

Newsletter

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CEO's Corner



The BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races

The fifth edition of this event proved to be the most successful yet on a number of fronts and featured many innovations. With around 370 participants we registered a 50% increase on our previous best. We also had an increase in the number of sponsors and for the first time attracted a Title Sponsor, BRND WGN. Moreover, the fundraising for our chosen charity, Hospice Malta, also reached new heights. This was not only due to the higher number of participants but also due to the successful campaign on the Zaar Crowdfunding Platform. This year's edition was listed, for the first time, on Malta's Athletics Calendar giving our event better exposure. We also noticed that this time we got more exposure from the local TV, radio, print and internet media both before and after the event.

I think we also stepped up a notch in the quality of the organization and preparations for the event. The introduction of the deadline dates for applications and the distribution of the goody bags days before the races helped greatly in having a smoother organization on the day. Results were issued much faster than usual. In the meantime, the entertainment provided through the Xfm Radio live coverage, the Brazilian Band, the Ferrari photo shoots and the penalty shootouts certainly kept everyone interested until the awards were handed out.

So, all in all, I am very happy with the outcome and I cannot thank enough my organizing team (Johanna, Hannah, Louis, Paul, Alexia, Mary Ann and Ray) as well as various supporting University Departments and volunteers, for the effort and creativity put in before, during and even after the event.

Bring on the next one, I say!

Initiating a Project

Correctly initiating a project is as crucial for its ultimate success as the other core phases of planning, executing and controlling in project management.

A project, unlike operations, is performed once, has a definite start and end, and is defined by the achievement of pre-determined objectives. The project is executed against a fixed budget and depending on its size and scope, a project team is usually assembled. Before accepting it, the organization will need to assess the business and financial benefits of the proposed project against its risks. Moreover, an organization will usually have a number of competing projects for a finite amount of money and other resources and it will seek to rank these projects using financial analysis tools (such as payback, internal rate of return and discounted cash flows). The chosen projects will also have to be best aligned to corporate strategy.

The organization will give the green light for the initiation of a project through a Project Charter. This is a short document whose main scope is threefold: to authorize the project; to serve as the primary sales document for the project with stakeholders; and to serve as a focal point throughout the project. It will provide a preliminary explanation of roles and responsibilities, outline the project objectives, and define the authority of the Project Manager. This is particularly important if he/she will be interacting with the operational side of the organization. The Charter will also outline the reasons for undertaking the project, its targets, constraints and risks identified early on.

One other very important process in the initiation of a project phase is the identification of stakeholders. These are the people who can be affected positively or negatively by the project. Whilst stakeholder support helps to deliver projects, their resistance can cause serious damage. So it is important to list them and understand their sources of power and their interest in the project. Tools normally used for this task are the Stakeholder Strategy Grid and the Stakeholder Register.

In general, one may say that good project governance protects stakeholders. As a minimum this means having a main Sponsor (responsible and accountable for the delivery of the project benefits), a Steering Committee of senior stakeholders (to guide the project), a Project Manager (responsible and accountable for the day to day operations of the project), and a good reporting system allowing the Project Manager to update regularly the Sponsor and the Steering Committee.

This is not rocket science. We just need the patience and discipline to go through these simple processes. Once we do this the project really starts on a strong footing.

Rediscovering the joy of reading

When I was young (roughly the same age as my kids today – 12 to 15 years) and without a care in the world I used to spend hours every day reading books. Fortunately at home we had quite a well stocked library. This innate urge to submerge myself in make belief magical worlds, mysteries and tales of adventure subsequently transformed into a love for films.

With adulthood and middle age my time for reading became less and less as I was taken over by the more pressing needs of graduating in something, earning a living and raising a family. Moreover, the drab corporate world I found myself immersed in for a good 25 years meant that most of my reading had to do with exotic stuff such as annual corporate reports, investment appraisals and auditors' reports.

Well, my kids have come to my rescue. Through them I now have access to hundreds of books from the school library. I am once again enjoying reading and dreaming about wizards, heroes, monsters, prophecies, mysteries and time travel.

Never make yourself indispensable

As a manager one of my biggest concerns has always been to identify areas within the organization subjected to over dependence on any one individual. Wherever I have been, big or small entities, private or public, I have had experience of this phenomenon. Although admittedly this problem was more acute a couple of decades ago it is still detectable in the places of work today.

In truth, although this occurrence might be simply due to the circumstances at that time and not due to any fault of the individual concerned, it is still a problem. Some people still seem to think that making themselves indispensable offers more job security, a better chance to career advancement in a niche area of their choice or a source of power over their colleagues and the organization itself. They do this through a number of ploys such as hoarding of information, acquiring and guarding exclusivity of expertise and sometimes downright manipulation of any authority that they might have.

Myself, I am allergic to such scheming. Besides being an extremely selfish attitude it is not only bad for the business entity concerned (a serious business continuity risk) it is also detrimental, in my view, to the individual without him/her actually realizing it.

First of all, I would not even start to think of recommending promoting a person who has this trait to give him/her the chance to cause further damage to the company. Being indispensable also means that you have to make things work on your own, come rain or shine. This piles on the pressure and stress with negative knock on effects on personal relationships at work and probably at home.

The situation becomes more serious if the individual is in a senior managerial position. This is the very same person who should have high on his/her agenda the dissemination of information and knowledge amongst staff, promotion of teamwork and inter-unit flexibility and ensuring that the show goes on no matter what.

That is why I am so obsessed with creating small units with clear roles and responsibilities but also with the capability of interchangeability built into the structure.

Passing the baton

The new Rector of the University of Malta has been announced. On behalf of everyone at MUHC I would like to welcome Professor Alfred J. Vella and wish him success in his new challenging role.

I cannot end here without thanking enough the outgoing Rector, Professor Juanito Camilleri (who is also our Chairman of the Board of Directors of MUHC Group of Companies) for his leadership, continuous support and, above all, the trust he placed in our abilities. This approach helped the Group in no small way to deliver ever improving results under his expert watch.

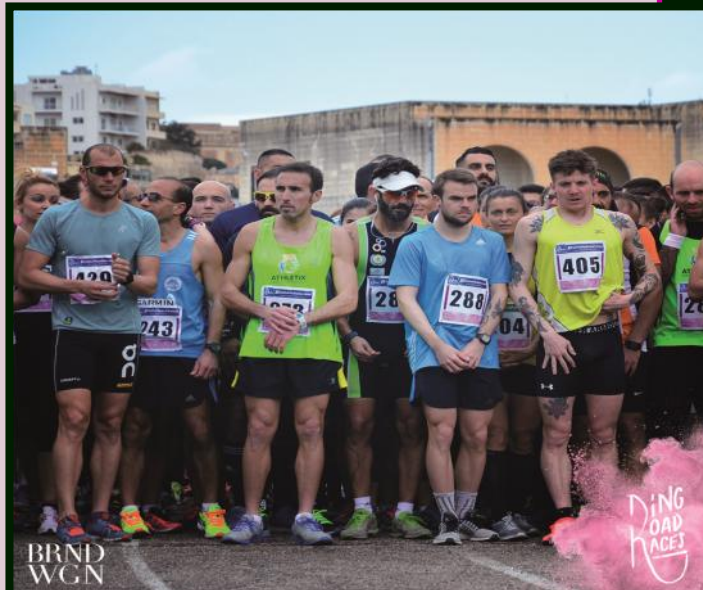
I do not use the word “expert” lightly here. Professor Camilleri and myself have bumped into each other, on and off, a number of times over the past 18 years and it has always been a pleasure to work with him. In my career I have met a select few people who have had the special ability to enrich me personally as an individual and a professional. In the presence of these few it is best to shut up, observe, listen and learn. Juanito is one of them.

Cheers.



The BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races – A DAY TO REMEMBER.

Unfavourable weather conditions failed to impact the BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races, held on Sunday 13th March, with various course records being smashed. Over 370 people of all ages and abilities gathered at the University Track for the 5th Edition of what has become an annual event, making this a record number of participants. Individuals ranged from top competitive runners including the likes of Charlton Debono and Josann Attard Pulis as well as the less serious groups of families and friends just out to enjoy it and keep fit. Despite the various levels of runners, each was out to focus on one of the main scopes of the event – that of running for a cause in order to raise funds for Hospice Malta.



The Malta University Holding Company has been organizing this event since 2013 but it actually dates back to as early as the 80's when University students would gather on the ring road for a showdown of the fittest. Today, the event has grown to include numerous races namely a 5km, 2km, 5km relay and an 800m children's fun run.

Apart from overall prizes, age group winners as well as top university employees and students are awarded in the various races. A prize for the best fancy dress costume for both adult and child are also given out. This year also saw the first three corporate teams being presented with hampers in the relay races. Each finisher is presented with a medal and goodie bag as a token for their participation.

Results and pictures of this year's event can be found on the event's facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ringroadraces/?fref=ts> and the company website: <http://universitiesportsandleisure.com/races/results/>.

A video of the event is available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9jFRMdFDnE>.

MURPHY RUNS FOR HOSPICE MALTA - Target Reached

One of the main scopes of this event is to raise money for Hospice Malta. This year an online campaign was set up to encourage people to donate with the focus on running for a cause. MURPHY, the mysterious guy in the pink morph suit built quite a reputation for himself participating in both the Malta Half Marathon and the BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races.

His efforts didn't go unnoticed and a total of €1,061 was raised this year for Hospice Malta through the success of the Crowdfunding platform as per this link :

<http://www.zaar.com.mt/projects/murphy-runs-for-hospice-malta/>



We are pleased to announce that a total of €2750 was raised for Hospice Malta this year through the BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races.

This year, the races were given a bit of a facelift having secured title sponsorship from BRND WGN. Johanna Galea, the face behind these races stated, "They are a crazy bunch of the most creative people you could imagine. We would like to thank them for their support throughout the entire race planning process. We would also like to thank Birkirkara St. Joseph Sports Club, Emergency Fire & Rescue Unit, San Gwann Scouts Group and the Hospice Malta volunteers for their support on the day as well as the numerous sponsors who all helped to make this possible. Everyone seemed to have a blast and we are already looking forward to the next edition of these races to be held on

Sunday 12th March 2017





MALTA UNIVERSITY CONSULTING



Our next CPE Seminar -

The Role of the Company Secretary in terms of the Companies Act

Wednesday 20th April 2016



MALTA UNIVERSITY CONSULTING

Operations Management course for People working in the manufacturing industry

2nd May — 11th May 2016
Time: 1.00p.m. – 5.00p.m.
(16 hours)



Venue: Malta University Residence, R Mifsud Bonnici Street, Lija

Course fee: €195 (Cheques payable to Malta University Consulting)

Tutor: Ing. Charles Muscat

address: R. Mifsud Bonnici Str, Lija | tel: +356 21240746/99829244
email: maria.bugeja@muhc.com.mt | website: www.muhc.com.mt



MALTA UNIVERSITY CONSULTING

The Art of Public Speaking

Monday 7th March – Monday 25th April 2016
17:30-20:00 hrs (20 hours)



Venue: The University Residence, R Mifsud Bonnici Street, Lija

Lecturer: Dr. Joseph G. Agius

Course fee: €200 (Cheques payable to Malta University Consulting Ltd)

address: R. Mifsud Bonnici Str, Lija | tel: +356 21240746/99829244
email: maria.bugeja@muhc.com.mt | website: www.muhc.com.mt

[Click](#) here for further information on MUC courses.



MALTA UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Malta University Language School hopes that everyone has had an enjoyable and peaceful Easter. As spring kicks in we're seeing students coming to enjoy our Mediterranean weather, and although most of our lovely Japanese and Korean University students have finished their courses, we are looking forward to the next groups. For this year we have updated our Adults and Teens brochure with a new look, one which we hope is enticing enough.

Jean and Barbara attended the FELTOM ELT workshop in order to establish new relationships with agents to attract students from new markets, such as Turkey and Kazakhstan.

Furthermore the school is working on new projects which will ideally see us venture into new territories.

We are confident that since we offer a professional service, one which is welcoming and friendly, Malta University Language School has a bright future.





MALTA UNIVERSITY CONSULTING

TRADEMALTA

Malta University Consulting Ltd in collaboration with TradeMalta organised for the second time running a course on

Internationalisation and Export Readiness

for first time exporters or SMEs whose export revenue is less than 20%. The course is Phase 2 of the 'Go Global Scheme' administered by Malta Enterprise. The course ran between January and March 2016.

This time round there were representatives from 14 companies that attended the course. Trainers included local professionals including academics from the University of Malta and also foreign experts with experience in internationalisation and entrepreneurship.



The course involves:

A 3-session Master Class with training on the key skills on internationalization, aimed at decision makers within enterprises and covering topics such as Decision making, Planning, Strategy and Risk;

A 4-session training required to effectively internationalise the enterprise, tackling such issues as Organisational set-up, International Trade issues, Finance, Supply Chain, etc

Panel discussions involving experienced exporters;

Facilitation to apply for co-funding of projects aimed at building internal capacity and/or conducting international market research.

The plan is to keep the collaboration ongoing with TradeMalta and to keep the course running on an annual basis.



Malta University Consulting has organised once again
an Annual Fieldwork Visit for Geography and Planning students
from the University of Birmingham



A visit to a Dairy Farm in Dingli



Group photo at Qbajjar Salt Pans
during a full day visit to Gozo



Students during a lecture at Valletta
Campus

FOCUS ON PERSONNEL :
HANNAH PACE
MARKETING ASSISTANT



Recent University of Malta graduate Hannah Pace is a relatively new addition to the Malta University Holdings Company team. Her flair for marketing and passion for anything related to physical activity led to her joining the Malta University Sports & Leisure sector as Marketing Assistant in December. She also assists with marketing related tasks in other sectors.

She may be one of the youngest members of the team but her energy and enthusiasm have led to her already being in full swing, having played a vital role in the organizing of this year's University Ring Road Races that have just taken place. Hannah is particularly passionate about MUHC and her role within the company for the simple reason that it is her first full time working experience. In fact she is not only determined to give as much as possible to the company but is also looking to learn and develop from it.

When Hannah isn't working on her latest marketing project she can usually be found swimming, cycling or running somewhere across the island. In fact she can be considered a jack-of-all-trades forming part of both Malta's Cycling and Triathlon national teams. Hannah's life has always been about hard work but also balance; she looks to extend this to her career within MUHC by applying her success in sports to what her job entails.