

# What's UP?

*Official news from Unlimited Potential*

unlimited  
potential  
ICT PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

**SUMMER 2008-09**

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## MERRY XMAS & THANKS!



Image courtesy of Phillip C

It's been a fantastic and eventful year for UP. We've welcomed some new Exec members, and also farewelled a few. We've had a record number of events and even rubbed shoulders with world-renowned international IT personalities. We're thrilled about the merge with The Wellies, and are also proud to be taking on the management of the ICT Capital membership database.

The 2009 events calendar will kick off with our [What's UP? New Year Party](#) in January. Other exciting developments are also in place including the release of our long awaited website redesign. Huge thanks to everyone who has been involved with UP this year as presenters, helpers, sponsors, and members – far too many

people to mention! You have all contributed to the ever-strengthening network that is UP and Wellington's ICT sector.

We're looking forward to 2009 with keen anticipation, and getting even bigger and brighter. Have an excellent summer!

# UP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NEWS

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## MEET THE 2009 UP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Formally elected at the recent [Unlimited Potential AGM](#), the official UP Exec line-up for 2008-09 is:

- **JO BOOTH:** one of our resident Mac geeks, Jo is facilitator for the Wellington Macintosh Society New Media Group and works for [Intergraph SG&I](#).
- **ALEX DEAN:** our new Expat Officer, find out more about Alex [later in this newsletter](#).
- **MARTIN EHRENSTEIN:** our adept treasurer, Martin is secretary of the NZ Shareholders' Association and earns his pocket money implementing financial systems and software development processes, risk analysis and occasionally training.
- **TOM LEGRICE:** Tom is the former head of [The Wellies](#), an informal expat network specifically for IT professionals, based locally in Wellington.
- **SARAH LOCK:** part of UP's communications team, Sarah works in human resources at [EDS](#).
- **RUTH MCDAVITT:** our event manager extraordinaire, Ruth works for [Grow Wellington](#).
- **STEPHEN NICHOLAS:** our 'numbers man', Stephen is CEO of chartered accountant firm [OpenSide](#).
- **TOM REIDY:** our newly elected Chair, Tom is the Director of Market Development for Catalyst90.
- **JACOB ROSEVEAR:** our resident legal eagle, Jacob is a lawyer at [Wigley Law](#).
- **KIRSTEN ROSE:** part of UP's communications team, Kirsten is a writer and communications consultant who runs [The Real Article](#).
- **PAUL SPENCE:** is a technology aficionado and heads technology services provider [ideegeo](#).
- **JAYNE WALLIS:** Jayne proved her event management prowess at Software Freedom Day. She is a web developer and part-time government consultant.

Our trusty Secretary, **BRONWYN HOLLOWAY-SMITH** will continue the role in 2009. In addition to this role, she works an Artist and Arts Administrator for the [One Day Sculpture](#) series at Massey University's Litmus Research Initiative.

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## UP EXPANDS MEMBERSHIP BY 25% WITH THE WELLIES MERGER!



Unlimited Potential looks forward to expanding its membership by almost 25% as it welcomes onboard The Wellington IT Expats, otherwise known as The Wellies.

The Wellies are an incorporated society and were founded in 2006 with the aim of assisting IT professionals to migrate to and settle in Wellington. Founder Tom LeGrice, an expat himself, recognised that the lack of a business and personal network discouraged skilled migrants from settling permanently in Wellington. The Wellies aimed to overcome this in the spirit of making Wellington a more attractive migration choice for IT professionals.

Tom says, "In a little under three years, The Wellies has grown to over 550 members, of which around 70% are in Wellington, and 30% are preparing to migrate. While it is fantastic that clearly a need exists for this service, this growth has also brought challenges such as structure and financial rigour. The Wellies and our members saw great complementary synergy in UP's aims and our own, and approached UP to propose a merger of the two organisations. We are really positive about helping UP to ensure that Wellington continues to build on its reputation as a vibrant community of IT

Professionals.”

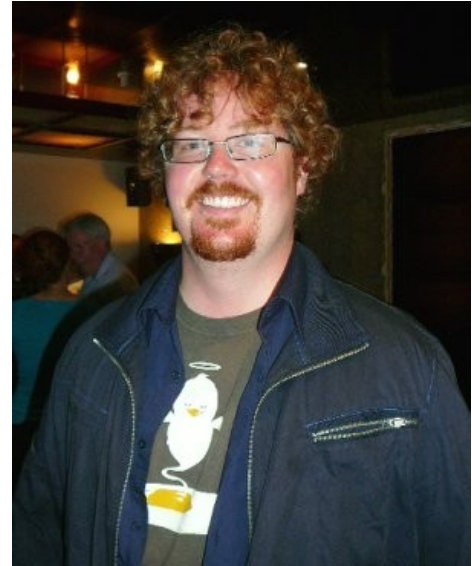
As part of the merger, The Wellies will transfer their website redevelopment project to UP control, and will build upon the existing UP website. UP welcomes any comments or queries about this website redevelopment from members – email them to [Jo@up.org.nz](mailto:Jo@up.org.nz)

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## INTRODUCING OUR EXPATRIATE OFFICER: ALEX DEAN

UP is pleased to introduce its newest Committee member: **Alex Dean**. Alex will take up the BRAND NEW Exec role of Expatriate Officer, instigated as part of The Wellies merger. The focus of the role will be to make sure the UP retains a focus on expatriates and continues to recognise that they are an essential part of the IT Community of Wellington.

A “natural born serial expat”, Alex was born in Switzerland to Scottish and English parents. Raised in Germany, he went on to study business and IT in London, funding his studies by working in a jazz club. He left London to publish an expat magazine in Barcelona, and subsequently worked with Microsoft as a Solution Architect in Switzerland during the infant stages of *SharePoint 2007*. By chance he fell in love with somebody who wanted to come to New Zealand as much as he did. Immigrating to Wellington in August this year, he has already started a recruitment company, HotShots Recruitment, and worked as a Microsoft Certified Trainer. Oh, and apparently he and his partner are still disagreeing about who had the idea of coming here first!



## UPCOMING EVENTS & OTHER NEWS

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### WHAT'S COMING UP IN 2009?

So, what's coming UP in 2009? If you thought 2008 was cool, wait till you see what we have in the works....

#### **WHAT'S UP? NEW YEAR PARTY**

**Wednesday 28 January, 2009, 5:30 for a 6:00 start.**

We'll kick the year off with our perennial favourite **What's UP? New Year Party**, asking Wellington's top bloggers share their predictions for 2009. This is a great chance to meet local bloggers and experience fabulous UP networking (and pizza and beer!). Each blogger will make predictions about upcoming milestones in gadgets & games, the internet, business & telecommunications, technology, Wellington and New Zealand. Predictions made by blog readers are allowed... and cheating by using insider knowledge, in-depth simulations, latent psychic powers, reasoned analysis, alcohol, Ouija boards, etc. is strictly encouraged!

**RSVP** now at <http://up.org.nz/predictions-2009/>

#### **FUN FOR THE FAMILY IN FEBRUARY**

To make the most of summer, UP is planning a new kind of networking event. It's still a bit top secret but will be aimed at

welcoming our new members from [The Wellies](#) into the UP community and getting out and about in the city. So get ready for a challenge and fun for ALL the extended UP family.

## THE RETURN OF THE CLASSICS

Other highlights in 2009 will of course be our trademark **Gadgets, Games & Geeks** event, **Software Freedom Day '09** (we're definitely UP for being involved in another awesome SFD) and a repeat of the highly successful **Wellington to the World (W2W)** event for innovators, entrepreneurs and investors. And of course, we'll be thinking of new creative ways to incorporate BEER into our **AGM**.

Thanks for your support in 2008, and we look forward to seeing you at UP events in 2009!!

**Got an idea for an UP event? Want to be involved? Contact [events@up.org.nz](mailto:events@up.org.nz) and we'll hook you UP.**

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## WEBSTOCK 2009

Webstock, being held in Wellington from 16-20 February next year, is definitely the place to be for anyone working in the web industry.

Since its inception in 2006, Webstock has become the premier opportunity for training, education and networking for web people in New Zealand. Webstock involves five full-on days, nine hands-on workshops, 26 kick-ass speakers and 26 must see presentations. Truckloads of design, development, user experience, web standards, content, community, innovation and inspiration. Visit [www.webstock.org.nz](http://www.webstock.org.nz) for more information.



## INDUSTRY OUTLOOK – THE ICT SECTOR

The year 2008 has been, and still is, a challenging year for New Zealand. The global financial situation had a major impact on consumer goods prices and thus consumer spending. Unemployment rose to 4.2% which is the highest rate since December 2003, but still less than was forecasted. The business sectors most affected by the economic developments are the retail and housing sector as well as construction. Still, it seems companies are trying to keep staff by reducing hours and not by laying them off and employment is still strong and stable in most other industry sectors.

The ICT market in Australia saw a major decline in job ads over the last year (down 22.81%) and is predicted not to improve much during next year. Yet the ICT market in New Zealand is in a much better position. Confidence is strong with entrepreneurs and NZ businesses see less doom and gloom in the current situation. Demand is stimulated and the economic situation may even offer growth opportunities for some. Even though New Zealand job ads have been declining in the last two quarters there is still a high demand for skilled workers in the IT sector. The ICT industry is not predicted to experience major struggles in the following months, apart from the telco sector with its large number of available contractors. Most promising areas for continuous IT work are ERP, development (.Net, C# and Java), virtualisation and Citrix. Still it will take time for the economic situation to ease and get back to normal. Economists expect recovery to take place over 2009 and 2010.

# EVENT REVIEWS

## WELLINGTON TO THE WORLD WRAP-UP

Wellington to the World (W2W) proved itself to be a cracker send off for Unlimited Potential's final event of the year and a good start to the 'networking silly season' that is Christmas.

The free event, MC'd by technology blogger and *Unlimited* magazine columnist Ben Kepes, provided networking opportunities with local angel investors and business pitches from four ICT entrepreneurs – selected through an intense application and interview process.

Around 75 people turned up to the event and were treated to insights into commercial opportunities emerging from ICT research from Victoria University and got a sneak peak at four companies who we will no doubt be seeing a lot more of in the future.



iPredict, Fingertapps, Futrix, and Aptimize Ltd all gave stunning presentations delivering business pitches to not only those there in person but those in cyber space via a web video. These presentations are now winging their way overseas through YouTube and the KEA and NZTE networks.

All participants had a chance to hobnob with Wellington's ICT and investor elite – and Aptimize managed to get a few column inches in the *Dominion Post's InfoTech* pages with its technology editor singing the start-up's praises.

By all accounts everyone enjoyed themselves and we understand at least one active offshore venture capital investor has been seriously reviewing the entrepreneur presentations.

Plans are afoot to make this an annual event... watch this space. For now, check out the photos:

<http://up.org.nz/w2w-2008> and the W2W YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/UPW2W>

## UNLIMITED POTENTIAL AGM WRAP-UP

**Tuesday 28 October, 6.00pm, Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce (Level 28, Majestic Centre, 100 Willis Street)**

Unlimited Potential's Annual General Meeting was, as always, a blast. Around 33 people attended the event which was emceed by Gen-i's Steve Rush and featured presentations by UP's Chair Marie-Claire Andrews, 'legal eagle' Jacob Rosevear, accountant Stephen Nicholas and a fantastic beer tasting session with Maurice Bennett from Bennett's Beer.

Held in the illustrious [Wellington Chamber of Commerce](#) (featuring stunning views over our fair city and harbour), the event kicked off with MC Steve reviewing the current 'economic downturn' and relaying some words of wisdom to the group: "if in doubt [of how you can make it through this period], you can always survive on the free beer and pizza at UP's events".

This was followed by the formalities – Marie-Claire Andrews’ Chair report, highlights from the year and setting the scene for 2009. Highlights included:



- Growth in events: 10 events held throughout 2008
- Growth in delegates at events: average 60 per event (though Software Freedom Day '08 boasted more than 200)
- Growth in membership: now 2000 members
- Growth in sponsorship dollars
- Establishment of Victoria University computer science scholarship
- Increased brand awareness within Wellington’s business and ICT community

The team capped off the formalities with the election of the [2009 UP Executive Committee](#).

Of course no UP event would be complete without free beer and pizza and our wonderful sponsors [Bennett’s Beer](#), Island Bay New World and [Hell Pizza](#) provided. Delegates were treated to a beer tasting session of four Bennett’s Beers by its owner, marketer-turned-beer master, Maurice Bennett. Beers sampled were *The Wellington Classic*, *Four Seasons*, *Belgium Strong*, and *Bennett’s Classic Black*. Delegates were then tested with a ‘pop-quiz’ on the different beers with the winners receiving Cafenet vouchers. All in all, a great evening!

## A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

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### IN BUSINESS MAGAZINE

Unlimited Potential is proud to welcome IN Business magazine on board as their newest in-kind sponsor. IN Business is proudly the only regionally focused, world-class magazine, for businesses that want expert knowledge to grow quickly and connect locally – [www.in-business.co.nz](http://www.in-business.co.nz).

#### *Special offer for Unlimited Potential members*

IN Business offers Unlimited Potential members 10% off subscriptions. For more information or to subscribe email Sue from IN Business on: [suec@in-business.co.nz](mailto:suec@in-business.co.nz)

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### NZ DEFENCE FORCE – CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION

The ICT function at Defence is currently going through a transformation under new Chief Information Officer, Peter Thomas, where additional resources are being directed into ICT to assist in the delivery of new capabilities to all parts of the organisation. To quote Peter:

*“I’m a passionate New Zealander, and working for the NZDF is an extremely exciting and challenging environment where we really make a difference helping to protect and serve this great country. The Defence ICT environment is fast paced and ever changing, and provides the opportunity to work with leading edge technologies and progress your career through all aspects of ICT”.*

Currently there are opportunities for Senior Microsoft Systems Administrators, Network Design Engineers, Senior Security Engineers, Senior Windows Server Engineers, Telecoms & RF Network Design Engineers and Security Risk Analysts. For further information contact Rob Mato at 920 Career Agents on [robmato@920.co.nz](mailto:robmato@920.co.nz) or (04) 978 1888.

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## **IT ROCKSTAR GOSS**

In case you have been living under a rock or hiding out in Paraparaumu for the last few months, NZ's IT Rockstar for 2008 was announced in May. Adam Brown took away the title after battling it out amongst fellow I.T. superstars Nick Breese and Matt Van Deventer.

Adam, founder of First In and Yellow Fever websites, took out the grand prize this year being crowned New Zealand's first IT Rockstar! He is off to Las Vegas in January 2009 to cause havoc in true Rockstar fashion! Adam will be blogging his trip and all the scandal he will no doubt create – keep an eye out on our website for more details!

Also keep your eyes and ears open for more details about the 2009 IT Rockstar competition. This will be bigger and better than 2008 and is going to blow the IT industry apart! Start racking your brain now for who to nominate – or why you should be nominated!

Check out [www.920.co.nz](http://www.920.co.nz) for the latest jobs and regular industry gossip! And for more IT Rockstar information go to [www.itrockstar.co.nz](http://www.itrockstar.co.nz) and get thinking NOW!



**WISHING YOU HAPPY HOLIDAYS,  
THE UP EXECUTIVE**

A **BIG THANKS** to all our sponsors, without whom we wouldn't be able to run any of these events:

## SILVER



NineTwenty Career Agents, Gen-i, Grow Wellington

## ASSOCIATES



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