TALENT SPOTTERS

**PRESENTER TIM BEARDER, BBC OXFORD INTRODUCING, ON THE BAND STORNOWAY**

They sent in a little letter with a cd saying they'd seen me out and about. I went to one of their gigs and I was the only person in the audience – just me and the band in a tiny little venue in Oxford. I really liked what they were doing, played them and watched their fan base develop.

In 2006 I barricaded myself in the radio studio and just played Stornoway for a whole hour. I was suspended for a couple of days, but I was passionate about the band – and it's been great seeing them come on from there. We put them forward for the Radio 1 Big Weekend, and they were spotted by judge Alison Howe, who is the producer for Jools Holland. She also looks after Glaston-

bury content for tv, and she put them on BBC Two as part of the coverage. Then they went on to play Jools Holland last month, and they're still completely unsigned.

From us supporting them, it's just been an upward spiral. They've done really well and they're our biggest achievement to date.



Urban hymns: producer Chris Long

**PRODUCER CHRIS LONG, BBC MANCHESTER INTRODUCING, ON THE UPLOADER**

The Uploader is a fantastic tool – I couldn't sing its praises enough to be honest. The only downside is that it's made it so much easier for bands to get to us that the volume of tracks we get is staggering. Since February we've been sent about 1500 tracks, all from the Greater Manchester area, and it's a daily job to keep up with it.

Saying that, it's allowed us to access areas that we've had difficulty getting into before. With the rock scene I can go out and talk to promoters, but the urban scene was much more difficult to get inside – now with the Uploader we get as many urban, rap, soul, whatever tracks as traditional rock, and are able to help them as well.



Home grown: presenters Will Walder and Marie Lennon keep it local

**PRESENTERS WILL WALDER AND MARIE LENNON, BBC WILTSHIRE INTRODUCING**

Will: The thing about the 'next big thing' is that you always know that for every signed band there are eight or nine bands that are better. A&R people are notoriously lazy, so the bands that get signed are not necessarily the best ones. Unsigned music in this country is fantastic – playing it is not something you take with a pinch of salt.

Katie: It's about getting the balance right between keeping it local and thinking about where these bands could be going. If we get something really good through, like Gabby Young, we'll send it to 6 Music or Radio 1. We try to be outward looking but also retain that community feel as well.

# THE NEXT BIG THINGS

**'MY GAP YEAR IS BEING A POP STAR,'** laughs George, from brother and sister synth-pop duo *Muuchu*. Six months ago the 18 year-old from Herefordshire had finished college and was planning on doing the uni thing – a plan that was swiftly dropped when they were recently offered a record deal by a Birmingham-based record label.

It's all thanks to Introducing. Or, more accurately, it's thanks to Muuchu's surprisingly enterprising dad who put three of their demo recordings into the Uploader and sent it to their local Hereford and Worcester Introducing show without telling them. 'He said, there's this cool Uploader thing, and showed us it,' remembers George. 'Then he told us he'd already done it. We didn't think much would come of it.'

The station liked the track so much they invited the band into their studio for a live session – a pretty nerve-racking proposition for the duo, considering that it was their first ever live performance. It was something they soon had to take in their stride – H&W forwarded the band's tracks to Huw Stephens for his 6 Music show, and he liked what he heard enough to book them for a session at Maida Vale studios.

The band did four tracks and an interview. 'We were in this crazy legendary place with our tiny little key-



Pop tarts: siblings Milky and George

boards,' says George. 'We kind of didn't feel deserving; it'd been such a short time since we were recording at home.'

The record deal followed, as well as a slot at the Introducing Stage at Underage Festival at Hyde Park. Recent gig offers have been flooding in from as far afield as Norway. Apart from a few initial jitters – 'a year ago Milky [his sister, Muuchu's singer] wouldn't have even sung in front of me, she was so shy. This has changed her as a person; she's far more confident,' George confides – they're taking the fast-track to musical success in their stride.

'People always ask us how long we've been going. We tell them six months, and they're like: 'I've been trying to get on the radio for eight years,' George laughs. 'We've been very lucky with it.'

# THE INDUSTRY

**EWAN HALL, PROMOTER, PEER GROUP RADIO & TV**

BBC Introducing were on board with Florence and the Machine long before most people had heard of her, taking her to the South by South West festival in early 2008 – a massive opportunity for a young artist who at the time had no record label and hadn't even released a single! They also gave her the opportunity to record

a session at Maida Vale and have followed and backed her every step of the way. The Introducing stamp of approval has worked hand-in-hand with radio support, which began growing steadily over that period and it played a big part in bringing her to the attention of other media and labels.

It's an invaluable platform for new bands to be heard and seen and their track record of getting it right has been pretty impressive so far.



Mercury Prize nominee Florence Welch on stage at Reading 2009



# When we outsourced HR, did we take it a step too far?

Four months after a survey showed only 17 percent of staff are satisfied with HR, BBC People is doing more to simplify bureaucracy, but some users say they're still wrestling too much red tape

by Cathy Loughran

**NO ONE WAS TOO** surprised when users of BBC HR systems gave a resounding thumbs down this summer to clunky processes, lengthy paperwork and faceless service providers.

BBC People director Lucy Adams says the results of the client perception survey could have 'backfired', discentivising her teams. Instead, they've been spurred into action, developing a number of new ways of doing things more simply and increasing 'client' contact.

As some of the regular users who spoke to Ariel describe here, some familiar frustrations persist. But in other target areas, like freelance hiring and invoicing, smarter processes are already cutting time and paperwork, making sure people are paid in days, not weeks. Other moves aim to plug obvious gaps – like making sure everyone knows who their line manager is.

Since the survey, hundreds more users have been consulted, says Adams, who wants satisfaction rates to be at least 50 percent, as opposed to 17.6 percent, within two years.

The new director is also taking a hard look at the make-up of her teams. Less than six months into the job, she feels the original outsourcing of 260 HR staff to Capita in Belfast – to make admit-



**Lucy Adams:** 'There's a little less heat, a little less anger...but we still have a long way to go'

tedly significant savings of £50m over ten years – may have been too extreme. Benchmarked against other public sector companies and, more so, against the private sector, BBC people is short on in-house HR advisors, she told Ariel. It might be time to bring a few more back into the business – one projected future model suggests three times as many.

'When functions were outsourced we took a dramatic reduction. The question for me is, did we go too far? If clients are saying it's not good enough, did we undercut the service?

'When you consider the extra workload in the BBC connected with compliance, we are quite light. Intuitively, that's how it feels on the ground, why we're creaking a bit.' She adds: 'I don't think we're looking for major investment or even more numbers, just a little reshaping to make BBC people more divisionally focused.'

Meanwhile, system improvements under way or already delivered include:

- annual-only paperwork for freelancers who now widely use an electronic contracting process, including contract consent online;

- Supplier Self Service, which lets freelancers create their own invoices, submit them direct to SAP and

get paid within three days;

- a simpler freelancer booking portal which will re-use existing information, halving paperwork. User testing and training has begun;

- a 'How Do I' manager's tool on Gateway, for advice like how to deal with HR Direct and engage a casual;

- a feedback group of frequent HR Direct users;

- PeopleView – a map of the organisation that will be live on Gateway by mid-2010, to clarify who's who in terms of reporting lines;

- BBC People representatives at meetings between users and HR Direct, to determine if problems lie with Capita or in BBC corporate policy;

- more call-handling training for HRD staff;

- a dvd explaining BBC people services for all new joiners, also to be available on Gateway.

Adams senses 'a little less heat, a little less anger', from staff: 'Typical comments have gone from, 'it's a disaster, and here are two or three current examples...' to 'it's still bad', but when pressed for examples, they are fewer or not recent,' she observes, fully admitting there's 'a very long way to go'.

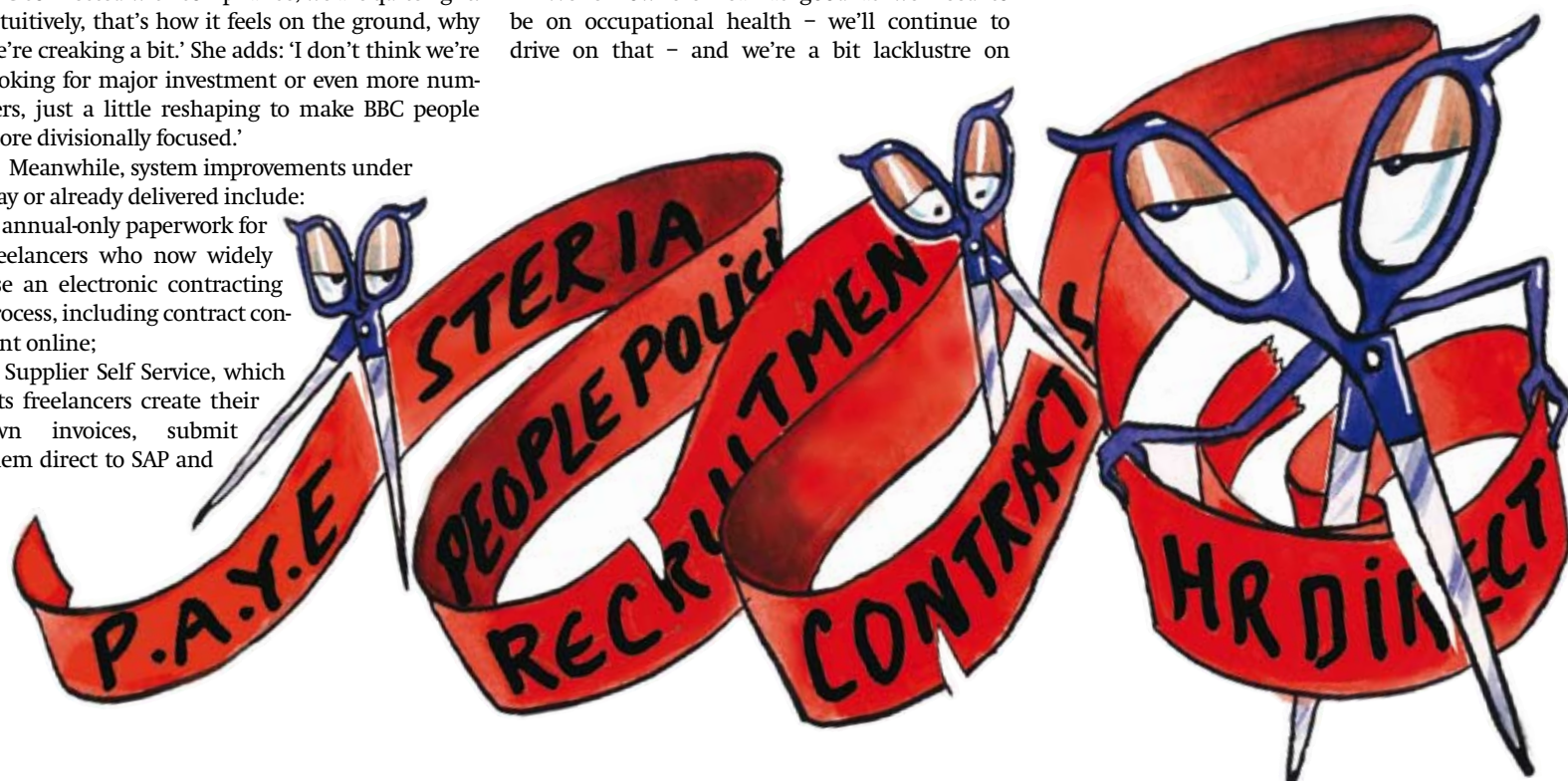
'We're nowhere near as good as we need to be on occupational health – we'll continue to drive on that – and we're a bit lacklustre on

recruitment.' She feels the sometimes strained relationships with outsourced partners Capita (HR Direct) and Steria (payroll services) have been improving too. 'Some of the problems are not even about them, they're about us. In any case, BBC people is only as good as the HR Direct service that staff experience and any organisation only gets the contractors it deserves. People who work here don't care whose fault a problem is, they just want it fixed.'

Solutions might be as simple as using one process instead of several: 'We used to have four policies on drugs and alcohol, now we have one,' she says.

Adams has also appointed leadership and change champions within her team to look at things like line manager induction into HR and identifying where and why BBC People is saying 'no' to clients. The forthright HR leader concludes: 'We're on an aspirational journey that will take three to four years. By then I want BBC People to be perceived as easy to work with by our clients and by HR professionals as a cv-enhancing employer.'

Before that, she'll be enhancing her own insights into what the core business is up against with a voluntary spell as a runner on *Blue Peter*.



## The user experience

**SUZANNE JONES**, production co-ordinator  
The Supplier Self Service system for freelancers, trialled at *EastEnders*, is the first BBC system I've found that actually feels like it's there to help – almost no opportunity for error and people's money in the bank within days. It even produces invoices in the BBC approved format. It works.

However PAYE contracts are still a problem. Weekly paid drama production crew are on non-standard rota patterns that alter due to changing production schedules. With so many stages for one contract to be processed, there are too many chances for human error. Some of our crews working across productions get underpaid, overpaid or paid late. As there is no

detail on payslips, it's hard to sort out what's gone wrong.

### LOCAL RADIO MANAGING EDITOR

There are still so many annoying hoops. Someone returning from a career break STILL has to provide copies of their passport to show they can work in this country – even though they've worked here for many years before they took their break.

**RANI RANDHAWA**, HR and development manager, Birmingham

My experience is good. As long as I ensure I provide ALL the relevant details for a transaction, it's pretty much done within hours of HR Direct receiving it.

Longer serving HR Direct employees have a much better understanding of BBC needs and diverse demands. But occupational health remains a challenge – time delays, missing forms and a complete breakdown in communication. I'd say it's a resource issue.

### FREQUENT CONTRACTOR IN VISION

I think it's a mistake having two separate companies running HR Direct and payroll. And there is still too much paperwork – like the additional Pay Change Form you have to fill in to extend a contract, even if people are acting up and there is no change in salary. That's ludicrous duplication.

I've been contracting people here for 15 years and I still find it labyrinthine. Solutions? More support for escalating complex issues and more HR advisors back in the business.

**CERI ANDREWS**, production allocator, BBC Wales

HR has got a bit better, but what still bugs me are the emails generated, each with a different case number!

I have a member of staff working for me who retired four years ago after 40 years' service. I've been using him since he left, sometimes on a casual basis, but he's had various contracts as well, so you'd think they would have a record of him by now.

At the moment he is on a flexi contract which took ages to set up as they kept getting his name and job description wrong – so I had been using him for ages before it was sorted.

**PAUL ELLIOTT**, intranet officer, BBC Wales  
I'd say some things have improved over the last six months, like all My Benefits stuff is now easier to get to and My Risks too. Generally, Gateway still

seems to be a monster with tons and tons of information, but I think even that is improving all the time.

**ANDY COOPER**, editor, tv news, Newcastle  
Recruitment is the biggest issue for me. It used to be enough to send a simple email requesting what you wanted to a recruitment consultant. Now it seems to involve endless form-filling to both request an advert and then appoint someone. The forms repeat themselves. The process takes far too long.

**MARK HURRELL**, managing editor, BBC Gloucestershire

There are some relaunched HR forms coming our way which, on the face of it, look much simpler. I think you have to be patient with processes these days. HR Direct appears to be improving, although it's been patchy in the past.



This is the page that everybody reads. Please email [claire.barrett@bbc.co.uk](mailto:claire.barrett@bbc.co.uk)  
You can also contribute to the mail page directly from the Ariel Online home page

## Party faithful

I look after the BBC Manchester retired staff and organise an annual Christmas gathering, which has been funded by Manchester management for many years.

With the recent announcements about funding Christmas parties, the funding for this, quite rightly, was cancelled. Needless to say, there was much disappointment – not least because this year's event was likely to be the last event before we move into Media City at Salford Quays.

Following petitions from many members of retired staff who still wanted the chance to meet and reminisce we have managed to reinstate the event but with guests paying for it themselves.

Some cynics thought no one would attend as the retired staff were just after a free meal. However, I have had more than 100 replies (with cheques) so far – on a par with previous years.

I think this pays great tribute to the camaraderie that exists between the staff who retired from BBC Manchester – some more than 20 years ago. Thanks to Balfour Beatty workplace catering for their help in making this event happen and existing staff who come along and chat to the retired folk and make the evening special.  
**Angela Burton** *asst to head of people programme, BBC North Project*

## Accept the blame

There was a time when 'unacceptable' meant 'unable to be accepted'. So what are we to make of the fact that chief technology officer John Linwood says that: 'We have had issues with the phone system since we switched to VOIP and it is unacceptable.'

Why then has the system been accepted rather than rejected and sent back for a refund?

**Paul Lewis**  
*presenter, Money Box*

■ John Linwood's got a cheek (Ariel, December 1). He 'pays tribute' to staff who 'worked round the problems' of the phone meltdown and talks about getting 'full value' for public money.

How about apologising for the cock-up created by the disastrous decision to switch every BBC phone to VOIP? And the suggestion that VOIP is necessary because everyone at W1 will be hot desking is another red herring. We've been hot desking in local radio for as long as I can remember.

The old phones weren't perfect, but we could easily divert extensions to other desks. I take it his department will be picking up the mobile phone bills of hundreds of staff who don't have work issue handsets?

**Kevin Stanley**  
*bj, Radio Nottingham*

■ Your correspondents have got it all wrong regarding the failure of

## Pause a moment and enjoy the pace of Pat

My two young children enjoy a daily dose of CBeebies and, quite frankly, as a working mother it is a necessary adjunct to my sanity. However, keen to expand their viewing repertoire I picked up a 10p Postman Pat video from our local charity shop.

I positioned the children, as is the Sturt custom, on the sofa, jolted the antiquated video player into life with a kick and commenced my mad-mum, damage-limitation dash around the house. But Postman Pat stopped me in my tracks. He sounded so old-fashioned. I delayed

turning on the hoover and re-entered the room to watch more. The pace was so slow it seemed alien. Everyone was speaking in a gentle, unhurried way. The red van was pootling. Envelopes were fluttering. The cat was yawning. I peered at my children. Why no protest? Why no jeers? They too were mesmerised. Perhaps we don't need our kids programmes to be so frenetic. Try going from that to the madcap *Lazy Town* or zany *Tweenies*. Honestly, try it. It too will stop you in your tracks.

**Chrissy Sturt**, *sbj, South TV News*

the new VOIP telephones. Nobody's going to be sacked or any contract reassessed, because senior BBC management don't care if it goes wrong from time to time – as long as it's cheap.

When we in Radio News moved over from BH 11 years ago, a manager actually said to me (regarding new recording technologies): 'We can live with failure once in while, so long as it saves us money.'

He also said (with regard to material filed and edited without a technically trained ear across it): 'We can't afford EQ; it's good enough as it is and it saves us money.'

Sorry, folks, but that's the way it is.  
**Nick Hartree**  
*radio news sound operations*

## Fair share?

I'd like to apologise to the lovely young man from Sport who had to wait about 15 minutes for me to finish up at the end of my shift last night because he'd been assigned a cab-share with me.

Finishing dead on time at the end of a shift is a bit of a holy grail to be honest – especially if you're the only person in charge and you want to make sure you've done your job properly.

I can understand the concept of cab-share, don't get me wrong, but I just don't think it's very practical. Anyone with a conscience will feel obliged to get finished quicker rather than keep someone else hanging on. And who wants to hang around at 0030.

I'll leave the story for when I had to wait half an hour for my cab and was then made to cab share 'on the spot', which meant I went right round the houses, for another edition of Ariel...

**Jo Babbage**  
*business unit*

## Squeeze on Latin America

The current debate over the salaries of senior managers at the BBC is about much more than just whether or not they actually deserve such high levels of remuneration. It's about allocation of resources.

We have a finite budget, provided by licence fee payers. If the dg earns

£834,000, then that is money which cannot be used elsewhere.

To put this into context, News-gathering is planning to close sponsored reporter posts in Brazil, Argentina and Mexico. A relatively small amount of executive belt-tightening would make those closures unnecessary. Are we really using our resources in the most efficient way?

**Theo Leggett**  
*business reporter, World Service*

## Fall from Gracie



At 2100 on November 23, BBC Four broadcast the following continuity announcement: 'Jane Horrocks stars in a brand new drama in our Women Who Loved sea-

son, telling the heartbreaking love story of an Italian-born Hollywood director and the inimitable Gracie Fields.'

This was followed by 80 minutes of Ms Horrocks imitating, beautifully, Our Gracie.

As the only weapon in continuity's armoury is language, I would expect them to strive a little harder than this to get it right.

**Andy Walker**  
*Today programme, Radio 4*

## First Harare

We at the African Service were happy to see that other domestic BBC outlets are still keeping vigil over important African stories such as Zimbabwe. However, I was taken aback by one error in Ariel (November 24): 'Victoria Derbyshire will broadcast live from Harare on December 2 in the first full BBC programme from Zimbabwe since the ban on the corporation was lifted earlier this year.'

I hate to nitpick, but on October 8, a team from the African service did a full day of lives and inserts into many World Service and domestic programmes including the *World Today*, *Newshour*, R4 bulletins and BBC World. The team also facilitated a 5 live inter-

view with Zimbabwe's justice minister. But their primary function was to broadcast *Focus on Africa*, *Network Africa* and *Africa*, *Have Your Say*.

On this day we relocated *Focus on Africa* to Zimbabwe. All three daily full editions of the show were produced, presented and broadcast entirely from Harare. So 5's firstness is false. And judging by the talk around Bush House, I'm not the first to say it.  
**Joseph Warungu** *editor, Focus on Africa and Network Africa, World Service*

## What's Upsy?

Last January (2009), BBC Worldwide in consultation with American manufacturer Hasbro promised to create a closer replica of the popular *In the Night Garden* character – Upsy Daisy.

If you remember there was a wave of protest from parents after Hasbro had mysteriously lightened the skin of the doll. Both parties denied there was any racial or commercial intent for this change.

So where can I get the NEW Doll that looks like the tv character? I'd like to buy it for my daughter. I've searched the web but can't find it. Surely the BBC hasn't reneged on its promise on such a sensitive and widely reported issue?

**Nick Tulip**  
*News*

## OBITUARY

### ANDREW GRANT

Andrew joined the BBC as a trainee broadcast engineer in 1983. After qualifying, he worked in TVC studios, BBC monitor and office facilities, network engineering and the MTC, transferring to Siemens in 2005.

With over 26 years working for the BBC at Television Centre, Andy honed his engineering skills in electronic engineering maintenance and RF systems. He was a friendly, competent and reliable engineer who won the Confederation of Aerial Industries prestigious student of the year award.

Andy's passion outside work was the board game, GO. He was an

### BBC Worldwide Licensing replies:

BBC Worldwide, and our toy partner Hasbro, changed the colour of the Upsy Daisy doll after research showed a small number of people wanted the toy to more closely represent the figure used in the live-action part of the programme. As a result, all Upsy Daisy dolls made since the early part of this year feature a darker face colour than on former lines.

The newer version of the Upsy Daisy doll has been appearing in shops up and down the country as previous stock runs out, but distribution logistics mean it is not possible to specify which retailers have the new stock.

## Ask a favour

Will you help us test BBC competition questions? Occasionally we run competitions, consisting of a multiple choice question, on various parts of our output. In some cases, we need to assess the level of difficulty (of the question) and so we are putting together a panel formed by volunteers (only BBC staff), to whom we will send questions, every now and then, along with a few possible answers and ask them to respond. The topics may vary from sports to television trivia to children's programmes, etc.

We will collate answers anonymously, deleting your details as soon as we receive your response. You may look up the answer on the internet and we may ask if you did research the question and how long it took you to find the answer.

You must agree to keep confidential the questions as well as the answers and, unless expressly stated otherwise, BBC employees and their close relatives are not eligible to take part in any BBC competition.

Finally, do not worry if you cannot commit to respond always. So if you are away, or too busy, that is OK.

If you are OK with us contacting you, please email Hannibal Latuff and you will be added to the panel distribution list. Thanks.

**Shelley Bradley and Hannibal Latuff**  
*ITACU*

accomplished player, travelling all over the world to various championships. Such was his nature, that when he went to Japan he even learnt to speak Japanese, just to converse with the locals. Andy had a book published on the subject, 400 Years of Go in Japan. In the late 1990s he was one of the top three dozen players of GO in this country.

Unhappily Andy developed a lung disease and the last few years have been difficult, but throughout it all he tried to remain optimistic that he would receive a lung transplant and pick up the threads of his life again.

Sadly he lost his battle, but he will always remain in the hearts and memories of his family, friends and colleagues and is sadly missed by all.

*Terry Manning*



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PROPERTY

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PROGRAMME MAKING

**Assistant Producer, What's in the Box?**  
Glasgow  
7P/Ref: 21975709  
📅 13-Dec-09 📅 06 months

**Producers, Radio 3**  
London  
Broadcasting House  
7D/Ref: 22910209  
📅 18-Dec-09 📅 Various

**Assistant Producer, Radio 1**  
London  
Yalding House  
5/7D/Ref: 22853809  
📅 16-Dec-09 📅 Various

**Assistant Producer, 1Xtra**  
London  
Yalding House  
5/7D/Ref: 22683109  
📅 14-Dec-09

**Drivetime Presenter (Broadcast Journalist)**  
Liverpool  
5/7D/Ref: 22618009  
📅 13-Dec-09 📅 12 months

**Radio Content Assistant, Topical & Events**  
Glasgow  
5D/Ref: 22994609  
📅 20-Dec-09 📅 03 months

**Upfront Presenter (Broadcast Assistant) Part Time**  
Liverpool  
3/4D/Ref: 22618209  
📅 13-Dec-09 📅 12 months

**Horticultural Runners Pool**  
Birmingham  
2D/Ref: 22471609  
📅 21-Dec-09 📅 Various

JOURNALISM

**Editor, WSNCA**  
London  
Bush House  
SM2/Ref: 22918909  
📅 14-Dec-09

**Presenters, BBC Arabic**  
London  
Broadcasting House  
8/9D/Ref: 22796909  
📅 16-Dec-09

**Senior Broadcast Journalists, BBC Arabic**  
London  
Broadcasting House  
8/9D/Ref: 22796709  
📅 16-Dec-09

**Multimedia Desk Editor**  
London  
Bush House  
8D/Ref: 22279409  
📅 16-Dec-09

**Music News Journalist, 6Music**  
London  
Western House  
7D/Ref: 22954609  
📅 10-Dec-09 📅 06 months

**Broadcast Journalist, Politics Show/News Channel**  
London  
Millbank  
7D/Ref: 23054409  
📅 17-Dec-09 📅 3 months

**Broadcast Journalist**  
London  
TV Centre  
7D/Ref: 22731109  
📅 22-Dec-09

**Video Journalist - BBC North West**  
Manchester  
7D/Ref: 21924609  
📅 10-Dec-09 📅 05 months

**Broadcast Journalist (Week-ends) P/T, BBC Essex**  
Chelmsford  
5/7D/Ref: 22819809  
📅 08-Jan-10 📅 06 months

**Regional Reporter, South America**  
Brazil  
N/A/Ref: 22972209  
📅 15-Dec-09

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT

**Senior Project Manager, Design Hub**  
London  
11D/Ref: 22994309  
📅 20-Dec-09 📅 2 years

**Lawyer, Programme Legal Advice**  
London  
White City  
8D/Ref: 22997109  
📅 08-Jan-10 Various

**Project Manager, 21CC**  
London  
White City  
8D/Ref: 22968709  
📅 22-Dec-09 📅 06 months

**Project Manager, Annual Report & Accounts**  
London  
White City  
8D/Ref: 22911709  
📅 14-Dec-09 📅 06 months

**Management Accountant, World Service**  
London  
Bush House  
8D/Ref: 22793609  
📅 09-Dec-09 📅 07 months

**Brand Executive, BBC HD & Vision Multi-Platform**  
London  
TV Centre  
7D/Ref: 22986809  
📅 03-Jan-10 📅 12 months

**Senior Research Executive, Audio & Music**  
London  
Henry Wood House  
7D/Ref: 22702109  
📅 14-Dec-09

**Policy Officer**  
London  
Bush House  
7D/Ref: 22697509  
📅 16-Dec-09 📅 18 months

**Finance Specialist (Technology)**  
London  
Bush House  
7D/Ref: 22662709  
📅 13-Dec-09

**Operations Co-ordinator, Secretariat & Governance**  
London  
7D/Ref: 22548709  
📅 07-Jan-10 📅 06 months

**Audience Planner, Specialist Factual**  
London  
Media Centre  
6/7D/Ref: 22986909  
📅 17-Dec-09

**Awards Manager**  
London  
6D/Ref: 23001809  
📅 15-Dec-09

**Press Officer**  
London  
TV Centre  
6D/Ref: 22958909  
📅 14-Dec-09

**Assistant Production Accountant**  
London  
5P/Ref: 22933409  
📅 13-Dec-09 📅 12 months

**Event Organiser, Blast on Tour**  
Multi Location  
5D/Ref: 21590009  
📅 14-Dec-09 📅 03 months

**Senior Information Assistant, BBC Children in Need**  
London  
White City  
4D/Ref: 22956509  
📅 13-Dec-09

**Scheduler (Part-time), BBC North West**  
Manchester  
4D/Ref: 22922609  
📅 16-Dec-09 📅 10 months

**Technical Assistant, DVSolutions**  
London  
White City  
4D/Ref: 22788509  
📅 21-Dec-09 📅 12 months

**Talent and Operations Co-ordinator**  
Glasgow  
4D/Ref: 22617809  
📅 15-Dec-09 📅 09 months

**Assistant to Chief Operating Officer, BBC World Service**  
London  
Bush House  
4D/Ref: 22449809  
📅 12-Dec-09

**Team Assistant & PA to Head of Operations & Business Affairs, Commissioning**  
London  
TV Centre  
4D/Ref: 21990109  
📅 07-Dec-09

**Team Assistant, Performance, BBC Trust**  
London  
4D/Ref: 20365809  
📅 14-Dec-09

**Communications Co-ordinator**  
London  
White City  
Under Review/Ref: 22311309  
📅 14-Dec-09 📅 06 months

**Volunteer Committee Chair, BBC Children in Need**  
Multi Location - South East  
N/A/Ref: 22755209  
📅 18-Dec-09 Voluntary 3 years

NEW MEDIA

**Senior Content Producer, Springwatch & Breathing Places**  
Bristol  
8D/Ref: 23001209  
📅 15-Dec-09 📅 03 months

**Digital Design Manager, Content & Channels Team**  
London  
White City  
8D/Ref: 21972309  
📅 13-Dec-09

**Assistant Content Producer, BBC Blast Online and Outreach**  
London  
Media Centre  
6D/Ref: 22729909  
📅 13-Dec-09 📅 06 months

**Researcher, Blast Online**  
London  
Media Centre  
5D/Ref: 22730109  
📅 13-Dec-09 📅 12 months

**Web Researcher / SEO Analyst**  
London  
Media Centre  
5D/Ref: 22729809  
📅 14-Dec-09 📅 06 months

TECHNOLOGY

**DMI Programme Manager (Finance)**  
London  
White City  
10D/Ref: 22861409  
📅 16-Dec-09 📅 18 months

BBC WORLDWIDE

**Deputy Editor, Girl Talk**  
London  
Media Centre  
2W/Ref: 22894209  
📅 10-Dec-09 📅 06 months

**Sales Administration Assistant**  
London  
Media Centre  
4W/Ref: 22850909  
📅 13-Dec-09 📅 12 months

TRAINEESHIPS

**BBC Trainee Technologist - Manchester**  
Manchester  
5D/Ref: 22735209  
📅 18-Jan-10

**BBC Trainee Technologist - London**  
London & Kingswood  
Warren, Tadworth, Surrey  
5D/Ref: 22569709  
📅 18-Jan-10

See Attachment

Growing over lunch

It needed a break from BBC London to convince Sharif Sakr he had something to offer them

**AFTER THREE YEARS AS A TV PRODUCER** and investigative journalist at BBC London, I landed a six-month attachment as *Working Lunch*’s web producer.

It might seem a strange move, going from ‘glamorous’ tv to ‘geeky’ online, but if you’re a video journalist there’s no distinction...and it’s one of the best career moves I’ve made.

The attachment has forced me to raise my game. I got the job largely on the strength of ideas that I pitched at the interview, so I had to follow through. I also needed to win the editors over in the hope they would let me do some tv reporting – something I’d done occasionally at BBC London and enjoyed.



‘The only way to lose that baggage is to leave that job’

I assumed it would take ages before I’d be allowed to front a *Working Lunch* story, but the chance came in my first week. The main reporter had been double-booked and there was no one to present the weekly gadget strand, called The Tech Shed. I overcame my nerves, my piece was well-received and now I’m reporting for The Tech Shed most weeks.

There’s something about going on an attachment which really boosts your confidence. I think it comes down to this: how you feel about your day job can be coloured by your early experiences there. And the only way to lose that baggage is to leave that job – even if only temporarily.

In my case, I started at BBC London as a rookie journalist surrounded by very talented people. It was daunting and for a long time I lacked the confidence to push for new opportunities such as reporting. It was only after I got this attachment and put my skills to use in a different newsroom that I realised I had been too harsh on myself. The truth was that I thrived at BBC London and learned a great deal from those talented people – not least how to make good films.

I hope the positivity I feel now will become my new ‘baggage’ and that I will be able to carry it back to my old job when the attachment ends.

Been anywhere nice? Send your attachment stories to Clare Bolt





# TALITHA SMITH

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT, IMAGINE

## CV

**Degree:** BA English at Exeter; post grad in broadcast journalism at City University

**Family:** Only child. Mum and dad both teachers

**Origin of Talitha:** My parents wanted to call me Tallulah but my grandmother vetoed it so they plucked Talitha from a baby name book

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GORDON

### What does a production management assistant do?

A lot of the time I coordinate information. I am the first port of call for enquiries. If someone has a copyright question or wants to use our material or know who directed this or that, I'll try to help and, if I can't, I'll pass it on. I check supplies, contact producers and ask them to write billings and programme information, and chase them up to ensure it's there on time to pass to the press office.

### So you need to be across everything?

Yes. It's a really integral role to co-ordinate material. When arts or tv festivals come up I have to get submissions in. It's fun to talk to our

exec about what she wants to submit and be in contact with producers. I've also written some filmographies and background information.

### What qualities do you need for your job?

Resilience, determination, hard work and attention to detail. You need to be very organised and be able to multitask and prioritise. It's important to be friendly and approachable. I work with a friendly team who are easy to get on with and who help me.

### How did you get the job here?

When I was at City University doing my post grad course, a couple of BBC people came in and told us about the Vision Intake Pool. It

sounded an exciting opportunity to get a first taste of production and a great way to start so I applied.

### Would you recommend it to others who'd like to get into production?

Yes. There are several ways in but I think the Vision Intake Pool is brilliant.

### How does it work?

You state a preference for working in factual, entertainment, children's or drama although you still get calls from other departments. Talent managers have your cv and pass it on to people in production who're looking for help in particular areas. For example, if someone needs a runner for a month or a production management assistant for a while, and they like my cv, they give me a call. I found out who my talent managers were and kept sending my cv. I eventually got an email about *Imagine*, got an interview and have been here for three months.

### When did you join the pool?

I started in May and went to various training days on health and safety, risk assessment productions and a cv workshop.

### You are only 22 so what was on your cv?

Lots of work experience. I've worked at *Look East* and a couple of indies to beef up my tv experience. At Talkback Thames I did a bit of research on *Escape to the Country*. That was nice because prior to that most of my tv experience had been in news with a few weeks with local radio stations, BBC Norfolk and a news agency.

### Why did you opt for production and not the journalistic route?

I like getting my teeth into things. In news, things happen and they can be huge and then they're gone and it's on to the next thing. Because I'm analytical I like to enjoy and explore something in depth. I have more of a feature style approach to things.

### Do you think you'll want to stay in arts?

I really enjoy it although it's not my only area of interest. History would also be great. However, since being on *Imagine*, arts is even more attractive than it was before.

### Do any Imagine programmes stand out for you?

I really enjoyed *Save the Last Dance for Me* [in which Alan Yentob met a group of pensioners who had taken up contemporary dance]. As a young person, you watch this sort of programme and wonder if you'll relate to the content and I found it genuinely moving.

### What are your other interests outside work?

Reading, visiting art galleries and watching tv. Prior to living away from my parents I was very into travelling and I would love to revisit places I've been or explore other parts of the world.

### Where have you travelled?

I was born in Saudi Arabia and grew up in Norfolk and I used to go travelling with my Dad. Once a year we'd go somewhere like Nepal, Tibet, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Jordan or the US.

### What's your ambition careerwise?

I'd like to be a researcher then producer and ultimately producer/director. For now my plan is to be an absolutely incredible production management assistant.

Interview by Sue Llewellyn

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# SILENT NIGHT. UNHOLY NIGHT.

Igor Dvorkin is a one-off, an intuitive composer who can turn his hand to any style, and brings an original twist to everything he does.

We're a happy band at Audio Network, all the happier when Igor is writing music for us. This year, we've let him loose on Christmas, so to hear his and other Christmas treats, go to [www.audionetwork.com/playlists/christmas](http://www.audionetwork.com/playlists/christmas)

We think you'll find them joyful and triumphant.



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# green room

## THE ARIELATOR

A weekly take on life at the BBC: who's up, who's down, who's off



**UPSIDE** Yes, that's Led Zeppelin screamer Robert Plant about to feed BBC West Midlands station sound producer **Craig Lewis** into some kind of silver sausage machine. And yes, that's a pie he's holding. Craig had been hanging about backstage at Bev's Big Bash – a charity evening organised by BBCWM presenter and ex-ELO and Black Sabbath drummer Bev Bevan – waiting for special guest Plant to turn up so he could snap him with the pie. Why? For the weekly BIG PIE newsletter that the WM sports team puts together – which has a regular photo feature of someone clapping a pie – of course. 'It was one thing to ask for a photo with him but quite another when it's with a pie, so I was a little nervous about it,' Craig confided. In the event the legendary Plant agreed to the photo but refused to get his hands dirty, making Craig hold the savoury snack. Typical rock star behaviour...



**DOWNSIDE** A windswept **Michael Caine** was spotted sweeping through Broadcasting House reception on Thursday morning, only to be blocked by security, despite having an attentive BBC minder in tow. The star of Get Carter and new gangland movie Harry Brown was gracious, if a bit puzzled, by the delay. Happily, he wasn't in character at the time...

## EARWIGGING

OVERHEARD AT THE BBC

...I've just got my shawl snagged on the Lord Lieutenant's uniform...

...'Did you know Lesley?' 'No I didn't know him very well' 'No, her' 'Oh, in that case I didn't know her well at all'...

...If they're bad, you get a bit tingly at the knees...

...I'd like to be a plaything for a badger...

...So it's different if it's a hooter?...

...As I get older, I'm getting more and more intolerant of people who can't roast potatoes...



## GETTING IT ON YOUR CHEST



**THE 6 MUSIC TEAM (ABOVE)** joined gig-goers all over the country for the second annual Wear Your Old Band Shirt To Work day last Friday. Veteran indie kid Steve Lamacq (4-7pm weekdays) was our host. 'The original T-Shirt Day was launched in

response to all the celebrities who'd taken to wearing AC/DC and Rolling Stones t-shirts, which their stylists had probably bought them,' says Steve. 'We thought it would be a good idea to reclaim the band t-shirt for us awkward music fans.' Green

Room attempted to display a delightful Cult of Luna t-shirt but was prevented by icy conditions at White City – evidently not a problem suffered at 6 Music, or perhaps they're all just well hard. Can we have the next one in August, please?

## WE HEAR THAT...

**EVERY RADIO** listener has wondered what goes on in the studio when the dj presses play and cuts to the music. On Thursday all will be revealed on Scott Mills's show when, for the first time in the history of Radio 1, listeners will hear what's said off-air between dj and production team while the records are spinning. Except they will be 'on-air' in a sense because they're being listened to online... Still, the experiment promises to be revealing – does the lively Mills

lapse into an embittered murmur as soon as the mics are off, a la Krusty the Clown? It's part of Radio 1's AAA week, which also involves special CCTV cameras surveying staff for the voyeuristic delights of the online audience...

**BASIL BRUSH** nearly got busted for bad language when someone complained to Ofcom about the word 'pillcock' being used on his eponymous show. Thankfully it wasn't upheld.

## WIN A BBC LAPTOP BAG

**BBC BRANDED** laptop bags are now available in cream, bright blue and navy as well as the original black. They can be found in all BBC shops at £19.99 each, staff price £15.99. We have four bags to give away. **To enter to win one, answer this question: Which country makes 90 percent of the world's zippers? Email ariel competitions by December 14.**



## ROLL OUT THE BARRELS

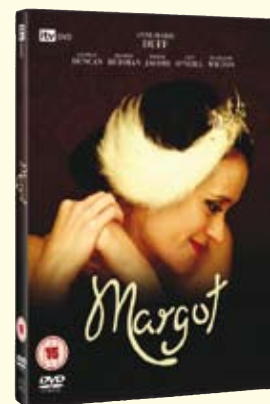
**THE STORIES** about David Cameron's alleged bid to 'de-toff' mps with double-barrelled names by making them switch to a more proletarian single surname prompted Tatler features ed Ticky Hedley-Dent to disclose an alarming revelation in The Times: 'In these politically correct times, my name was a worry when I was applying for jobs,' she writes. 'I applied to the BBC and was turned away countless times. I considered re-applying as plain Hedley – but why should I change my name because some people would rather I had a dull name, such as Jones?'

Namism at the BBC? Green Room collared a few BBC double-barrels who've slipped through the net, determined to extract tales of inverted snobbery, fake names on CVs, and Cameron-esque directives from above to shorten their monikers 'for the

kids'. It wasn't to be: 'My name has never been a problem,' said tech correspondent Rory Cellan-Jones. 'It was actually an advantage when I got my break as a reporter on *Wales Today* – although I think the people of Wales were slightly disappointed when I opened my mouth and my South London accent came flooding out.'

Janie Ironside Wood, acting head of international comms at global news, was more ambivalent: 'The name does baffle some people. I've had letters addressed to Mr Ron Sidewood (who sounds rather dodgy), and once in a hotel I was paged twice as Mrs Ironside and Mrs Wood.' TV sound supervisor Adrian Harding-Jones admitted his name sounded 'embarrassing' on a tannoy but stayed positive: 'It does look good on film credits – it sticks out further than everyone else's...'

## WIN MARGOT ON DVD



**MARGOT BRINGS** the turbulent life of Britain's first international ballet superstar, Dame Margot Fonteyn to the screen. At age 40 Fonteyn, played by Anne Marie Duff, was already recognised as a great, but her private life was in turmoil. Then she met Russian sensation Rudolph Nureyev and everything changed. Originally broadcast on BBC Four, Margot is now

available on dvd (rrp £17.99) from December 7, and we have five copies to give away. **To enter, email ariel competitions by December 14 and tell us: What was Margot Fonteyn originally known as?**