

Second edition: get updated about the Alumni Network!

Take part in the PM Alumni meeting by Vivian Roode

On this PM in Ghent the first big alumni gathering is being organised. During four days a group of maximum 36 people will enjoy both a career related part and a relaxing leisure part. In the nights there is of course time to relive some good old BEST times with all the PM delegates.

The arrival day is on Thursday the 16th of November. On Friday morning people will be updated on the work of alumniNET and on some (new) important projects in BEST. The afternoon is reserved for some special career related topics, to learn from other people's experience.

On Saturday a trip to Bruges is scheduled, including a city tour, a nice long lunch and a brewery visit. After the cantus on Saturday night it is time to say goodbye again to all your renewed contacts.



Everything about BANTSE... by Jan Maeyens

Do you fancy a short networking summer course customized for BEST Alumni? If so, keep your eyes open for BANTSE.

BANTSE is a condense (3-4 days) Alumni Summer Networking Event on Sustainable Energy. Chances are big that this Alumni Summer event will be organised in Ghent in the summer of 2008.



BANTSE wants to bring together 20 BEST-Alumni working in the field of sustainable energy, give them the opportunity to learn more about the topic and find out how they all are related to sustainable energy. Furthermore, the goal is to learn how to build and organise your network.

A quick preview from the schedule: a business network cafe with 50 professionals related to sustainable energy, network training, participants' conference, external speakers on CO2-certificats, ecological economy or European energy legislation, international evening, speed business dating.

If you are interested in boosting your sustainable energy network in a BEST summer event setting, keep your eyes and ears open for BANTSE!

You are interested and you would like more information, contact Jan: jan.maeyens@BEST.eu.org

Alumni goes Eindhoven by Mirjam Zwanenburg

AlumniNET, a group of BEST Alumni developing the Alumni network of BEST, gathered in Eindhoven for their second Short Intensive Meeting (SIM). During a weekend in the end of September, LBG Eindhoven hosted 8 Alumni and 2 members of the international board of BEST.

During the daytime the participants discussed about the work of AlumniNET during the last 6 months and determined plans for the next months. There were interesting discussions about new Alumni events, BEST history, IT tools, HR and the next Alumni Times.

During the nights they drank home-made caipirinha or tequila sunrise and explored the city centre of Eindhoven. Downtown they met some of the members of LBG Eindhoven in their favourite bar "Van Putten", which has a singer that makes every party successful.

This was the second AlumniNET SIM and after London and Eindhoven we are ready for the third edition...

You can always join our team and take part in the next Alumni SIM! Interested to join AlumniNET and develop our BEST Alumni Network?

For more information check:
<http://private.BEST.eu.org/alumniNET>



Alumni in Zagreb: find more about them by Dario Nikolic

Being Alumni in Zagreb is always a lot of fun. We are a quite compact team: the glue that keeps us together is our constantly bursting optimism and common interests in sports and parties.

We have all types of activities: in the summer we organise a sailing week in the Adriatic sea and the winter is reserved for skiing. Through the whole year we are hiking and biking and when the warm days arrive, we usually play beach volleyball every week near the lake in Zagreb.

Like other Alumni groups we also have a meeting once a month. This meeting takes place every first Monday of the month and its theme is always the same: wine & cheese. In our future plans we also hope to organize some after-work parties.

To conclude, we can't forget our youngsters who always invite us when they organise something and we do the same thing for them. They also know that they can count on us whenever they need help (company contacts, training, motivation weekends...)

Are you GETTING your THINGS DONE ? by Nico Deblauwe

How can you manage your time in such a way that stress is avoided and that projects keep their initial kick-off speed? It is an interesting question that many freshly working engineers are struggling with, both in their professional and private life. We talked to two BEST Alumni who have recently discovered GTD for managing their time. Is it just another methodology or would it work for you too?



GTD, or fully: Getting Things Done, rests on the principle that a person needs to move tasks out of his mind and get them recorded somewhere. That way, the mind is freed from remembering everything that needs to be done, and can concentrate fully on actually performing those tasks. By embedding this into a control framework, suddenly empty-headed became a synonym for well-organised.

David Allan, father of GTD, explains: "Get everything out of your head. Make decisions about actions required on stuff when it shows up – not when it blows up. Organise reminders of your projects and the next actions on them in appropriate categories.

Keep your system current, complete, and reviewed sufficiently to trust your intuitive choices about what you're doing (and not doing) at any time." It all sounds quite simple, and maybe that's why many started applying it after as few as reading a short introduction (e.g. in Wikipedia). Unfortunately, it is not as easy as it may seem.

Olaf Drechsler (bonding): "Let's start with some facts on my productivity: I was in deep trouble fighting to get hold on too many things. I gave it a try and experienced a productivity boost in the first two weeks, but since then productivity dropped. I don't know exactly why, but I think the boost always will happen when changing to something new whereas now everything becomes more normal and thus the usual laissez-faire comes in." There seems to be the catch that kills all productivity: routine, making you apply (whichever) time management method less strictly and thus rendering it less effective. Unfortunately GTD is not an exception to this.



Wim Farasyn (Leuven) has a solution for this: "The trick to a high productivity methodology and still satisfy your undying hang to routine, is keeping your method interesting all the time by changing small things. You could for instance use different tools to track down tasks, or add a colour coding, or even change your filing system from time to time." As a conclusion, one could state that the big secret is that you have to make lists (and clear your head). Wim adds to this that "... it makes the entire difference. I just had a very tough period at work and private with to-dos overwhelming me. Spending one weekend afternoon to sift through all my 'stuff' and make a to-do list makes me feel so much better already!"

Myself, I started since two weeks to carry a Hipster PDA (a fancy word for a paper notebook) to empty my head, and it works. The lists keep on growing faster than I would like to, but I got addicted to the feeling of "not having to remember thousands of ideas". The idea of selecting every time a next action is the second improvement in my life: I do no longer fear the huge projects, but simply look at what is next for me to do.

Whether you want to give GTD a formal try or not, just remember to make lists. And then, as Wim concludes, "the only thing left is stop the procrastination."

Further reading:

"Wikipedia" http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Getting_things_done
 "Article in The Guardian" <http://technology.guardian.co.uk/business-sense/story/0,,1580180,00.html>
 "David Allan's website" <http://www.davidco.com/>
 "GTD and Gmail" <http://4work.pl/wordpress/2006/08/22/gmail-time-management/>



Any suggestion or comment ? Contact AlumniNet@BEST.eu.org
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