

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **UNLIMITED POTENTIAL UNITES WITH THE WELLIES**

Wellington's premier information and communication technology network Unlimited Potential has merged with successful expat IT network The Wellington IT Expats (The Wellies).

Both networks have grown substantially over the past three years, now boasting more than 2500 members combined. Under the merger, The Wellies will be incorporated under the Unlimited Potential banner with special events catering for the expat community added to UP's annual event calendar.

"It's really a match made in IT heaven. Unlimited Potential and The Wellies have always had a lot to do with each other and many of our members are active members of the expat community," say Tom Reidy, Unlimited Potential's new chair.

The Wellies was set up in 2006 to assist IT professionals and their partners to migrate to and settle in Wellington. In a little under three years, the group has grown to over 550 members, of which around 70% are in Wellington, and 30% are preparing to migrate here.

"We were obviously delighted with The Wellies' success but its rapid growth brought challenges such as structure and financial rigour for what was, essentially a one-man band, which is why the group approached Unlimited Potential," says former Wellies chairman and English expat Tom LeGrice.

"The Wellies and our members saw great synergy in UP's aims and our own. We are really positive about helping UP to ensure that Wellington continues to build on its reputation as a vibrant community of IT Professionals."

For Unlimited Potential, The Wellies merger caps off a year of unprecedented success and growth. Highlights include growth in the number of events (10 events held throughout the year) and the number of delegates at each event (with Software Freedom Day boasting more than 200 delegates). The network also established a scholarship for Victoria University computer science students.

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In addition to The Wellies merger, UP has welcomed new members to its executive committee including new chair Tom Reidy, deputy chair Ruth McDavitt, and Alex Dean who fills a new role as expatriate officer.

By way of background, Tom Reidy is the former creative director of Calcium Software, one of New Zealand's leading e-marketing software companies. In addition to his UP role, he sits on the board of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce and is about to launch a new company. Tom replaces former chair Marie-Claire Andrews who has "retired" from the UP executive committee to focus on her growing business consultancy, Vault Consulting.

Deputy-chair Ruth works for Grow Wellington and has been instrumental in the growth of Unlimited Potential over the past two years, improving access to business networks and assisting in the success of its events.

Alex, who works for ACE Training Development, is a self-confessed “serial expat”. Born in Switzerland to Scottish and English parents, he was raised in Germany and went on to study in London. After graduating Alex moved to Barcelona to publish an expat magazine before shifting to Switzerland to work for Microsoft. He immigrated to Wellington in August and is relishing the opportunity to work with the expat community as part of his new UP role.

“It’s been a big year for Unlimited Potential. I’ve taken over a group in really good shape and it is only going to get bigger and better next year starting with the What’s Up bloggers event in January. Stay tuned,” says Tom Reidy.

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**For more information, images, or to arrange an interview please contact:**

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