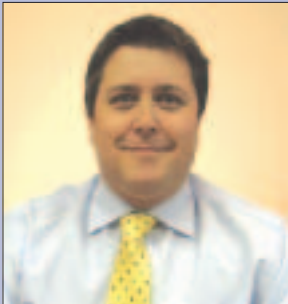


spirit

A New Year, a new face!



To start the New Year there is a 'new' face at SHILLING.

I'm Alex Thurley-Ratcliff and I was delighted when Kevin asked me to join forces with the SHILLING team to spearhead

multimedia communications. It's refreshing to work with the SHILLING team, which is renowned for its culture of lively innovation, after working within corporate structures for many years!

SHILLING is raising the bar by launching SHILLING TR – adding a new dimension to our multimedia services and building on our reputation as a firm of high quality employee communications specialists – verified by our numerous awards over the years.

My years of pensions industry experience – spanning more than sixteen years with major consultancies and successfully guiding many PLCs to successful use of multimedia and new technology – now put me in an ideal position to maximise opportunities for SHILLING clients. Our combined team offers in-depth industry knowledge, experience, clarity of language and original design concepts, plus all aspects of new media, to take benefits communications to the absolute extreme!

Using multimedia as part of a well-rounded strategy gives targeted, measurable and

secure two-way communications. We can link to real data, enabling user-friendly employee access, showing instantly how changes made now, impact the individual in later life. This educates employees about their lifestyle and benefit choices in a meaningful, personal and direct way.

One of our first new initiatives of 2005 is the launch of BAREfacts.info (Benefits and Rewards Essentials), which recognises that pensions is no longer separate from the wider issues of business leadership, corporate planning and human resources. For more about BAREfacts, see page 3.

I look forward to discussing with you the opportunities that SHILLING TR can open up for your organisation.

Alex Thurley-Ratcliff

Raising the bar

Morgan Crucible – what a swirl party this was!

We were delighted to be asked by Morgan Crucible to design and develop communication literature to generate wider staff participation in their Sharesave Schemes.



This involved delivering versions in both English and German, as Morgan were extending the scheme to German employees.

The concept had to translate effectively into more than one language so it was strongly visual. A striking 'swirl' was chosen as the graphic theme to unify the booklet, poster

Sharesave items immediately recognisable – and symbolising the five business units moving forward in unison.

The text conveyed complex information in plain language and an easily digestible way, for which the English version received the Plain English Commission 'Winning Document for Clear English Standard' accolade.

Morgan Crucible wrote to testify their complete satisfaction with the communications, praising our quality standards throughout, from the initiation to delivery of the Sharesave material, and now a French version is planned this year.

The icing on the cake was that Morgan Crucible was nominated for the prestigious "Most Effective Communication of an Employee Share Plan" Award. While Morgan did not win the award they did not leave the gala evening empty-handed, as Kevin commemorated their nomination by presenting Victoria Gould, Director of Communications with a sleek glass candle-holder echoing the sweeping lines of the brochure. With SHILLING, no clients are losers!



and postcard – making

A step in the right direction for Royal & Sun Alliance pension members

More investment choices, lower charges and the opportunity for members to increase the size of their pensions by adding extra contributions were the benefits that Royal & SunAlliance asked us to help them communicate to members about changes to their pension fund. The pension fund has many young members who might be unfamiliar with pension matters; R&SA wished them to be fully and clearly briefed.

Our communications covered the background to the change, what it meant to members, and also requesting them to respond within a specified time. The literature was designed to appeal to young people and

conveyed these messages simply and graphically, in easily digested chunks.

Graphic images based on footprints, led readers through the information process, using the theme 'Step into ...'

The suite of literature comprised an information pack, a leaflet including a useful jargon-buster section, a question & answer document, a factsheet, investment vehicles booklet and financial advice leaflets.

As part of R&SA's communications programme members were also given a presentation by current pensioners who were able to



Jacqui Nield, Pensions & Development Manager of R&SA highly recommended our unique way of working – "Providing a comprehensive communication strategy, with eye-catching and attractive design and proactive and innovative input."

speaking from a neutral basis. All members transferred smoothly to the R&SA 2002 scheme on 1 September 2004.

Underlining this, R&SA has asked us to undertake a number of further communication projects for scheme members throughout this year.



Professional Pensions Awards 2004

Reach for the stars! – award win for Rexam

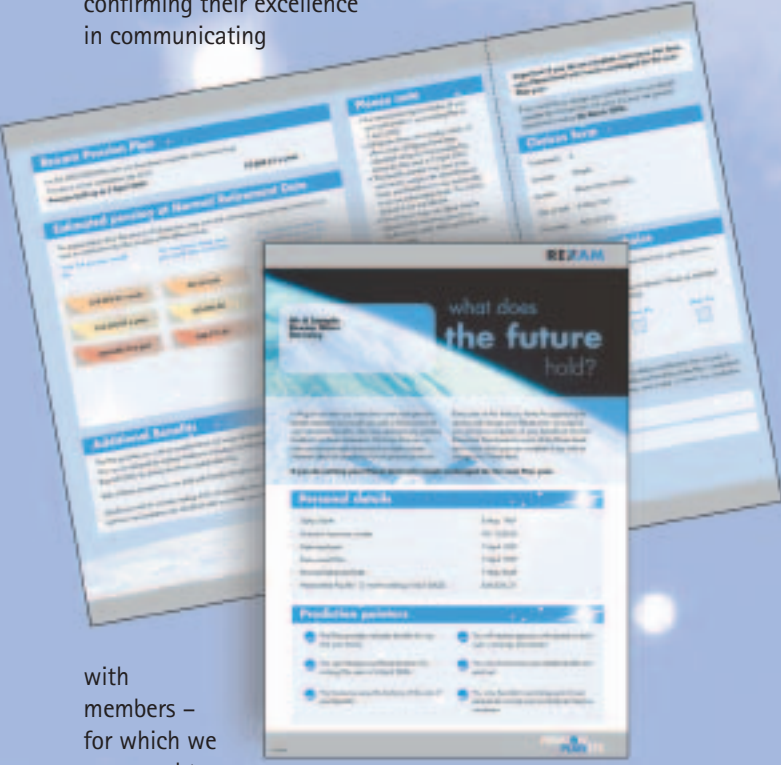
Department's desire to provide members with clear and informative statements of benefits.

Rexam's annual statement of benefits is produced each July. Pension information is broken down into segments illustrating personal benefits under the Rexam plan, AVC benefits, state benefits, early retirement and incapacity benefits. Additionally there is a section to which members can add details of other investments, enabling them to have all retirement figures in one document.

Rexam carried out a survey in which 95% of respondents found their benefit statement was more useful when AVC and State benefits were shown alongside Plan benefits.



Congratulations to Rexam who won the 'Best Benefit Statements' Award, confirming their excellence in communicating



with members – for which we are proud to have provided the strategic planning, implementation and design work.

This award, in the Professional Pensions 2004 Pension Scheme of the Year Awards programme, showcases Rexam Pensions

This is just one innovation which came about as a result of continuing reviews by Rexam to provide clear, specific information, reflecting members' needs.

Back-seat driver

I declined to write the introduction to this issue of *Spirit* because it would be inappropriate. It is SHILLING's young consultants and designers that are driving through new ideas and initiatives to support the needs of our clients during the year ahead. This issue of *Spirit* only touches the surface of some of our activities planned for 2005 and this has prompted me to reflect on how much the Company has grown during the last six years. Our client base includes 45 companies in

the FTSE 350 and most of our new business comes from referrals. I put this down to business professionals being more astute and clear about the service they want and expect. The days of the monolithic "one stop" consultancies have gone and small independent, flexible and focused consulting firms bring a new era of professionalism and creativity to the world of employee benefits.

SHILLING is one such consulting firm and is leading the way as we begin 2005 which promises more legislation, a general election and no doubt many surprises.

BAREfacts

This month we launch a new website for the pensions and HR community. BAREfacts (Benefits and Reward Essentials) was designed to instigate interaction at a senior level between pension and HR professionals.

The website includes up-to-date news items, features from leading professionals, a "discussion forum" where ideas, comments and queries can be exchanged, and a recruitment section where current job applications are displayed. Log on to BAREfacts at www.barefacts.info.

EndGame

During a meeting with the Treasury in 2003 I was struck by the obvious interest the Government has with educating young people about the wisdom of investing for the future. Following that I toyed with various concepts and eventually developed a board game called *EndGame*.

Players pick a Fate Card from a pack then work their way around a board acquiring assets as they go. The winner is the player accumulating the correct amount of assets to match what their Fate Card has in store for them.

Copies of *EndGame* are available by contacting Matt Frost via matt@shilling.co.uk.

So, I may have taken a back seat on *Spirit* but in every other sense I still have my hands on the wheel, as there's still so much I want to do to improve the overall level of employee communication across corporate UK.



Kevin
Kevin Shilling

White rabbits, white rabbits!

The doors of Plestor House, in the tranquil Hampshire countryside, were thrown open on Friday 30 July last year for our annual open day. The day's theme was

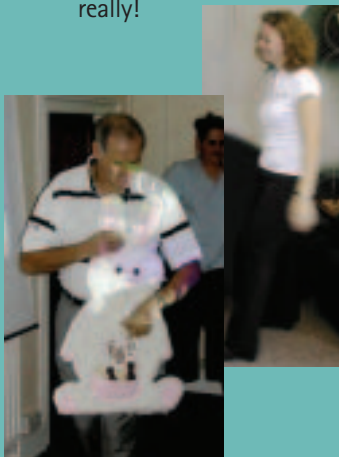
day, including a leisurely lunch, over which we and our clients, and future clients, got to know each other better.

Miranda, Helen, James and Kevin demonstrated creative thinking is a way of life at SHILLING. Paralleling how outrageous designs can become high-street fashion, similarly,



the Mad Hatters' Tea Party, which set out to stimulate the senses and provoke thought. Guests, some visiting us for the first time, and coming from as far afield as Liverpool, experienced at first hand the unique way the SHILLING team works. Visitors were informally shown around the office noticing areas dedicated to stimulating the different senses using sound, sight, smell, touch and taste, illustrating there are very many ways of communicating. It was a fun, low-key

apparently crazy creative ideas can be refined into successful and award-winning communication campaigns, giving clients' messages high impact. This was illustrated by the white rabbit turning into a benefit statement - yes really!



We're looking forward to Friday 24 June 2005 - our next open day - with eager anticipation!

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Check out our website for our latest news!

SHILLING helps regenerate Britain's forests

One of our values as a company is to demonstrate a commitment to the environment. This has led to a further donation to the Woodland Trust which, this year, is linking with the Society for Nautical Research in the Bicentenary year of Nelson's

fleet sailing into the Battle of Trafalgar. The Woodland Trust will plant trees to create 27 new woods commemorating, and named after, the 27 wooden ships in Nelson's fleet. We are delighted to be involved in this project.



Welcome to Josephine

Josephine Smith, 19, project co-ordinator, is the first person to welcome visitors and callers to SHILLING. Josephine came



for her interview and took one look at SHILLING and was hooked - and fortunately so were we! Josephine, who is a keen musician in her leisure time, keeps everything flowing in harmony around the office. She has widened her business repertoire by learning about our work, gaining confidence and recognition as a valued member of the team along the way - aided and abetted by colleagues whose belief in her has never quavered!

We take an intangible concept and give it shape

Stephen Willard, lead designer in SHILLING's graphics team, explains how we achieve creativity to exceed customer expectations.

"In the widest sense our brief is to help employees make clear, informed decisions. Our creative imagination transforms a client brief into eye-catching designs that instantly convey a key visual message, accompanied by text that is well designed to add clarity to the concept. Our creativity is both flexible and structured, drawn from original thinking;

brainstorming - alone and with other team members - and the experiences we absorb from everyday life.

As creative thinking can happen at any time probably my most important tool is a sketch pad - always on hand to capture ideas! Drawing skills aren't as essential as they once were but visualising a page layout is - getting a structured balance between copy, images and headers - assisted by the best Apple Mac technology.

Clients expect and receive the freshest and most stimulating visuals - surpassing their expectations. This is what drives us and has proved successful, differentiating us from our major competitors."



SHILLING

As a business specialising in communication, we recognise the importance of regular feedback. Please feel free to send us any questions or comments you may have about *Spirit*.

