

BCS Manchester Branch, Chairman's Report, October 2010.

The purpose of this report is to reflect on the year just gone and to outline the Branch's aims for the year ahead.

So let me reflect. Has it been a successful year?

It has certainly been an interesting year. It started with the BCS re-branding itself (did you see the Manchester billboard advertisement?) and finished with us eagerly awaiting the outcome of the Presidential Working Party (report due in November) - sparked by an EGM. So we are now BCS – The Chartered Institute for IT.

Interesting, yes but successful? Well, defining success by the ability to run a range of monthly events, on a variety of IT related topics. Then yes, as the Branch's events programme will attest. Our programme included meetings that covered a large variety of IT topics ranging from the prestigious Turing Lecture to career events and not forgetting the events we supported during the Manchester Science Festival and FutureEverything.

However the BCS's mission determines the true definition of success. This is to enable the information society by promoting wider social and economic progress through the advancement of information technology science and practice. Whereby this can be achieved by fulfilling the following strategic objectives:

- Bridging the gap between education practice and research;
- Giving practitioners the professional development and career support they deserve;
- Informing public policy on how IT can contribute to society;
- Ensuring everyone benefits from IT;
- Championing the global IT profession.

It is clear that the Branch is not fulfilling all of these objectives, which is understandable considering its limited volunteer time and budget. However I believe the Branch can achieve much more because it has one tremendous resource - its members. Its total membership, which fell 1% this year, stands at 2,916 and includes a vast wealth of experience and knowledge about life, the universe and IT. Hence recently I informed members of 10 opportunities requiring their inspiration or roles they could undertake that would enable the Branch to fulfil the BCS's strategic objectives – focusing on Greater Manchester. Here the aim is that by involving more members the Branch can become truly successful, to the benefit of its members, BCS and society.

However it should be recognised that there is more to the Manchester IT scene than just the BCS (Branch and Specialist Groups). In particular there are a multitude of other groups that cover a variety of IT areas. Indeed with the tremendously successful Manchester Digital Laboratory (www.madlab.org.uk) the IT scene in Manchester is becoming more vibrant every day. I believe that the BCS should support such activity, as it supports and promotes the IT profession. Consequently the Branch aim's to support and promote this activity whenever it is possible.

Finally, for making this a successful year, may I express my thanks to:

- the committee for all their time and effort they have volunteered over the year;
- Professor Nigel Linge and his team at Salford University for organising the Family Telecommunications Days;
- Keith Miller and Lewis Endlar of MMU and MMU's Business School and Department of Computing and Mathematics for assisting us with some of our events;
- Manchester University's School of Computer Science for their part in organising another great Turing Lecture;
- the numerous BCS and other institutions that have worked with us during the year;
- the speakers at our events who have all given their time freely to the benefit of the profession.

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