



NEWSLETTER

SMITH & OUZMAN LTD

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Changing Times For UK Elections

There have been a number of changes to the requirements for UK election materials this year, which has made for an even greater diversity in the work we produce.

For the increasingly popular postal voting process we managed the proofing, printing, personalising and mailing of the new identity information packs to voters across the country.

Just as this work drew to a close, poll card data started to arrive. Poll cards are mainly A5 postcard size and are posted to voters to confirm the details of the election. For postal ballots the poll cards were printed on pink card and for the Welsh Assembly election they were A4 size and posted in envelopes as they carried more information. Our IT department sorted all the addresses into "Walksort" order so that they can go straight into the postal system achieving significant discounts on the postage costs.



Poll card mailing continued apace up to two weeks before the elections on May 3rd. The final part of the process, having prepared for receipt of the postal votes and reminded people to cast their vote, was to prepare the ballot papers.

In previous years, UK ballot papers have had fairly little security but this year the Electoral Commission stated that all ballot papers should carry a secure mark to prevent electoral fraud. S&O worked with a number of authorities and utilised security features including watermarks, microtint patterns, underprinting and barcoding.

In many areas of the country more than one election took place on the same day for District, Parish and, for some, even County elections. With close of nominations on April 4th and the first ballot papers required for postal issues on April 16th, the window of opportunity for production was small, but thanks to the efforts of all the S&O departments all our delivery schedules were achieved. The next major project for UK elections will be voter registration later this year.

Roll on the Registration Forms!

Automated Response Services More than just a printing company

S&O is providing automated telephone and internet response services for local councils carrying out their annual voter registration exercises later this year.



Registration forms are printed with a unique PIN code and mailed to households across the country. This enables voters to confirm their whereabouts so that they are eligible to vote at local and national elections.

The forms can either be posted back to the councils, or the database can be updated by dialling a freephone number and using the telephone keypad and PIN code to verify registered voters' details. Voters are also able to confirm their details via a secure website.

GOING GREEN

We are currently implementing an Environmental Management System (EMS) at S&O to evaluate the effect our company has on the environment and help us work towards gaining ISO 14001 Environmental Registration by 2008.

An EMS is a systematic way to discover and control the effects of our business activity. It will help us prioritise ways in which we might reduce our impact on the environment, by setting targets and continually measuring against these to ensure the system is maintained. It also demonstrates that environmental awareness and compliance are core principles to the company and play a significant role in our day-to-day business.

As well as being officially recognised as a 'green' company, we hope the initiative will bring further benefits such as improved efficiency and productivity.

Look out for more updates during the year.

S&O HELPS MAURITANIA MAKE HISTORY



In another landmark international contract, S&O played an integral part in the political history of the West African country, Mauritania.

Following a bloodless coup in 2005, the country's military junta promised that democratic elections would be held to hand over power. The Ministry of the Interior selected S&O to assist in this transition and requested the secure printing and delivery of over 4.5million ballot papers, weighing more than 45 tonnes, for the country's first ever democratic parliamentary and municipal elections in November and December 2006.

A delegation from the Ministry of the Interior and UNDP visited S&O during production to oversee the very demanding delivery lead-time of just two weeks for the main elections, and three days for the second round run-off elections. S&O provided advice on the packing of the ballot papers to assist in the logistical distribution around Mauritania which was a unique requirement in a country almost five times the size of the UK but which has only two tarmac roads outside the capital.

Nick Smith, sales director, said: "This has been a testing project to undertake due to the very short timescales but we've been able to achieve delivery, with enhanced specifications, because of our knowledge of similar previous projects and the flexibility and diligence of all of our staff."

Update from Nick Smith:

"In March this year two further rounds of elections were held in Mauritania to select the country's President. Following an international tendering process we were again selected as the preferred supplier for the ballot papers. The elections passed off peacefully and successfully with Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi voted in as President, winning 53% of the ballots cast. This completes the democratising of the country since the 2005 military coup and these elections have been largely seen as the first free and fair elections since independence from France in 1960."

NIGERIAN ELECTIONS

S&O played a large part in the recent State Assembly, Senate, and House of Representative elections which were held in Nigeria in April.

Hundreds of types of ballot papers were designed and printed for the different elections being held in each part of the Federal Republic. The timescale for the production and delivery of the ballot papers was an ever-shrinking element of the contract as candidates and party symbols were changed up to the eleventh hour. S&O's experience working with INEC in previous elections in 2003 meant that we were well prepared for all eventualities and were able to deliver our contract on time and to specification.

MURRAY'S MARATHON EFFORT

Congratulations go to Murray Hicks, our Origination Supervisor, who successfully completed the Flora Marathon in London this year in 4 hours and 52 minutes to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support.

According to Murray, "I had a magnificent day! The heat was a big factor and everywhere you looked there were people struggling. The support was amazing, the showers around the course were fantastic and the whole atmosphere was wonderful. I felt absolutely fine until around 16.5 miles when I did experience some knee pain and had to then alternate between walking and running for a while before running the last mile!"

Murray raised over £600 for Macmillan Cancer Support. If you would like to add to this total please contact him by email murrayhicks@smith-ouzman.com



Kenyan Inspection

We were visited by four electoral commissioners from Kenya earlier this year.

The visit was due to a by-election, held on 14th May in Margarini Parliamentary Constituency, near Malindi. S&O printed the ballot papers for the by-election and will also be carrying out the critical task of printing the ballot papers for the general election in December 2007.

As the trip coincided with the UK local elections it provided an ideal opportunity to meet with Eastbourne's chief executive Martin Ray, to discuss the electoral process and visit one of the town's polling stations on election day.

The Kenyan delegates consisted of lawyers Samuel Manyunza and Kihara Muttu, writer and news reporter Habel Nyamu and election officer Philip Chepsat. They are pictured with Martin Ray (left) and Chris Smith, director of S&O (right).



A day in the life of: **TED RYAN**



"My day actually started last week when I made my weekly plan of sales activities. Planning ahead is essential in maintaining the self-motivation necessary to a sales career and working from home.

A typical day starts around 8am. Fortunately I live in the middle of the area I cover, which includes the North, Midlands and Eastern Regions, so I can reach most locations within two to three hours.

I aim to make three or four visits per day to promote S&O, establish

clients' needs and to ensure that we can meet their specifications and timescales. Meetings generally last for an hour, but gone are the days when you could expect an order immediately, now it's a case of taking enquiries, submitting proposals and prices, following up and following up again.

I like to try to get home by 6.30pm to finish off my paperwork and deal with messages and emails. But this is just the day-to-day routine. In the course of my work I've met all sorts of people and experienced some bizarre encounters. On a trip to Jersey to visit the Finance Officer in the States of Jersey offices my sales presenter was checked and I was asked whether I had a Hawkers' Licence. In replying I hadn't I was promptly arrested and escorted to the local police station. Fortunately, a phone call to Eastbourne verified my identity and I was released to work another day!"

S&O STAFF NEWS

SERVICE RECOGNITION

40YRS -

Dave Byers

30YRS -

Robin Clarke

20YRS -

Geoff Depper
Alan Smith
Murray Hicks

10YRS -

Claudio Raso
Michael Davey
Jon Young
Mark Dyer

5YRS -

Tim Matthews
Keith White
Chris McHugo

NEW STAFF

Roy Mullins,
Business Development Manager
Alan Goldsmith,
Finishing Operator
Lisa James,
Finishing Operator
Carl Mitson,
Guillotine Operator
Jeanette Parks,
Cleaner
Richard Summerbell,
General Assistant

Roy Mullins has joined our team of sales specialists this year as Business Development Manager for the West of England, Wales and London.

Roy brings a wealth of experience in security printing and transactional mailing to the team. In his first few months with the company he has been successful in obtaining new orders for a number of clients, including producing tickets for a high profile London music festival.



hot off the press

We're delighted to announce several new arrivals since the last edition of our newsletter.

In October of last year our Sales Director Nick and his wife Leanne became the proud parents of Chloe who was born on the 8th weighing 8lbs 7oz.



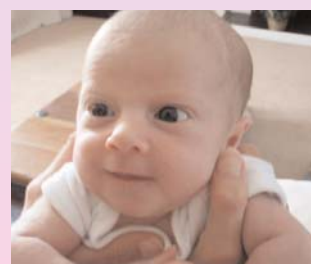
New Year's Day celebrations extended this year to January 2nd for Simon Payne and Jo as their son Tommy arrived. Simon heads up our Purchasing Department.

William Cahill was born on February 10th weighing 10lbs. Mum Sam is an Account Manager within the S&O Client Services Department.



And Ethan Clarke arrived just after Easter on April 12th weighing 6lb 11oz. His dad Rob works in our Press Room.

Most recently, Isobel Victoria arrived on May 27th weighing 6lbs 5ozs. Isobel is the daughter of Pete Ellis, Director of Finance.



You can check our website for regular news updates
www.smith-ouzman.com

Developments in Personalised Documents

❖...datamatrix...❖

This S&O newsletter is the personal copy of ❖...title...❖ ❖...first name...❖ ❖...last name...❖, copy number ❖...00000...❖

S&O's IT and Origination Departments have been at the forefront of developments in the growth of specialised variable data personalisation of documents. This includes the development of document authentication processes using two-dimensional encrypted datamatrix barcodes, colour personalisation and digital printing techniques.

S&O has also provided bespoke decryption software and barcode scanners to a number of Examination Councils around the world to enable them to read printed barcodes and authenticate their certificates.



UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

STEVE HANCOCK

SENIOR PROGRAMMER AT S&O



How did you get into the IT profession?

Like many programmers of my generation I bought a Sinclair ZX80 in 1980 and was hooked. Several years later I answered an advert for a programmer at S&O and Len Smith hired me, even though, as he kept reminding me, I was his second choice for the job.

What excites you in your role with S&O?

Finding the solution to any enquiry that initially seemed impossible.

How do you see your job changing in the future?

My job is constantly changing. In fact, it's all about change and implementing new technology. The new Management Information System is a good example of how new technology has changed both how I work and how S&O works. Five years ago it would not have been possible to produce the system we have. It's exciting to think of all the new innovations and ideas we have for the future.

What would be your dream job?

I am just waiting for NASA to ring.

What is your proudest achievement?

Every time I see coverage of a ballot we produced on the evening news, especially when they show the people celebrating in the streets afterwards.

Have you got a hobby?

I play golf poorly and enjoy poker but my main hobby is programming neural networks (it's fun, honest!).

Do you have any hidden talents?

I am told I make very good sushi.

RETIREMENTS

S&O has bid a long-serving member of staff a very happy retirement after 47 years' employment this year.

John Burcombe joined S&O in 1960 as a machine apprentice, following in the footsteps of his father, who also worked for the company as works manager at that time and provided 50 years' service to S&O.

Phil Ouzman, production director at S&O, said: "The Burcombe name is really as much a part of the company's history as the two family names our company bears, with their involvement spanning nearly 100 years. We wish John a very happy retirement here in Eastbourne with his family."

This Spring also witnessed the retirement of Iris Turner who joined us in 1958 and has worked within the S&O Print Finishing Department throughout her career.



Christmas

This year we will be holding our annual dinner dance on Saturday 1st December at the Cavendish Hotel. Please see Jenny Filsell for tickets.