

To: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE		Subject:  NORTH LANARKSHIRE MULTI- MEDIA BUSINESS DIRECTORY
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT		
Date: 16 JULY 1997	Ref: SC/LC/REP.243	

## 1 BACKGROUND

Following completion of the North Lanarkshire Business Directory earlier this year, consideration has been given to the production of a multi-media version of the Directory. This would be developed using the business details held on the Economic Development Unit's Business Listings Database. The project will be undertaken by a specialist multi-media and company. Invitations to tender have been issued to 4 companies and submissions received from each of them.

## 2 THE BENEFITS OF MULTI-MEDIA

The multi-media directory could be produced on either CD-ROM or computer disks. Upon reviewing the tender submissions it has been decided to opt for a computer disc-based version.

A multi-media version will be easier to update than a hard copy, i.e. published version. The dynamics of the local company base can therefore be accounted for. It may be possible to update the multi-media version at 6 monthly intervals whereas the publication is unlikely to be updated for 2 years.

The most current version of the Directory can then be utilised by partner economic development agencies and North Lanarkshire Council staff. Potential inward investors and relocators could also be provided with the updated multi-media version. At international trade events the multi-media version could be distributed which would portray a progressive image of the Council, and be less bulky to transport.

There are also environmental benefits to be had from the multi-media version. The amount of paper necessary to provide company information will be reduced, and considerably less storage space will be required. In future it may be that we move increasingly towards multi-media and rely less on the published edition.

The information will be stored on computer disk format in such a way that it will be for reference only. A charge similar to the cost of the business directory publication (£10) is likely to be levied. Companies wishing to manipulate the data to produce mailing lists etc. will have to pay an additional fee. There is increasing demands for this service as companies invest more in direct marketing. Other Council departments and public sector agencies have requested a copy of the database as part of the increasing requirement to establish partnerships and raise sponsorship. Further research into appropriate charges for this service and any data protection issues will be carried out.

## 3 COSTINGS

Discussions have been held with the Lanarkshire Development Agency and they have agreed to make a contribution of "30% of total costs or £4,000, whichever is the lower figure". The balance will be met from existing Economic Development Unit budgets.

In the tender invitation each of the 4 companies were requested to outline a range of options and the costs for each option. A summary of these is given below:

### 3.1 DELPHIC

Format: CDRom  
 Structure: Info on NL, dbase, basic entries plus media-rich entries, potential for video.  
 Key word search and geographic area search.  
 Update: Could be done at 6 monthly intervals costing £2,800 per update.  
 Time: 7-12 weeks depending on option.

#### Options for 1,000 CDRoms:

- A. £14,750 Basic database
- B. £16,370 Basic database plus retail.
- C. £30,820 Basic database plus retail and a media rich NL business services section and a media rich NL information section.

### 3.2 MULTI-MEDIA INCORPORATED

Format: Computer discs  
 Structure: Database to be hidden behind front end.  
 Structure to follow that of SEnt Manufacturing Capability Directory  
 Menu driven, search by company - product - industry ...  
 Option for geographic search. Option for print.  
 Security: Maximum print option, 20 company records.  
 Update: At 6 monthly intervals.  
 May be able to be done at EDU. First disc with graphics etc. will not need updating, only discs holding data.  
 Time: 12-16 weeks

#### Options for 1,000 :

- A. £17,610 CDRom with basic database
- B. £ 7,725 Computer discs with basic database
- C. £ 8,725 Computer discs with basic database and geographic search
- D. £ 9,325 Computer discs with basic database and geographic search and retail
- E. £10,325 Computer discs with basic database and geographic search and retail and capacity to print more than one record.

### 3.3 PICARDY

Format: CDRom  
 Structure: Interactive database.  
 Search by keyword, coy name, ind sector, address ...  
 Capability of storing pictures, graphics etc  
 Possibility of adding coy logos etc and selling advertising space to companies.  
 CDRom can link to internet web site.  
 Time: 12 weeks

#### Options:

- A. £24,950 For 3,300 entries
- B. £27,450 For 3,300 entries plus retail (4,500 entries)
- C. £32,200 As per B plus link to Internet web site.
- D. £variable As per A, B or C plus expanded company entries.

### 3.4 WIGWAM DIGITAL

Format: CDRom  
 Structure: Sectors, sub-sectors, company data  
 Search facility by sector, sub-sector, A-Z listing ...  
 Security: Can provide advice on a locked version

Update: At 6 monthly intervals costing between £4,560 (A), £5,640 (B) and £5,940 (C)  
 Time: 10-12 weeks

Options:

- A. £14,960 Basic database
- B. £19,080 Basic database with audio and voice-over.
- C. £29,780 Basic database with audio and voice-over plus presenter and language translations.

## 5. SUMMARY

- Of the 4 submissions only one has considered computer discs. This option is cheaper than CDRom and will have knock-on benefits as it would be cheaper to copy and update, cheaper to distribute and able to be used at various events and exhibitions on laptop computers.
- Multimedia Incorporated appears to offer the best value for money by putting the database onto computer discs.
- The 3 submissions which refer to CDRoms tend to be design led with inclusion of graphics, video, voice-overs etc. While these options are attractive they may not be as relevant in transforming the database to multimedia as this is basically an information source on the local company base.
- Computer discs appear fine for handling large quantities of data, however, for more advanced graphics etc CDRom is probably best. In this instance it was felt more appropriate to use computer discs as no reasonable justification seemed to be put forward in favour of a CDRom version..

## 6. CONCLUSION

- From the evidence provided in the 4 submissions, and the associated costings, it would seem that the best value for money would be achieved through selecting Multimedia Incorporated who propose a computer disc-based version.
- This would provide us with a digital multimedia version of the database that is quite easy to update. It would also be compatible with all our computers i.e. it could be used with the laptops at local and international trade events.
- The computer disc-based version is in line with other large data sets that have been transferred to multimedia (i.e. Scottish Enterprise manufacturing Capability), whereas CDRom is tending to be favoured for more media-rich and presentational formats.

## 4 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee :

- Notes the content of this report
- Agrees to the project progressing through the use of external consultants, and agree to appoint Multimedia Incorporated to undertake this work
- Agrees to appropriate charges being levied for the sale of the finished product
- Agrees to the Economic Development Unit share of costs being met from within existing budgets
- Seeks a further report upon completion of the project

  
 Stanley C Cook  
 Director of Planning and Development