Meeting Minutes

1st July 2010

I. Call to order

William Linard called to order the regular meeting of the CompTIA UK Reseller Forum at 10.00 on 1st July 2010 in London, UK.

II. Register

William Linard (CompTIA) took a register. The following persons were present: Robert French (Talk Internet), George Ilko (Vitality Consulting), Mark Lambert (bear IT), Rob Franklin (JPT Solutions), Richard Tubb (Netlink IT), Chris Timm (TCG Computer Services), Neville Hunter (Hunter Systems), Khalid Mehmood (Oxford Macintosh Solutions Limited), Alex Dixon (Oxford Macintosh Solutions Limited), Paul Tomlinson (Mirus IT Solutions), James Harbridge (Dot IT Solutions), Nigel Rawlins (The Support Force), Matthew Poyiadgi (CompTIA) and Todd Thibodeaux (CompTIA).

III. Agenda Items

a) **Introductions and Welcome then Message from the CEO.**
William Linard welcomed and thanked the group for attending and proceeded to introduce Todd Thibodeaux, CompTIA's Chief Executive. Todd addressed the group and shared the latest from CompTIA, the most recent developments from the association and the direction and vision of the next few years. Toolkits for MSP's, Legal and HR best practice handbooks and a job board for companies to find pre-trained and certified technicians were just a few of the latest developments in the States.

b) **Member Focus Presentation**
Richard Tubb, Business Development Director, JamesCash.co.uk, gave the forum an insightful overview of his company; what challenges he is currently facing and how he has made success.

Starting with a brief overview of why Richard merged his business Netlink with fellow HTG member James Cash (of JamesCash.co.uk), he went on to openly discuss how he had made a successful business by:

- Participating in communities: sharing knowledge, making alliances and learning from others who had been through similar issues.
- Cultivating vendor relationships: ensuring that the relationship isn't just a 'what are the vendors going to give me' stance. Instead, Richard discussed his unique approach to understanding how he can get the best service from his account managers. The top tip was to ask how his account managers were paid, whether it be through kit, or more partners and then commit to helping them achieve their goal. In return, JamesCash.co.uk has been selected for beta testing of new products, a marketing video on Windows 7 and the receiver of any leads that the vendor may receive.
- Producing a scalable business: by ensuring that all processes were repeatable and scalable as they grow.
- Being a sales company, not the IT guy.
- Being a connector for their customers and referring leads to local businesses who are experts in another space.

Level 5 City Tower | 40 Basinghall Street | London | EC2V 5DE | Tel: +44 (0) 207 330 6062 | Fax: +44 (0) 207 330 6062

After a very thought provoking session, Richard provided all attendees with a few links to find more info on his presentation. http://tinyurl.com/tubblog-collaboration, http://tinyurl.com/tubblog-merger and http://bit.ly/UKSBSCPALFY11. Follow Richards blog here: www.tubblog.co.uk. You can also find him on Twitter and LinkedIn.

c) **Where are we headed?**
Matthew Poyiadgi started a discussion around differentiation. The members around the table shared a number of areas where CompTIA members can stand out from 'cowboy' providers, and the exchange homed in on disaster recovery (DR). This continues the theme of evolving from an 'IT Fixer' to 'Technology Consultant' for customers, and as DR tends to be an issue after the event, i.e. a customer only realizes the pain once data has been lost, the table agreed to be proactive with its customers and create a white-paper outlining putting in place a procedure for DR.

d) **Best Practices Presentations**

1. Use Zenos academies to recruit young apprentices that are CompTIA certified. Please contact William Linard (wlinard@comptia.org) if you are interested in hiring an apprentice.
2. Add a telecoms arm to your IT company and start to offer your customers mobile phone contracts. For a relatively simple question, you can earn up to 35% of all mobile spend from your customers if you partner with a network.
3. Have one internal database rather than many.
4. Measure your service levels: Service Addiction is a method of measuring and benchmarking service with peer organisations. After researching the marketplace, Net Promoter was identified (www.netpromoter.com) as the standard customer service-benchmarking tool for all service focused companies. Through utilizing this tool a company is able to track improvements in service levels whilst also tracking the score against leading organisations such as Google, Amazon, and Virgin Atlantic.
5. Customer service and customer facing skill improvement is key to winning new business.
6. Eazipay – streamline how you receive payment by signing up to Eazipay and introducing direct debit to your customers.
7. Package every service that you offer into a branded website available online to help easily differentiate each service that you offer.
8. Build a full sales plan that you adhere to with every customer to create consistency.
9. Virtualisation: junior techies go on site and fit the kit whilst senior techies install it from the office. This can allow for multiple sites to be set up at any one time.
10. Utilise Marketing Development Funds (MDF) from the vendors. Train and certify your people to reach the vendors highest partner level and in return you can lean on them for case studies.
11. Every problem that is logged by the customer should be followed up after the problem is resolved to ask if everything is ok. This also provides a great opportunity for up-selling.
12. Free marketing – if you send 80 emails per day and 50% are external, over the course of a working year, you will send around 9000 emails. Make sure you include a message on your signature strip as it allows you to subtly put a message across, for free.

IV. Actions

1. Share update on MSP Credential at next meeting

2. CompTIA to develop a Disaster Recovery best practices document.

Level 5 City Tower | 40 Basinghall Street | London | EC2V 5DE | Tel: +44 (0) 207 330 6062 | Fax: +44 (0) 207 330 6062

3. CompTIA to investigate whether the legal and HR customizable benefits and handbooks need localising.

4. UK Reseller Forum attendees to update their profile online at http://www.linkedin.com/groupItem?view=&gid=2099212&type=member&item=5791878&qid=34fa751b-3c12-47b2-a286-d679d1702b08&goback=.gna_2099212 to allow CompTIA to develop a UK Reseller Forum member handbook.

5. UK Reseller Forum attendees to register for the next UK Reseller Forum and the EMEA Member Conference at www.comptia.org/emea2010.

6. Todd kindly offered all attendees of the forum the opportunity to receive a selection of books to help their businesses grow:

   - Drive by Daniel Pink - http://www.danpink.com/drive
   - Getting Naked by Patrick Lencioni - http://www.tablegroup.com/books/gettingnaked/
   - Making Ideas Happen by Scott Belsky - http://the99percent.com/book

   If you would like to request copies of any of the above, please contact William Linard at wlinard@comptia.org.

V. Adjournment

Matthew Poyiadgi adjourned the meeting at 13.00.

Minutes submitted by: William Linard (CompTIA)

Minutes approved by: Matthew Poyiadgi (CompTIA)

Level 5 City Tower | 40 Basinghall Street | London | EC2V 5DE | Tel: +44 (0) 207 330 6062 | Fax: +44 (0) 207 330 6062