

An Outline Manifesto
for the future development of
New Media
in the
Bradford Metropolitan District

bmedi@ 2001

Infrastructure

Physical Networking and Communications

We believe that a core element of new media clustering is the provision of telecoms, and high bandwidth connectivity, at an initial low cost that would be commercially viable to upgrade as required in the future. We would achieve this by:

- Identifying existing geographical clusters of new media businesses
- Identifying potential locations for new clusters for businesses
- Working with telecoms companies and connectivity providers to secure high quality services to target specific geographical areas at low/deferred/subsidised cost
- Working to influence public bodies and institutions in relation to the upgrading of connectivity to current sites and to the consideration of connectivity provision for new sites/builds
- Endorsing agencies and companies in the Bradford area which can provide informed advice on connectivity issues
- Seeking economies of scale through clustering of new media activities which will attract major connectivity and hosting initiatives

Infrastructure

Buildings

We believe that a full, clustered, range of new media businesses can only be attracted by a full size range of potential accommodation. If Bradford District is to be 'sticky' for new media businesses, it needs to offer room for growth.

We would achieve this by:

- Identifying potential geographical sites where a range of business sizes can be accommodated
- Identifying locations that would appeal specifically to larger businesses
- Identifying locations that would appeal specifically to new/recent start-ups
- Seeking applicable funding and commercial partners for the development of these sites
- Helping to co-ordinate already existing projects and strategies
- Highlighting the low cost of entry that Bradford District offers, and its implications for improved working environments and quality of life for employees
- Demonstrating through case studies the ability of Bradford District to house successfully incoming businesses and organisations

Infrastructure

Knowledge, Business and People Networking

We believe that a range of knowledge, business and contacts services are needed to underpin development within new media in Bradford. We would achieve this by:

- Creating a medium for sharing applicable knowledge and information
- Identifying and cataloguing essential suppliers of information, training business knowledge and skills
- Creating, through an audit, a directory of Bradford District new media businesses
- Encouraging First Tuesday in the North and similar venture capital organisations to use Bradford District regularly as a venue
- Creating, following the planned seminars, special interest groups that can develop through physical or on-line meetings
- Seeking a combination of public and private funding and support for a website for bmedia
- Offering a graduated subscription model for bmedia membership with opportunities for subscription dues to be paid in kind.
- Instituting regular meetings for the bmedia group
- Establishing a local business angel network

Perception/Image

We believe that the perception and image of Bradford District as a centre of excellence for new media are as important as its skill base and infrastructure. We would achieve a shift in perception by:

- Seeking sponsorship for a national new media awards event to be hosted in Bradford District
- Identifying public and commercial partners for the production and distribution of targeted marketing material about Bradford District's assets, not just as a new media location but as a city and area
- Making this material freely available to new media businesses wishing to promote themselves or attract staff
- Facilitating the development of an umbrella brand for new media in Bradford District.
- Establishing the criteria for a New Media Development Officer, to include not only a support and co-ordination role but also a role as ambassador to the city's new media assets and integrator of the brand image of Bradford District as a centre of excellence
- Supporting the arguments for a physical showcase New Media Centre as an illustration of the potential of the rest of the city to host new media businesses
- Identifying and exploring opportunities for collaboration and co-operation for access to specialist facilities, expertise and equipment
- Acknowledging and addressing current external perceptions of Bradford District through:
 - providing examples and case studies to reflect the value of the cultural and social diversity that Bradford can offer to national and global markets
 - demonstrating cross-cultural influences in the creative and production processes
- Highlighting the positives that Bradford District has to offer in terms of quality of life, entertainment and opportunity for creative stimulation.
- Showcasing success stories of new media businesses in Bradford District

Media Creation/Content Production

We believe that creativity in new media requires investment funding to allow new products to be created. We believe that a substantial amount of ongoing marketing and education content production could be driven into the area by encouraging creative and explorative uses of new media. We would achieve this by:

- Building strong relationships with grant making organisations for the arts and education
- Providing a mechanism for a central register of:
 - grant availability and qualifying requirements pertinent to the Bradford area
 - awards, prizes and other incentives available for new media businesses - locally, nationally and internationally
- Providing a forum in which businesses can share their experience of the grant application process
- Organising showcases and exhibitions, physical and virtual, for experimental, creative and not for profit uses of new media
- Helping to broker funding for creative new media projects which are not purely commercial
- Helping to broker funding for ground-breaking material that may have future commercial potential

Human Resources, Education and Training

We believe that human resource provision and retention in Bradford District and Bradford's educational institutions are fundamentally linked. We believe effective ongoing communication is required at all levels between the new media business and educational communities. We would achieve this by:

- Creating a forum in which new media businesses and education providers can discuss desired skills and requirements
- Using this forum to provide the engine for a local 'milk run' into undergraduate careers fairs
- Through the forum, enhancing communications between education departments involved in new media skills, the appropriate careers services and the new media businesses themselves
- Co-ordinating, through a New Media Development Officer, sandwich and summer placements for students with new media businesses, seeking subsidy for these where placements are with new start-ups
- Encouraging links with business as well as new media courses and offering local case studies in new media business to MBA level courses - introducing Bradford District as a centre of new media to a wide range of national and international managers.
- Integrating new media representation into employer's advisory panels already existing in the education sectors
- Profiling jobs within new media to make requirements clear to potential employees
- Liaising with student unions for part-time, placement and other employment opportunities
- Working with local on-line community initiatives to inform potential jobseekers of opportunities and desired skill-sets
- Providing a forum for personal showcases in which jobseekers can market their abilities
- Encouraging new media businesses in the area to offer portfolio and skill surgeries to prospective and new entrants into the local new media job market