



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 30
JAN - MAR 2017 MALTA UNIVERSITY HOLDING COMPANY LIMITED

CEO'S Corner | The BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races |
Presenting the 3rd edition of Battle of the Brains | Malta University
Language School | Focus on Personnel



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CEO'S CORNER



Audit

As you read this piece the Group's Annual General Meetings would have been held with the audited financial statements for the year ended 30th September, 2016 presented and approved. The Group now has new auditors – Grant Thornton Malta. From here I wish to thank Price Waterhouse Coopers (the outgoing auditors) for their sterling and professional service in these past years.

The audit has confirmed what we were envisaging towards the latter half of the year, that is, consolidation and improvement in current operations, growth in custom and financial results, and diversification into new areas.

Well done to all the crew!

Ins and outs

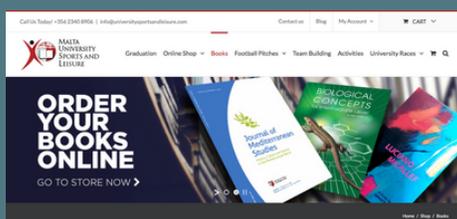
After 17 years of service as Head of Housekeeping at the Residence, Lourdes Vella has decided to retire. Lourdes always showed pragmatic leadership and enjoyed the respect and support of her staff and superiors. She will be hard to replace. We wish her full enjoyment of her retirement.

Goodbye and thanks also to Janice Borg who we had the pleasure to have as a Front Office Receptionist at the Residence for the past 7 years. Janice has taken up a new job as she seeks to further her career elsewhere. We will miss the bouncy and happy disposition which she reserved for clients and colleagues alike. Best of luck to her.

Finally, Ronald Mangion, a Night Receptionist/Security, has taken up retirement after 4 years of service at the Residence. Once again, we wish him a well-earned rest.

We welcome on board Ing. Mario Cachia who has joined Malta University Consulting Ltd. as a Consultancy and Training Executive in March 2017. Mario brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge after many years working in the hectic telecommunications industry. I am sure that he will prove to be a very good acquisition for our Group.

Our new websites



The new Sports & Leisure Website was launched, as promised, well in time for the University Ring Road Races. It has attracted favourable comments but we are always open to change for the better should it be necessary.

We are also thrilled that Malta University Language School's website, launched in 2016, was nominated (with two other finalists) for this year's MCA eBusiness Awards in the Best B2C Website category. The event was held on the 11th April at the Mediterranean Conference Centre. Even though we did not win the coveted first prize we are proud of this recognition.

University Ring Road Races 2017

Held on a glorious Sunday (12th March 2017), in this 6th edition of the Races we managed to attract the same level of participation as last year in spite of competing athletics events during the week leading up to them. One important data is that out of the total 366 official participants, 43 (or 11.7%) were University students. This is a clear improvement from just 5.1% last year and from past editions in general. Another 8.2% were University staff. Other increases were registered in the relay event where we had a record 19 teams competing (20.7%) and in the children's 800 m event with a record level of participation (14.5%). Backing from sponsors (financial and otherwise) for the event continued to grow and our total donation to Hospice Malta reached a high of €3,150 including the proceeds of another successful Zaar crowdfunding campaign (€1,244).

So, all in all, it was another great outing for the organising team (ably led by Johanna). I also need to thank Prof Alfred Vella (Rector) who found time to attend and fire the starting shots of the 5km and the 2 km events. We are already at work discussing possible ways of improving the races for next year.

Personally

2017 is a special year for me and my wife, Brenda, as we will soon be celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary. As the years roll by I have learned to appreciate and be thankful more and more for what I have been granted. Nothing beats the family atmosphere as we share each other's joy, problems, anxiety and hope.

Martina, my daughter, is currently doing her O levels. I have full faith in her and I am sure she will do well. I have a more pressing problem with my younger son, Andrew, though. Either he is growing rapidly or I am shrinking. In a few months he has outstripped me and everyone else in the household. I do not know what he has been eating but I cannot tell him to "look up" to his father anymore as, at just thirteen, he is looking down at me now.

I have still not shaken off completely the problems related to my left eye after about 5 months. Though the physical inconvenience has lessened greatly I am not out of the woods yet. Recurrent Erosion Syndrome they call it. As you might guess the first word is the problem. ECS has managed to beat me in one battle though as I had to miss for the first time in many years the University Ring Road Races. No matter, I will be back for more and I am lucky to be in good hands.

Cheers,
Joe

THE BRND WGN & UNIVERSITY

RING ROAD RACES



Sunday 12th March marked the 6th edition of the BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races and once again the event proved to be one for the books with almost 400 participants gathering at the University athletics track. This is the second year that BRND WGN has collaborated with Malta University Holding Company – as title sponsors, to help the races reach new heights. What makes this event so special, apart from providing an opportunity for University students and staff to integrate with the rest of the community, is the fact that half the proceeds are donated to Hospice Malta.

The sunshine as well as numerous forms of live entertainment helped to keep spirits high as the event kicked off with the 5km race and walk. In the male section, the race was won by Jean Claude Randon, a young athlete who is proving to be a force to reckon with. Randon was followed by Charles Camilleri and Mario Agius, in what turned out to be a close battle for 2nd and 3rd place. Fresh from her victory in the Malta Marathon, Josann Attard Pulis won the female race ahead of Agnetha Aguis, who was followed by Maureen Farrugia.

The 2km race was won by Matthias Cristiano in a new course record of 6:18. The young Maria Schembri emerged victorious in the female sector. Team XG, a group of athletes coached by Xandru Grech, dominated both the male and female sector in the 5km relay, always a favourite amongst spectators and competitors alike. With numerous companies using this race as an ideal team builder, MYTA Coaches took first place in the corporate section whilst MYTA C were awarded 1st team Under 20. An 800m fun run was also organized which proved to be a winner amongst young children; making it an ideal Sunday morning out for families.

Even though there could only be one winner in each race, everyone seemed to be having a blast as they ran, walked or even danced their way to the finish line. Johanna Galea, manager of the Entertainment & Merchandising unit as well as one of the founders of what has become an annual event was just as enthusiastic about how things panned out. "The BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races are extremely close to my heart; firstly due to the philosophy behind them - that of running for a cause.

Furthermore, over the years I have watched them grow massively into what they are today. Each year we aim to make them more fun for all and watching the event come together always makes me feel extremely proud. I am grateful for the massive external support we receive yearly and in fact I would say that the actual day's success depends very much on a combined effort between the organising team, sponsors, other supporters and participants alike. All in all, the 6th edition has left us all buzzing and we are already looking forward to planning our next edition!"

Running for Hospice - Target Reached

As mentioned previously, one of the main scopes of the event is to help raise funds for Hospice Malta. This is a non-profit organisation supporting patients with terminal illness and their families through its many professional services. Since they are constantly expanding and providing new services, they depend more and more on fundraising initiatives.

Last year, event organisers decided to raise the bar by setting up an online campaign to encourage people to donate with the focus on running for a cause. 2016 saw BRND WGN's Wagoneer in chief - Murphy (the mysterious man in the pink morph suit) take on the challenge of running both the Malta Half Marathon and the University Ring Road Races to raise more funds for Hospice Malta.

This year marked the return of Murphy who was set the new challenge of running a personal best time in the Malta Half Marathon. With a challenge so steep, Murphy was accompanied by a group of friends who supported him throughout. The team is thrilled to announce that this year a record amount of €3200 was raised for Hospice Malta. This is down to the success of both the races and Murphy's online campaign as well as the huge amount of external support received.



BATTLE OF THE BRAINS

3RD EDITION

02-06-17

SAVE THE
DATE



SUPPORTING RESEARCH IN ALS THROUGH RIDT

MALTA UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE SCHOOL

2017 seems to be a time of change for the language travel industry. The last report issued by the NSO has indicated that although the usual markets (Italy and Germany) are still the strongest, the number of student weeks has decreased overall. We are pleased that the school's strategy had already shifted to concentrate on long term bookings.

Since we are a small school we prefer academically oriented students who come to Malta to study English for more than 2 weeks. In fact our average student week is 6.2 compared to the industry's average of 2.8. We have also adjusted our pricing strategy to accommodate long term students and we are pleased that our usual markets Korea and Japan have responded to this as new bookings from the mentioned countries are joining us for 24 weeks or more.

We are also aware of new emerging markets, such as Iran, and we have taken a personal interest in assisting Iranian students. We have learned a lot and we hope that this could help us in capturing a new market. We have responded to this by adjusting our cancellation policy for Visa refusals in order to aid the student and be on par with our competition. We hope that this change will help us gain a foothold in new markets outside of Europe.

Furthermore we are in discussion with a Turkish/Iranian agent residing in Malta in order to have a local contact. This would allow us to also leverage local knowledge and expertise and also provide better service to the student as the agent could assist with their Visas and payment due to certain restrictions especially for Iran.



The school is being proactive in capturing new markets and we are hopeful as we have seen an increase in students from Turkey, Colombia, Brazil and Iran.

These markets accommodate the school's strategy, that of limited student numbers but long term bookings.



We have not forgotten about the European market. In fact the school is currently in discussion with a Spanish agent to collaborate on an exclusive agency agreement in order to reignite dormant markets. We hope that such a deal is reached in order to increase student nationality mix both in the winter and summer period.

Our Business Affiliate Programme has been successful so far and we have had numerous clients. We are pleased that companies such as Tumas Group, Foster Clark, ST Microelectronics, Bethard, Tynksoftware and many more have chosen us to be their preferred 'language training partner'. We are hopeful that the school will be able to leverage this new experience and internationalise a new product where international companies see Malta University Language School as a viable employee training platform.



Last but not least we are really happy that our efforts and hard work have been recognised during the MCA eBusiness awards.

We had been nominated for 'best B2C website' and the school was competing against Maltapost and Romy Foods. Although we did not win the award we are still proud of being a 'runner up'.

Regards,

Aeden.

FOCUS ON PERSONNEL



Eur. Ing. Dr. Charles Yousif is a lecturer at the Institute for Sustainable Energy of the University of Malta. His career at the University started in 1992 with testing the performance of the first stand-alone photovoltaic (PV) system for his M.Phil. degree. This was expanded to the installation of the first grid-connected PV systems at a residence and in industry. In 1993, he also re-initiated solar radiation monitoring in Malta after a gap of 20 years.

Today, the station has a number of sensors, including UVA, UVB and UV Index instruments. He continued his career by obtaining his Ph.D., which focused on energy performance of residential buildings. He is also currently carrying out research on shallow-ground geothermal heat pump systems for space conditioning.

Since 1995, he has been collaborating with the MUHC as a consultant on a diverse number of projects. He has succeeded to create and work with teams of experts, to deliver services in the areas of solar photovoltaic systems, energy efficiency applications, energy performance of buildings and consultation to government entities. He is a founder member and Secretary General of the N.G.O. Malta Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energies Association (M.E.E.R.E.A.). He is an organist and takes interest in a number of voluntary activities.

Renewable Energy can't save the world without Energy Efficiency. They must go hand in hand.