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Welcome to the Eye

Rhema likes to keep itself well-informed about the issues and ideas which are on the minds (and the desks) of our clients, and as part of that process we read what you read. The Learning and Development sector is well served by a range of professional publications. These continually cover a wide variety of topics, rather than having one dominant subject at any given time – other than major news stories. As well as being interesting, this variety points to the breadth of skills and specialisations within the human resource development community.

However, currently there is one theme which notably occurs in most issues of most publications, and it is easy to understand why. **It is the increasing use of technology** in delivering learning solutions. As this latest issue of the Rhema Newsletter shows, our own experience as a long-established supplier of learning and development solutions supports the view that this is a hot topic.

There is no doubt that technology and human resource development are increasingly merging, making it ever easier for HR professionals to address key issues such as Emotional Intelligence and Knowledge Enhancement regardless of where the learner is located.

We warmly welcome **Professor Steve Molyneux**, leading expert on e-learning – one of the few people who genuinely deserves the description 'revered' in his field – who will be working very closely with us on global strategies for technologies in learning and development. He will ally his enormous knowledge and experience in this field to Rhema's development of e-learning as an increasingly important element of blended learning and development solutions.

Steve has written the regular Big Issue feature in this newsletter and there is more about the work he will be doing with Rhema contained in this issue.

And as this newsletter announces, Rhema has formed new strategic partnerships to offer excellent uses of technology for **online appraisals and employee surveys**. We're also very happy to announce that the thoughtful, highly-regarded and innovative coaching expertise of **Paul Anderson-Walsh** is now embraced by the Rhema team of consultants. Paul has been assisting us as an associate for some time, earning our respect and affection as well as that of our clients with whom he has worked. He has recently joined us as a senior consultant, bringing all the experience and fresh thinking that his CV indicates. *See Rhema People, below.*

There is plenty of other news in this edition of The Eye about new Rhema people and projects, and as always The Eye has solid information and some fresh ideas to offer HR professionals and their organisations. The navigation around our e-zine and the main newsletter is simple and we are finding that there is growing professional interest in the content.

Managing Director

Jeremy Francis



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The Big Issue

Maximising Productivity in 21st Century Training

"As every advanced economy becomes global, a nation's most important competitive asset becomes the skills and cumulative learning of its workforce." (Reich, *Harvard Business Review*). Never before has there been such a focus on human resources in our society, and never before have we so seriously questioned the performance of our learning institutions, training programmes in the workplace and the basic skills required of individuals.

In recent years, corporate strategy for maximising productivity has focused on reducing direct labour costs through downsizing, increased automation and the re-engineering of inefficient processes. As a result of these interventions, individual employees are now required to quickly accomplish tasks that previously required groups of workers and lengthy time periods. These paradigm shifts in organisational structure and function, however, have also had an effect on the amount and quality of information employees must have access to in order to perform effectively.

In many organisations, formal training remains either physically isolated from the workplace - when it is delivered in classrooms and training centres; or severely constrained by the inflexibility of textbooks, video cassettes, and CD-ROMs. These characteristics are not in line with current business training needs arising from the neo-millennium learner, flatter organisations, high-speed communications, rapidly changing information, diffused decision making, and team-based management. Traditional training systems also fail to reflect current knowledge about the importance of self-directed learning, Just-in-Time training, and on-the-job instruction.

The high-performance workplace - where increases in productivity are sustained over time - demands a training system that supports a flexible 'learning' organisation which can respond and adapt quickly to change. New approaches to training have been developed in response to changes in the workforce and the workplace. These methodologies utilise developments in psychological and organisational research to improve upon the effectiveness of instruction and enlarge the range of organisational needs that training systems can address.

Recent research in educational technology has identified several factors that determine the efficiency with which younger employees acquire new skills and knowledge. This research indicates that learning can occur at a greatly accelerated rate as compared with traditional approaches if a training system possesses certain critical characteristics. This is particularly the case when younger employees, the Digital Natives, come already equipped with many 21st Century learning skills through exposure at school and college.

These critical characteristics include:

1. **A low-stress learning environment:** The first aspect in accelerated learning is stress reduction. People learn more efficiently when they are relaxed and studies have shown that adults are under less stress when permitted to learn independently versus in a group setting. In addition, frequent slight disturbances in classroom environments impede efficiency in the learning process. Individual instruction, where all of the learner's senses can focus on the task at hand, removes this impediment.
2. **Multimodal instructional delivery:** Instruction that utilises several sensory channels in parallel - such as images, text, and sound - harnesses much more of the cognitive capabilities of the learner than uni-modal delivery. When these modes are combined, a higher retention rate results; although learners retain on average only 20 % of what they hear, simply adding visual elements to the instruction doubles retention rates.



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3. **Interactivity:** Instruction that provides the learner with the ability to interact with the content rather than passively absorb large chunks of information stimulates a more active learner involvement and engagement. Research has shown that learners comprehend much more information when they can practise new skills as they acquire them. They can retain 75% of the new information they are exposed to provided that they both see and hear the information as well as do something with the information when they first encounter it.

When the method of instruction combines these three characteristics, the synergistic results far exceed those of traditional methods. For example, reports indicate that after a two-week period, only 10-20% of the information communicated in a classroom is remembered. When learners individually use computer-based multimedia incorporating sound, high-quality video, and interactivity, retention rates vary from 50 to 95%. Furthermore, training time is frequently half that necessary using traditional approaches. Training systems that possess all three characteristics of accelerated learning enable employees not only to learn more quickly, but also to remember and apply more of what they have learned.

New training strategies that are geared towards quickly solving employees' current performance problems are collectively referred to as Just-in-Time training. Many companies already utilise aspects of Just-in-Time training within their organisations:

1. Computer software applications with built-in 'help' screens provide Just-in-Time support for both novice and experienced users. The ability to perform unfamiliar operations with the software can be acquired while using the software itself.
2. Impromptu information exchanges between employees, such as when one employee asks a more experienced peer for guidance while performing a task, is also an example of informal Just-in-Time training.

New training technologies utilising computer networks can rapidly deliver effective training content directly to the desktop or work environment, and the selection of the training content can be made quickly by employees themselves in response to their individualised needs and the tasks at hand.

These technologies create training systems that can systematically address both Just-in-Time and conventional training within one integrated solution. This can only be achieved by a shift away from the delivery of an automated on-line textbook as is currently the case with on-line corporate learning, to the provision of discrete learning objects, each of no more than 10 minutes duration, with a fixed learning outcome, delivered Just-In-Time to the individual.

Studies have also noted changes in the nature of the workforce:

1. Along with a smaller, post-baby-boom pool of entrants into the workforce, greater numbers of workers are experiencing increasing job shifting throughout their lifetime,
2. Training systems will therefore have to accommodate "a more diverse population of trainees than they have dealt with in the past...many of those entering the workforce, as well as many already in it, will not have the prerequisite skills for the new jobs that they will be required to do".

The key trend associated with these changes in the workforce is that employees will increasingly be life-long learners. The traditional sequence of formal school-based education followed by a predetermined career path is no longer the norm. In its place, adults will iterate cycles of learning and applying skills in response to workplace demands,



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and continuously develop personal knowledge bases for the duration of their professional lives.

Employers must support this essential life-long learning process with a flexible and powerful training system, as employees will not only increasingly rely on it, they will also increasingly demand it.



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Strategic Partner News

Rhema Group provides global platform for Carbon360

A new strategic alliance with Element78 Solutions Ltd will add the impressive 360° appraisal software product **Carbon360** to Rhema's portfolio of customised products for talent development, leadership and management, performance management and sales training/skills development.

With a 20-year track record for delivering blended solutions incorporating HR consultancy, training, coaching, psychometrics and e-learning Rhema Group has an established reputation for supplying a global customer base. It can now offer Carbon360 as an easy-to-use, cost effective online appraisal solution that is readily tailored to meet individual organisation's requirements.

Many organisations are excited by the benefits of running online 360° appraisals but are deterred by the complexity and costs of systems which claim to provide this. Having worked with leading organisations to meet the needs of HR managers, Element78 Solutions Ltd has successfully responded to the gap in the market developing a powerful browser-based software package which creates and distributes 360° reports that are easily understood by both staff and their managers.

HR professionals are increasingly looking for state-of-the-art online 360° performance appraisal processes. Carbon360 meets this need providing a powerful and highly flexible solution that supports an open and participative approach to employee development. The product also helps organisations to fine tune their people development and talent management plans, and can be of particular use to Rhema clients who need to develop and then roll out global learning and development programmes.

Element78 Solutions Ltd successfully developed the Carbon360 staff appraisal software package in 2005. The first anniversary of the product has been celebrated with a strong order book that has been further strengthened by access to the global market-place that is provided by Rhema.



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Strategic Partner News Continued

With Two Way Vision, Rhema provides access to tailored online employee surveys.

"It was a great step forward – at last I feel I am being listened to". This heartfelt appreciation was just one of many glowing responses to a Two Way Vision web-based employee survey.

Recognising the quality, flexibility and effectiveness of Two Way Vision's online employee survey, the highly respected human resource development specialist Rhema Group has formed a strategic partnership with Two Way Vision – to offer yet more added value to clients who want to quickly and accurately obtain the views of their employees on key issues relating to them, and their psychological contract with the organisation.

The Two Way Vision employee survey includes the following key issues:

- Employee satisfaction and motivation
- Quality of internal communications
- Corporate governance and compliance.

Surveys can be customised to the client's needs, although typically they consist of about 60 questions, taking between 10 and 20 minutes to complete. Users can be divided into tiers or groups but to ensure that people can answer candidly, responses are aggregated and the anonymity of participants is protected. Combined results are made available online to nominated people, displayed in easily assimilated bar charts. The whole system is web-based for ease of completion, review and maintenance: it is also password protected and accessed by secure (SSL) link.

Two Way Vision was established in 2004 to offer a fast and effective online solution to the needs of companies and professional firms' for improved internal communications. Co-founders Tim Martin and Giles Cory have extensive experience in rapidly growing and changing environments and the communication challenges they create. Says Tim: "We believe that the ease of set up, customisation and use of the Two Way Vision survey system makes it an ideal product to add to the services of Rhema Group, and we are excited about working with them. Their operations and values are a perfect fit with our goal of enabling employees and organisations to communicate more effectively using new technologies."



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Profiles

Rhema launches dedicated Psychometric Assessment arm

Rhema's strategic partnership with Profiles International is firmly established, and starting to prove that the combination of Profiles' exceptional psychometric assessments, and Rhema's human resource development expertise can ensure unrivalled value for client companies.

Marlon Lorde (*see [Rhema People in this newsletter](#)*) has recently joined Rhema to work exclusively on developing the partnership with Profiles and taking their products into clients looking for sophisticated yet robust and pragmatic psychometric tests.



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Leading British e-learning guru Professor Steve Molyneux to work closely with Rhema on global strategies for technologies in L&D

Revered as one of the nation's leading experts in the use of ICT (information and communication technology) in education and training, Professor Steve Molyneux is acknowledged to be one of the fathers of e-learning in the UK and is currently Director of the Learning Lab.

Professor Molyneux will now link with the Rhema team as Senior e-learning Advisor and Strategist. He will ally his enormous knowledge and experience in this field to Rhema's development of e-learning as an increasingly important element of blended learning and development solutions. As a renowned guru on all aspects of e-learning and development he understands the growing market for this. He has already worked successfully with Rhema on high level strategic assignments, and his remit will be global, contributing to the company's strength and future potential.

A very brief biography

Professor Molyneux' personal consultancy roles include Special Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff within the MoD on training and education. He was a member the Learning and Skills Council's UK Distributed Electronic Learning Group; the Digital Content Group of the DTI; the DFES Post-16 e-learning task force and was a founder member of the Broadband Stakeholder Group Executive with responsibility for the Education and Training sector. He has also advised the British Government on broadband strategies for the UK and Northern Ireland and the Scottish Parliament on meeting the needs of the Scottish digital economy. He is consultant to a number of UK and international public and private sector organisations on the strategic use of ICT and broadband infrastructure. About a million students currently benefit from the virtual learning environment, – which he developed in 1995.

Throughout the 90s his vision and his work propelled development in many aspects of e-learning and web-based knowledge management and information sharing. He founded The Learning Lab in 1999, a recognised centre of excellence dedicated to the promotion and use of IT in education, training and employment. Since 2000, when he won the bid to provide the DFES' ICT Research Centre (a collaboration between The Learning Lab and the University of Wolverhampton,) his intense schedule of innovation and development in his ever-broadening field has continued at an impressive pace. Just one highlight project was a tripartite video conference on human rights between children in the UK, USA and Iraq. His public sector clients have included local and national Government in the UK, the Royal Navy, the Victoria and Albert Museum; and in the private sector - Deutsche Telekom, AEG and Siemens in Germany and Microsoft, Creative Labs and HSBC in the UK.

To see a fuller biography &: [Biography](#)

For a Question and Answer session with Professor Molyneux, click here
<http://www.rhemagroup.com/docs/stevemolyneux/>



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Rhema People

Highly respected leadership coach adds further strength and experience to the Rhema Group team

A long-standing interest in coaching and mentoring led Paul Anderson Walsh to settle on a vocation of seeing people discover their full potential by overcoming their "life-shaped" obstacles, and this led to his specialisation in training and coaching leaders and managers. He has joined Rhema Group from his own practice, The Anderson-Walsh Consultancy. In the past 10 years he has worked with a wide variety of companies from the iconic Walt Disney Corporation to Sir Robert McAlpine, Franklin Andrews & Cundalls, Scott Wilson and Legal & General. He has already been closely involved with Rhema on a major leadership training and development programme for global vendor leasing company De Lage Landen, which he delivered in both Europe and the USA.

He has also worked with numerous high profile professional football players, professional actors and musicians, lawyers, engineers, bankers, architects, and homemakers, and he has extensive experience of providing life counselling for very many people, from married couples to young offenders. Over the last 20 years the number of coaching, mentoring and counselling hours that he has facilitated runs into literally thousands.

Paul began his career in the financial services industry with Schroder Financial Management. During his time in the FS business he received many quality awards, and was appointed Financial Advisor to both the Downs Syndrome Association and to SCAR (Sickle Cell Anaemia Relief) of which he is now Vice Chairman.

More recently Paul's emphasis has been on synthesising a combination of life coaching, mentoring and counselling into a process that he calls *Life Coaxing*. He has employed this method to great effect with groups and in one-to-one coaching for managers who are being asked to assume higher levels of people management responsibility in their career development.

In early 2000 Paul founded The Grace Project, a registered charity dedicated to empowering individuals to overcome life issues such as low self-esteem and poor self-image and identify their life purpose and fully embrace life's opportunities while confronting its challenges. He has authored several articles on the subject and lectures extensively on contemporary issues such as "burnout." He is in increasing demand as a public speaker at numerous conferences around the world and is mentoring identity coaches in both South & North America as well as in the UK.

Paul is currently engaged in writing his first book on realising your potential, entitled *The Bonsai Conspiracy*, which is expected to be ready for English publication by the autumn of 2006. He is also currently involved in researching new programmes in *The Management of Virtual Teams* and *Leading To Win* - developing the leader/ manager through Emotional Intelligence. He is also completing a Masters Degree dissertation on "value based leadership." Jeremy Francis, Rhema Group MD, welcomes Paul's fuller involvement in the Rhema team: "We have already seen the impressive quality of Paul's work with one of our major clients, who have come to value his personal strengths as much



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as we do. We also have abundant evidence of how highly he is always regarded by the managers with whom he works.”

Marlon Lorde

Marlon recently joined Rhema as Sales Consultant, with a focus on the sales and marketing of Rhema’s range of tried and tested Profiles online psychometric assessment tests.

Selected to become a member of the core Rhema team because of his extensive account management experience, looking after some of the UK’s largest companies such as Kimberley-Clark, PWC and Fujitsu. He adds to Rhema’s strengths more than seven years experience of business-to-business sales and account management in the technology and marketing sectors. Marlon will work closely with clients, identifying their needs and providing solutions to assist them in finding new talent, providing coaching for existing employees, and optimising succession planning. His primary goal is to partner his clients in achieving the very best “Total Person” assessments which only the Profiles suite of online tools delivers.

Committed to his own personal development and the development of his team, Marlon is currently studying for a Science and IT Degree, to be followed by a Psychology Degree.



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Signposts

Rhema Resources

The planned Rhema Resource Centre is a potentially hugely important new service for HR Professionals, trainers, managers, employees, and students. The wealth of over 20 years of experience in creating and updating a wide range of training programmes will be made available to trainers via the Rhema website for download and/or printing. Users will have access to top-quality materials on Leadership and Management Development, Performance Management, Sales Force Development and Skills Development for their own use.

HR Managers will be able to access a wide variety of leading edge products including online Performance Management Systems as well as advisory services on such topics as Employment Law.

Those looking for interim consultancy work will be able to source such work. Graduate Natasha Osborne has been working with Rhema recently to ensure that the new Rhema Resource Centre offers what you really need, and her market research has given us very valuable information on how best we should set up this new online service as another high quality offering from Rhema.

The Rhema Resource Centre will be launched in the first quarter of 2007.

Rhema researches Emotional Intelligence and Psychometric Testing

With the increasing awareness of the importance of EQ, and the growing use of psychometric assessments in creating personal development plans, Rhema enlisted a researcher to create two papers on the topics.

The objective was to provide Rhema's clients, and in particular their employees undertaking training, with an understanding of the history of EQ and psychometric assessments, the different approaches currently being taken and the benefits of using the insights provided by both, in personal development plans.

Researcher Kate Francis commented "Many people these days are expected to understand the need for emotional intelligence and to understand the part played by psychometric tests in their selection for a job and personal development, yet don't have any context to assist their understanding of the two issues. The two research papers are designed to provide this context."

The papers can be accessed in the Psychometric Assessment Section of the Rhema website ([click here](#))