

THE MAZE

SUMMER 2009

Ruth's A Winner!



Labyrinth MD Ruth Waring has won the Women on their Way (WOW) award for woman in a non-traditional role. Ruth was presented with the prestigious award recently at a glittering awards ceremony at the Botanical Gardens in Birmingham.

Says Ruth: "I am delighted. I went along to the awards to enjoy the day, but to win was just incredible. It's hard to see what you do on a daily basis as exceptional, and most of the time I'm too busy getting on with it all to even think about its significance. It's great to take a step back and reflect on what I have achieved.

"I think there were two reasons why I won, the first being the great success of Labyrinth during 2008, where we had 3 major blue-chip projects as well as the ongoing customers who are so important to

us. But also in September last year I set up Women in Logistics UK (see page 2 for more information), which now has 275 members and is growing daily. The group is free to join and is run on a voluntary basis. So I think the combination of those two factors was significant. I was certainly up against some stiff competition."

The WOW awards are the brainchild of Jo Cameron, who found fame appearing in *The Apprentice*. Jo created the WOW awards to help fulfil her vision, to increase the number of women at higher levels at work and in business. There is more information about the awards and the winners of all the categories at www.womenontheirway.co.uk.

Ruth won a beautiful glass award (see photo), champagne, flowers and a free half day of massage sessions which she has shared with the steering team of Women in Logistics UK.

It's four in a row for ISO!

The following companies have all successfully gained certification to ISO 9001:2008 with help from Labyrinth:

- C4 Logistics, Coventry
- Jigsaw Solutions Ltd, Bardonia, Leicestershire
- Hopkinson Transport Ltd, Chesterfield, Derbyshire
- NDL Darlington

Labyrinth also has two more transport customers lined up to gain certification over the next two months.

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Labyrinth Operational Support launches a new service:

Occupational Health & Safety Management System OHSAS 18001

In uncertain economic conditions companies are looking for ways to differentiate themselves from the competition. One such way is to gain certification to OHSAS 18001, a management system which enables companies to demonstrate a major commitment to Health & Safety across their business.

OHSAS 18001 is based on similar principles to ISO 90001 and there are a number of overlapping areas, such as procedures for internal audits and control of documents. However the system really comes into its own as a mechanism for demonstrating management commitment to the whole H&S system, and the process is fully auditable by any third party which wants to come and see what controls you have in place.

OHSAS 18001 used to be the preserve of the "big boys", but smaller companies now have access to this via Labyrinth. We are currently preparing a series of template documents which can be adapted for use at individual companies, and can also be used in conjunction with existing Labyrinth H&S systems without disruption or the need to extensively rewrite existing policies.

If you are interested in gaining the competitive edge by having 18001 in your business, please contact Ruth by email:

ruthwaring@labyrintholutions.co.uk

Property Matters!

Everyone knows that property prices have been hit by the credit crunch but is your business taking advantage of this situation? Now is a good time to be buying your warehousing or yard land, renegotiating your existing lease or looking for a new property.

Buy your shed or yard? Many owners of vacant sheds are desperate to dispose of their sheds and to get some cash into their business. In addition, many of the property funds are geared (i.e. have borrowed money to fund their investments) and their refinancing cycle is drawing near. If they are unable to refinance because the banks are hanging onto their cash, this can exert enormous pressure to sell a vacant shed to repay the loans.



Therefore there is an opportunity now to buy, at a deep discount, either the shed you are using, or a vacant one that you need. This can be sold back into the market at a later time when values and yields have been restored. A shed with a tenant has a higher value than one without as it has an income stream attached

to it. Because the purchase price of sheds has dropped (20-35%), but rentals have dropped only slightly (25-50p/ft² or about 5-10%), yields for those able to buy now are very good and currently better than can be gained anywhere else.

Renegotiate your lease? Because a lease without break points has a more secure income stream than one with, it has more value to investors and can be sold for more. Therefore a tenant who feels secure with their current business position could agree to give away an existing break clause in exchange for cash or improved terms. In other words they would be sharing in the value increase. A 3PL could approach their client and propose that if the client was to increase the contract length it would allow them to negotiate away the break clause in exchange for a cash injection. The 3PL would be rewarded by a longer contract, the client by a cash injection and the landlord by an increase in the value of the property (useful if he needs to sell). Alternatively, the rental could be fixed for a longer period instead of rising at the currently agreed intervals (or instead of being reviewed, it is formally agreed not to review it).

Labyrinth Supply Chain works with clients on both network design and procurement, including property based warehousing contracts. In response to the current property situation we have teamed up with commercial property experts Knight Frank to offer companies advice on how they might take advantage of the current market. Knight Frank LLP is a global company and has expertise in the whole field of property and the market in which it operates. They would be able to review all the properties in a client portfolio and make recommendations to the client's benefit.

For further information please contact Jo Godsmark on jogodsmark@labyrintholutions.co.uk.

WOMEN IN LOGISTICS UK – GOING PLACES FAST!

In September 2008 Ruth Waring decided to invite a few friends to join her Women in Logistics UK group on the professional networking site LinkedIn.

Numbers soon gathered pace, and with 40 members Ruth held the first face-to-face meeting of the group in January this year. Half the membership turned up at Jigsaw Solutions in Leicestershire, and the group was officially off the ground in the real world! A steering team was formed, and the group agreed what Women in Logistics should be about.

Since then it has gone from strength to strength, and today has 275 members, with numbers increasing daily. With national recognition from across the industry, extensive press coverage, the launch of our new website, the introduction of a mentoring scheme and an exciting programme of networking events, there seems to be no stopping Women in Logistics.

Men are actively encouraged join

the group – they just have to be broadly supportive of the aims of Women in Logistics UK.

These are:

- To host networking events which can offer potential business/employment opportunities in the sector
- To offer a mentoring service for younger professionals
- To promote the interests of women in the logistics sector
- Have a presence in educating students about the industry for both male and females
- To provide personal development for all members
- To encourage male participation in the group

The newsletter can be viewed at www.womeninlogistics.org.uk and anyone who would like to join can email Ruth at ruthwaring@labyrintholutions.co.uk



That's torn it!

A huge thank you to all of you who sponsored Jo for the Flora London Marathon and her bid to raise £2500 for Bliss, the premature baby society. Unfortunately Jo tore a muscle in January which forced her to defer her place to 2010.

The good news is that she has already exceeded her original fundraising target and hopes to increase this to £4000 by April next year.

You can sponsor Jo at www.justgiving.com/jogodsmark.



Are you managing risk with your logistics partners? Labyrinth launches a new Vendor Assurance tool.

When purchasing or managing an outsourced logistics service many companies neglect risk management, concentrating on the more immediate pressures of service and price. However understanding your supplier's risk profile today allows you to avoid tomorrow's potential crisis and loss of service.

Labyrinth has been working with 3PL providers to improve their Health and Safety, quality systems and risk management for many years. Now we have used this knowledge to develop a Vendor Assurance audit tool which can

be used to provide buyers with an independent check of their suppliers' risk profile.

The service is based on a one day audit at the suppliers' premises and covers topics such as 'O' License, CPC requirements, Health & Safety, contractual exposure, management strength and IT. Other topics such as Dangerous Goods may be added at the client's request. After the audit both the client and the 3PL receive a report detailing the risks identified, with recommended actions and an overall 'score'. This score may be used to track progress or to

compare potential suppliers.

The Vendor Assurance audit may be used as part of a tender process, as a one off process or, ideally, to monitor and improve supplier performance over a number of years. It is available for both warehousing and transport suppliers.

Ruth Waring is offering a free Vendor Assurance audit of a third party transport supplier to the first person to contact her after reading this article, email to ruthwaring@labyrintholutions.co.uk.