



imagineear newsletter

May, 2011



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imagineear Spring update

I am writing following two very different events of global importance: the Royal Wedding in the UK, and the end of Osama Bin Laden. I read that 2 billion people watched some part of the former, and I imagine at least as many knew within 24 hours about the latter, so getting on for a third of the human race. This startling fact epitomises the world of immediate, multi-platform global communications that, as it happens, *imagineear* plays a modest part in, by delivering high quality media to help interpret culture.

We have made great progress since I wrote in January, and some of the highlights are illustrated below. As before, if you want to know more, please let me know. Alternatively, we look forward to seeing you at the Museums and Heritage show if you happen to be in London on May 11th and 12th.

Either way, with best wishes for a warm, successful and enjoyable summer.

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Redefining cultural interpretation

Our thinking and our offer evolves constantly, informed by our market feedback and requests.

Like a phone contract?

A question posed in one of our regular brainstorm sessions earlier this year caught my attention: “Most of us don’t buy our mobile phones, so why should a museum have to buy their audioguides? Why shouldn’t audio-visual players be available on a monthly subscription in the same way?” This provocative thought gave rise to imagineear’s in2 line. First off the blocks is [in2Handheld](#). Just like a mobile phone contract, clients subscribe over a period of months, and we take care of the rest. We explain the technologies, help as much or as little as required on the content development. No cash investment, no complex terms and conditions. It’s our way of helping museums and galleries into the world of high quality interpretation, which may previously have looked dauntingly expensive.

Get ‘em while they’re young?

The [mediaPacker™](#) is not only great value, it’s also dead easy to use. So easy in fact that we offered it to school children as a tool for interpretation projects. In a joint initiative with redfront, called [Young Interpretation](#), we are literally putting the technology in the hands of the next generation. You can hear Alice talking about it on vimeo, [here](#).

And when their ambitions soar?

We recognise that there are horses for courses in interpretation too. Our clients who want to work with large touch screens have every right to do so - and *imagineear* is ready to help. Our commitment is to work with our clients’ own tablet devices, provide charging stations, manage headphones and cases, and offer to insure and maintain them. But to make things easy, we will also recommend an *imagineear*-approved range. I recently scoured the tech hub of Asia with Eric, our Tech Director, for *imagineear*’s next generation android tablet devices, which we will showcase at the Museums and Heritage show next week. This rounds the *imagineear* offer out, bringing to market a range of high-end delivery devices, as well as cutting edge android and iPhone app development, to complement the unbeatable value subscription services we offer on the *mediaPacker™*.

Finally solving the last mile app problem?

The problem is as old as apps themselves. The app at the museum may be free, but downloading it over the 3G network can cost an arm and a leg. But free Wi-Fi hotspots aren’t a great answer either - they get clogged up when people realise they can piggy back on the network to surf the web, update their facebook profile, catch up on last week’s TV, etc - which slows the network, often to a standstill.

To solve this problem for our clients, and to ensure that their investment in apps can be enjoyed as widely as possible, we have signed a wide-ranging collaboration with a genius Parisian team called smArtapps. Their [smArtaccess](#) service solves the thorny last mile problem by offering visitors free access to the app - but only the app in question. It requires no password, but cleverly blocks access to other internet distractions like e-mail and vimeo. It even blocks access to other apps, which means the entire network bandwidth is put to work downloading the museum app safely. As a result, smArtaccess download speeds are up to five times faster than classical Wi-Fi hotspots. And last but not least, it collects valuable

usage data that can be shared with the museum, to help them optimise app or exhibit design.

Staff update

Welcome to [Nathan Elstub](#), our new CFO. An engineer and chartered accountant by training, Nathan practised for several years as a private equity investor for a leading UK fund, and has considerable experience acting as non-exec Director of investee company boards. For us, he takes care of the plumbing and utilities: tax, accounting, banking and legal as well as helping out on investor relations and strategic direction. We are delighted he has joined the team.

Nathan is a well-experienced corporate executive. Nearer the beginning of their respective careers we are delighted to welcome likewise a number of joiners. In Amsterdam, we welcome [Laurens Heijboer](#), who has joined the content team, and [Stef Hoeke](#) who joins the sales team. In Singapore, a big thank you and welcome to [Flo Horvath](#) and her team, who have worked so hard to deliver the Biennale so successfully with Andrew and Steve. And last but not least, in London, starting just on the 3rd of May, we are delighted to welcome [Amy Carmichael](#), lately of the V&A and with degrees from Bristol and University College London. Amy will take responsibility for the *imagineear* Academy - see below.

Partner spotlight

Many people have congratulated us - and me personally - on our website. And thanks to Google Analytics, I can see that they are putting their mouse where their mouth is. We are all flattered, and flattery famously gets you a long way, but I can really take no credit for this - the simple and clean design, and the speedy delivery are all thanks to [Rob Wayne](#) and his agency, [Gradeone Digital](#). I'd like to say we scoured the capital against a carefully constructed spec sheet for the ideal agency. But luck in business is important from time to time, and Rob - I thought - was in the same building as *imagineear* London. In the end, he had expanded and moved out, but we met anyway, and, although we reviewed a handful of alternatives, the rest is ... well, right there at the end of a mouse-click. Rob has been a delight to work with: quick to understand, hugely talented, delivers to spec and, importantly, not unconscionably expensive. I am delighted to recommend him.

Bringing it all together

There is a lot to take in just in our corner of the market. And change, though exhilarating, can be a challenge at the best of times. To address this, we are investing in a new project, called the '*imagineear* academy'. The academy will bring together much of our learning over the years and boil it down into a series of video training sessions available online, much of it for free to all comers. We will share our best practice on running sites, on building great content, and we will lay

bare the innermost workings of our own technologies and how to get the best out of them. It's way to use the world immediate, multi-platform global communications to everyone's benefit. And we would be happy with a millionth of the audience!

Goodness! Is that the time? Back to work. Have a great Summer season.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping tail.