



Connecting professionals around the world

International Practice Group, is an international network of independent firms, with a Secretariat, which meets clients' needs for legal, taxation and accountancy services throughout the world

Updates:

- Upcoming Amsterdam conference
- Website update

Bristol - a report on our Autumn conference

Between 15 and 18 October 2009, Charlie Thomson, our Co-Chairman from Bishop Fleming, United Kingdom, hosted and organised the IPG Autumn Conference 2009.

The conference was a great success. By the end of August the conference was fully booked! We had 67 delegates representing 43 firms. Together with our hosts, the spouses of some of the members, the speakers and the candidates this came to almost 100 participants.

The Management Committee would like to thank the organisers, Charlie Thomson, Matthew Lee and their colleagues from Bishop Fleming for their incredible work and efforts in arranging the conference. So many people contributed in so many ways to turn this conference into a smoothly run event with many presentations and a very good atmosphere for discussions and networking.

hard competition on a rainy day! The winner of the Golf Tournament was our new member from Malin, Bergquist & Co LLP, USA Mr Peter Kern.

On Friday morning the official conference programme started. Charlie Thomson greeted the members and made a brief introduction about his firm Bishop Fleming Chartered Accountants.

Afterwards we had an interesting presentation by our guest speaker Lesley Batchelor, Chair of the Institute of Export.

view of Europe at the present, together with its interaction with the rest of the world. In overall terms he felt that we were past the worst of the downturn but that it would be a long and difficult process for countries' economies to recover to previous levels.



(l to r) Friedhelm Gruber, Lesley Batchelor, Trevor Harrison and Charlie Thomson



The talk by Lesley was on the subject of market research and marketing in different cultures.

Assisted by Roberto Perez Teuffer from Mexico, Lesley illustrated the very different ways in which different countries and cultures communicate. It was an interactive and amusing session where the various delegates were able to discuss, in an open manner, how the barriers to communication arise.

Finally we had a presentation by Trevor Harrison, from Svenska Handelsbanken, who gave an informative talk on the economic

The conference attendees assembled on the evening of Friday 16 October 2009 for a Gala Dinner at the wonderful, historical and prestigious Merchant Venturers Hall in Clifton. This was a time to relax and to enjoy each others company.

Saturday morning held the Group's Members' Meeting. The Minutes and all documentation were sent to member firms' representatives on 16 November 2009.

We hope you enjoyed the conference!

We would like to thank the partners and staff of Bishop Fleming for their excellent hospitality in hosting the IPG Conference.

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(l to r) Matthew Lee, Charlie Thomson, Julian Cramp, Danielle Matthews & Joe Scaife



On Thursday morning some of the more energetic members met at the Celtic Manor Golf Club, where the challenge started. It was a

Interview with Charlie Thomson, Bishop Fleming , Conference organisers



Charlie - you have been a member of Picatrex for a long time and were the last Picatrex Chairman. Since the merger with IPG you are the IPG Co-Chairman. Was this the first conference you had organised?

No, the first conference I organised was in Bristol, some 10 or 11 years ago.

How did you find this conference and what is the difference to the first one?

Ten years ago Bristol was a city still living with its historical industries. It is now much more attractive to the media industries and is one of the most visited cities in Britain, so I am proud to host the conference to show old friends how it has changed and how it now welcomes the European visitor.

This conference is much bigger than the first one but all the members get on so well that it just seems like a bigger group of

friends. We deliberately planned so that there were plenty of sessions where the members could network and talk to each other and it was always these sessions that overran their allotted time!

With 10 years history in the group, I have long lasting friendships and business relationships, both national and worldwide. This conference has helped the group of friends get bigger.

Retirement of Michel Mall



At the conference the retirement of Michel Mall as a Management Committee member was announced.

On behalf of the Management Committee, Friedhelm Gruber, Charlie Thomson and Willem Smit thanked Michel Mall for his continuing support, his efforts, for his dedicated hours and personal initiative and for his contribution - in his unique way -

to make the group bigger.

The Management Committee Members wish Michel Mall every success in the future as he looks forward to new challenges.



AIA's educational initiatives

On behalf of the Association for International Arbitration ("AIA"), a few weeks ago we emailed all members about the project titled 'European Mediation Training for Practitioners of Justice' and a job advert for this interesting project. The project concentrates on mediation training. This will involve mediation workshops; research in mediation; expansion of the AIA's library in the same field; publication of resulting research papers and organising a conference, etc.

The AIA is seeking to recruit a project co-ordinator for a fixed term up to and including 2 November 2011. The position is based in Brussels. Skills and experience required are as follows:

- Demonstrable project management skills, such as, managing all external and internal communications
- Marketing the training program and resulting conference
- Organising and maintaining general ledgers
- Ability to work independently
- Competent with the Microsoft Office package
- Highly articulate with good communication and interpersonal skills
- Fluent in both English and Dutch
- Negotiation skills

Please contact Mr. Johan Billiet, President of AIA, if you are interested in this job opportunity at administration@arbitration-adr.org.

WWW.IPGNETWORK.ORG

Results of the recent website survey of our members



Screenshots of the website



We trust you are happy with the new website

Please help us to ensure your information is correct!



Wim Lukaart; [acon](#) [avm](#)

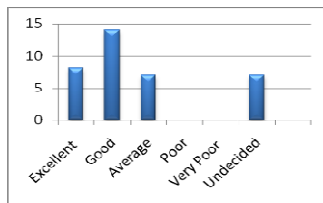
Wim is the member of the management committee responsible for PR and marketing. Wim is managing director of the corporate finance division of [acon](#) [avm](#) (Holland)([acon](#) [avm](#))

Firstly, a big thanks to all of our members who took the time to complete this survey. We appreciate your time and input, and value the comments you have made.

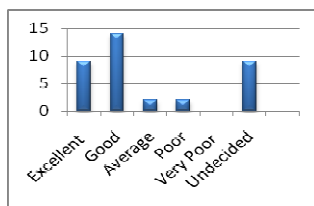
During the Autumn Conference in Bristol the Secretariat of IPG conducted a survey of members. The purpose of the survey was to learn what web-based services members used as well as what they would like to see in future implementations of the website.

36 survey results were analysed at the conference. The results were:

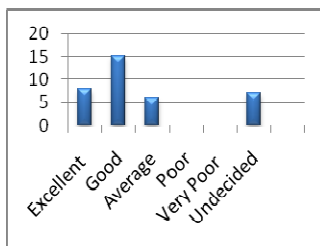
1. Please grade our website on the overall content



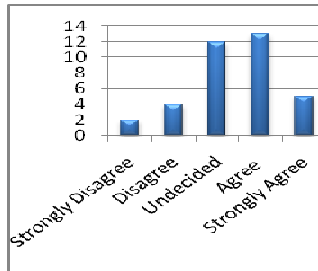
2. Please grade our website on the ease of navigation



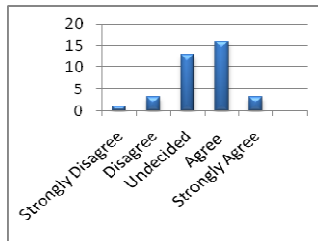
3. Please grade our website on overall look



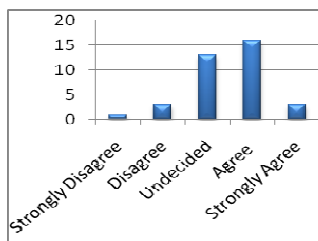
4. The links are current and working



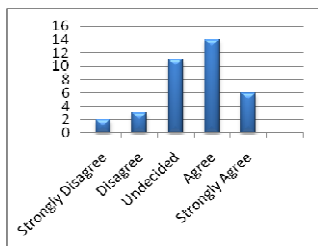
5. The website is interesting and professional



6. Can you easily move through the site to a desired location?



7. Navigation to your firm's site is easy?



Finally, the survey asked, in the form of open-ended questions about the accuracy of data for member's firms, including address, phone number etc. and ideas for future website implementations.

After the conference the Secretariat sent email invitations to complete the survey to those members who did not attend the conference.

In short, the results of this website survey are helping us and the web-designer confirm and give priority to the issues needing to be addressed as the site goes through its current redesign process.

The redesign process will be finished this month. As soon as the redesign is ready we shall inform you by email.

We would like to ask you to proof read, once again, your individual profiles and other information as shown in the current pages and feedback to the Secretariat.

The new website will have a completely new technology but the look and feel is kept quite similar and has been modernised. The members' data will be kept in one database now so that there will be no confusion when searches are done via the two possible options (i.e. via the globe or text).

I wish to thank you for your positive comments. We have used these to improve. Furthermore I want to thank all of you for the patience you showed! I am sure the new website will be a big step forward!

IPG Amsterdam Conference - 6–8 May 2010

It's time to update your diaries!

Following the successful meeting held in Bristol in October 2009 it is our pleasure to receive the baton from Bishop Fleming and invite you all to attend the following IPG conference to be held in the spring in Amsterdam.

Molade Trust Management B.V. is a company specialising in providing Corporate and Trust Management Services and we are delighted to be your host.



Maybe we the Dutch are a little bit fringe in The Netherlands. You sometimes hear these strange stories about our country and Amsterdam. Even though we are a bit different, we would like to welcome you to our city and see it for yourself. You cannot after all believe everything you see and read in the media

<http://www.iamsterdam.com/en>

During your stay in our splendid city, you will naturally want to see as much as possible. Public transport is the best way to visit all the sights and admire the city.

An interesting spouse's programme will be arranged to give an idea of our beautiful country as well as an extra curricular tour for all the delegates to give them an opportunity to partake in the Amsterdam experience as well.

During your stay we have arranged for accommodation and meeting packages in the Renaissance Amsterdam Hotel (a member of the Marriott Group) which is the high standard and quality that you are used to:

www.renaissancehotels.com/amsrd



We also hope to have subjects for discussion/presentation that will be of interest to all of the professions represented in the IPG Group.

Dutch "g" "ch" and "r" are all pronounced more or less the same (although the Dutch insist they're different) – a harsh, guttural "kh" sound (like you're clearing phlegm from your throat). So the word "gracht" (canal) combines all three "kh" sounds in one word... that sounds really, really awful: "khkhakht." This is why "Grolsch" (the beer) sounds like "Khkhols", not "grolsh".

Come and see us - The Dutch are the tallest people in Europe and the most multi-lingual. A third of The Netherlands is below sea level so bring your raincoats and rubber boots and if you come by car we drive on the "right" side of the road – and remember, Cyclists Rule.

We will submit hotel booking forms to all members in February and we hope that you will all book early for this conference to facilitate the arrangements for our team co-ordinating the conference.



Watch this space in the next newsletter for more specific details of the programme for the conference.

Rene van den Outenaar
Director

Molade Trust Management B.V.
info@molade.nl

IPG Autumn Conference in Athens

Our forthcoming Autumn Conference 2010 will take place in Athens. In Bristol, Andreas Ploumbidis and Sozos Papakyriacou outlined the arrangements for the Athens Conference to be held on the 7th to 10th October 2010.

The Management Committee thank those Members who have volunteered to hold the conferences in future years.

Protecting your commercial secrets in the Chinese legal environment—an article from our member firm CH-ina

In the current harder business climate, we have noticed an increase in unethical activities by competitors or employees relating to critical know-how, tailor-made tooling and client/suppliers information, all of which can generally be considered a company's commercial secret.

The reputation of China's business environment and culture in terms of intellectual property protection has notoriously been criticised, thus most foreign companies (and Chinese employees) believe that know-how cannot really be protected and everything depends purely on ethics of the people involved.

The legal situation, however, has changed and implementation has started to follow so that it is now very possible to protect one's trade secrets, provided enough attention is paid to the particularities of the Chinese provisions regarding protecting commercial secrets.

A commercial secret can be any of the following: a proprietary formula, a pattern, a drawing, a device, a method and technique, or a company's clients and suppliers list. Even the strategy or the business model of a company (that is used or that can be used in a business) can be legally protected. It does not matter whether the know-how or trade secret is presented in a tangible format or not.

The use of someone else's commercial secret for profit is clearly illegal and criminal under Chinese law. This is of considerable help as the police may be called to investigate and obtain testimonies that can be used as evidence. It also means that the punishments for infringers, if proven guilty, can be jail sentences. However, the law also says that the owner of commercial secrets must take sufficient steps to protect them.

In practice, as for all Chinese legal cases, obtaining the implementation of the law is very much a question of providing detailed material evidence to prove that a commercial secret was used for profit. As a result, to obtain reparation from infringers and to create a culture respecting the company's confidential information and intangible assets, it is necessary to take a set of preventive measures:

- For a court to take a case (or the Police to file an investigation) the company will be required to prove that the disclosed information has been defined as a commercial secret. At the moment, many companies do not have clear enough specifications in their internal rules and contracts to specify what are the company's commercial secrets to employees, suppliers or other stakeholders. (For example, documents containing company proprietary information need to be labelled "confidential".)
- As well, there must be written provisions to confirm that employees have the obligation to keep all non-published information of the company confidential. Such provisions are often included in the labour contract and the company's internal rules, and such provisions shall by all means be considered as clear and strong enough by the authorities so that they are convinced to intervene.
- Processes applied within the company to protect information are not only essential to make a successful case in front of authorities, they also generate a company culture that values know-how and prevents its loss. Among others, confidential documents need to be locked up and shall only be accessible by the authorised personnel.

To safeguard your company's knowledge, it is not enough to merely protect your patents; detailed measures need to be undertaken to address the issues above.

What the Chinese law requires, after all, is not unreasonable: commercial secrets are more and more a company's most important wealth which deserve the same special attention as tangible assets. To be sure to have protection, a company needs to see it in this way and to take all necessary steps to control access to its proprietary information, as well as to make it formally clear to its employees and partners that such information is of the company's ownership.

We hope that the above can be of support to your operation. For more information about this topic of defining elements to protect your intellectual property, do not hesitate to contact r.wang@ch-ina.com.

Reanna Wang & your CH-ina Team

Manager – Marketing & Business Development



Member News

On behalf of the IPG Board of Directors, it is with deep regret that we announce the death of Mr Peter Spark.

Mr Peter Spark was a founder of the group and a former Chairman. He was a passionate Board Member for many years. He clearly played a role in the success of our organisation and he had a significant and lasting influence on the group.



Peter Spark (Lawrence Jones) thanked Mayor Anatoly Sobchak, Mayor of St. Petersburg, following his address at the joint conference of EU-LEX International Practice Group and the Association of St. Petersburg Lawyers held on 26th - 28th November 1992.



EU-LEX and IPG merger: (l to r back) Peter Spark (Lawrence Jones and Secretary General IPG EU-LEX), Jonathan Chadd (Leathers Prior), Zig Wilamowski (Jeffcote Donnison Group), Isabelle Danninos (Cabinet Van Hagen), (front) Eddie Van Camp, Anthony Van Hagen (Cabinet Van Hagen), Klaus Schacht (Dras Schacht & Partners).

Memories of Peter Spark

Peter and indeed his wife Jennifer were quintessentially English in the best possible old style and sense. Jennifer with her deep commanding voice and larger than life presence reminded one of a kind but no nonsense headmistress – a person not to be trifled with. Peter, on the other hand, was more slight and indeed almost bird-like and was in some ways an unlikely partner. With his twinkling bright eyes he would hop here, rush off there, settle and then fly off again somewhere always mindful of the need to be in touch and serve his IPG members.

During his many years of dedicated and unselfish service as chairman of the IPG management committee he was dedicated in his quest to build a solid international network of lawyers, accountants and tax consultants. His criteria for doing so were twofold – professional excellence and the nurture of a spirit of friendship and goodwill amongst the members. In those early days despite being necessarily pre-occupied with the need to keep the group solvent he managed to achieve his objectives. The conferences in St Petersburg, Prague and Munich are just some that spring to mind as testimony of this. Today, once again after a period of uncertainty the merger with Picatrex has injected new life into the group and had Peter been able to attend the hugely successful meetings of the joint group in Turin and Bristol they would have brought that special twinkle back into his eyes and a deep satisfaction that his hard work had not been in vain.

Zig Wilamowski

Hamels Consultants LLP

Member News



On behalf of the IPG Board of Directors, it is again with great sorrow to inform you that our member, Mr. Mark Balaban, died last summer. He was a well loved and highly respected person. He will be greatly missed for his friendly personality.

The contact details for the Chairman and Secretariat of the group are shown at the bottom of this page, but detailed below is a list of contact details and areas of responsibility for the Management Committee:

Name	Firm	Telephone number	Email address	Responsibilities
Friedhelm Gruber	Senat AG	+423 237 43 43	friedhelm.gruber@ipgnetwork.org friedhelm.gruber@senat-ag.com	Chairman
Graham Wallace	Barnes Roffe LLP	+41 20 8988 6100	graham.wallace@ipgnetwork.org g.wallace@barnesroffe.com	Vice Chairman Treasurer
Willem Smit	Hoens & Souren	+31 79 342 02 50	willem.smit@ipgnetwork.org Smit@hslaw.nl	Head Section Law
Charlie Thomson	Bishop Fleming	+44 1752 262 611	charlie.thomson@ipgnetwork.org cthomson@bishopfleming.co.uk	Head Section Accounting / Tax
Wim Lukaart	Accon AVM	+31 76 578 57 20	wim.lukaart@ipgnetwork.org WLukaart@acconavm.nl	Head Section Website/Newsletter
Rahul Chadha	Chadha & Co.	+91 11 4163 9294	rahul.chadha@ipgnetwork.org rchadha@chadha-co.com	Member

And finally - Newsletter distribution

Finally, we would ask that you pass this newsletter on to all members of your firm who could usefully be aware of IPG. If you wish to supply the Secretariat with a general email address which acts as a distribution list for your firm then we would encourage you to do so. This way each firm can keep their internal distribution list up to date and the Secretariat can send newsletters, etc. to the widest possible number of people. If you have any questions please contact Hiacenta Leutert Klages.

If you have any matters you would like including in the newsletter then please let the Secretariat know.

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