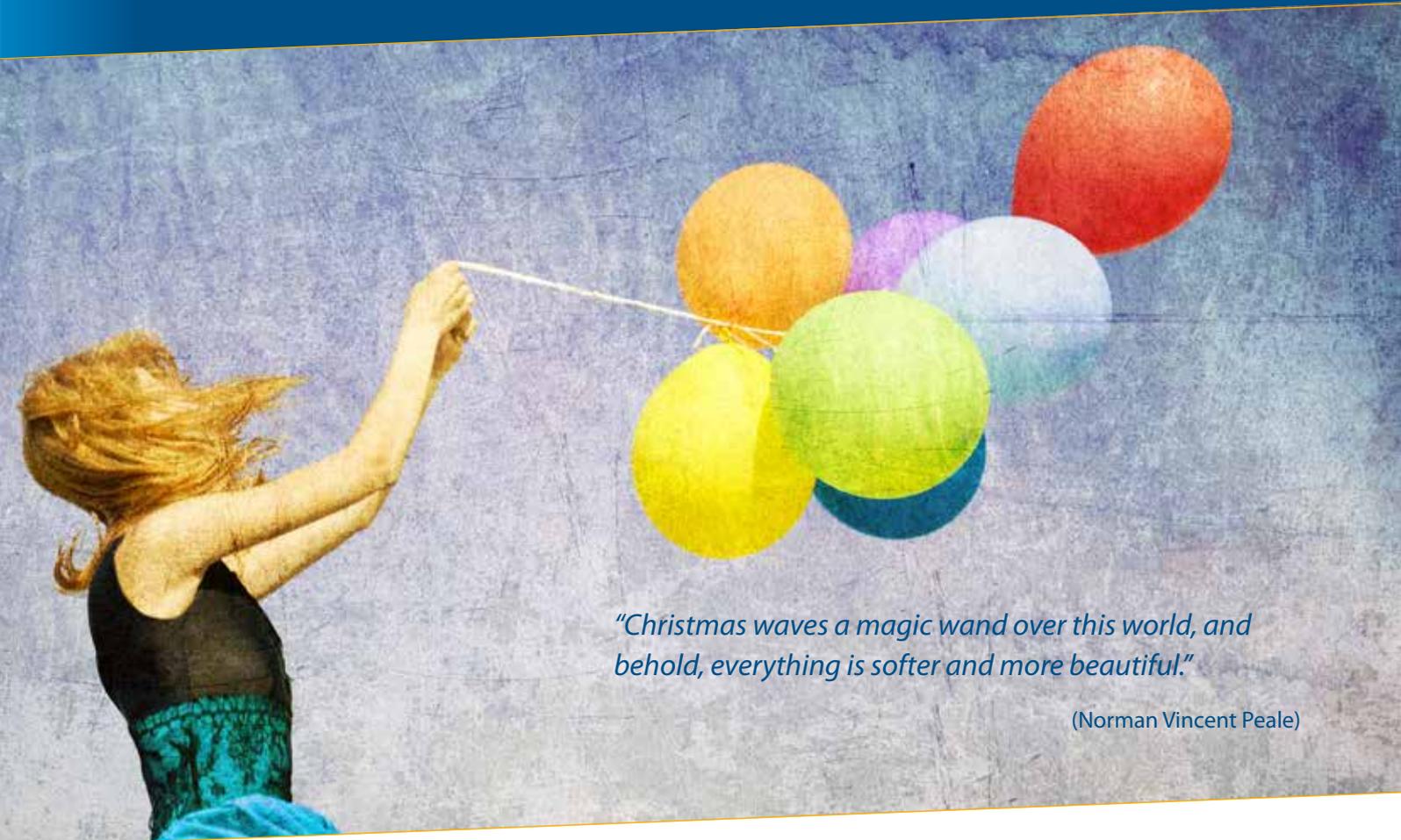


The Whistler

N° 08 - December 2013



Network
by ESN



"Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful."

(Norman Vincent Peale)

Our New Year's resolution ... more creative vigour

Another year has flown by and the holiday season is upon us again. This year has been a challenging one for everyone in Europe, and ESN is no exception. We have made a lot of changes in order to become more efficient and creative in our approach to business – both current and future.

This approach extends to all of our activities, including the Network by ESN. During the year, we have looked at ways to both expand and deepen the network, for example by adding professional event services. This has brought concrete results. In 2013, we have co-operated with several members of the Network by ESN, and benefitted from your skills and local expertise. These are promising results, but we can do better in 2014! Our aim is to involve as many of you as possible in carrying out ongoing ESN projects at pan-European level.

*We have also made efforts to rebrand ESN as a leading communications agency in Belgium with a simple goal: to serve more clients in more creative ways. **ESN's re-launched website** reflects this new approach. Also in this edition of The Whistler, we would like to share some other web-based examples of ESN's creative vigour.*

Of course, some things do not (and should not) change, and so it must be for my annual season's greetings! Let me take this opportunity to extend my very best wishes for a happy holiday season to you and those you love. And may we all look forward to a healthy and prosperous 2014.

Koenraad Tommissen
Managing Director, ESN

More EU businesses using internet and social media

Social media is now used by 30% of businesses in the EU-28, and almost three-quarters say they have a website, an increase of 6% compared to 2010, according to a new report on ICT usage by businesses in the Member States.

The report, published in December 2013 by the EU's statistical office (Eurostat), observed a shift in the content of enterprise websites from static web pages towards more interactive features and web applications, which include online ordering and links to social media.

The use of social media, in particular, has helped EU enterprises to improve their image and internet presence, noted the report. Some 30% of businesses employing 10 people or more used at least one type of social media in 2013, although only 8% had a formal policy for social media use.

Looking at specific types of social media, 28% of enterprises in the EU-28 used social networks (e.g. Facebook) in 2013, 11% multi-media content-sharing websites (e.g. YouTube), 10% blogs or micro blogs (e.g. Twitter) and 6% wiki-based knowledge-sharing tools.

These findings form part of a survey conducted at the beginning of 2013 on ICT usage and e-commerce in enterprises in the Union's 28 Member States, plus Iceland, Norway and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with a special focus on social media use.

"For more than a decade, there has been a shift from the static web pages of the earlier websites towards web applications which draw on user data and relevant applications stored in the 'cloud'" noted the report's authors.

The introduction of internet-based services, collaborative web applications and interactive websites, they continued, has encouraged users to subscribe, post and share their content, and to add links to other websites.

Individuals and enterprises have benefitted from so-called *"many-to-many dialogues"* which means they can exchange information, experiences and opinions more efficiently and cost-effectively over internet communication platforms.

"These virtual interaction platforms have, in fact, been part of a paradigm shift, as enterprises have been able to reach an audience in ways that the audience wants to be reached," the authors concluded.

What's the difference?

The report, entitled 'Businesses raise their internet profile by using social media', revealed significant differences in ICT use from one country to another. The share of businesses using at least one type of social media ranged from 15% in Latvia and 19% in France, Poland and Romania to 48% in Ireland, 50% in the Netherlands and a notable 55% in Malta.

Despite increased use by businesses, the majority of companies surveyed have no formal social media policy. Ireland (20%), the Netherlands (18%), Cyprus (17%) and Denmark (16%) were the exceptions.

Blog use is also growing among EU businesses, according to the report, especially in the Netherlands, the UK and Ireland. A blog is a website or page on which opinions, links, etc. are regularly shared – traditionally by individuals.

Business use of social networks, such as Facebook, is also rising with the highest recorded use again registered in Malta (52%), followed by Ireland (46%), the Netherlands (45%), Sweden (42%) and the UK (40%). The lowest use was recorded in Latvia (13%), the Czech Republic (15%), Poland (16%), France and Romania (both 17%).

For multimedia content-sharing websites the largest proportions were observed in the Netherlands (23%), Malta (20%), Belgium, Greece, Lithuania and Sweden (all 16%). Seven Member States had shares of below 10%.

The Netherlands (27%) took top spot for the use of micro-blogs like Twitter, followed by the UK (23%) and Ireland (20%), with 19 Member States reporting shares below 10%.

For wiki-based knowledge-sharing tools, Lithuania (14%) had the highest proportion, followed by Croatia (13%), Germany and Malta (both 11%), and Austria (10%). The remaining 23 Member States had shares of below 10%.

More info: [Businesses raise their internet profile by using social media](#)

Social media use highlights

- Some 30% of EU enterprises used social media (e.g. social networks, blogs, content-sharing sites and wikis) in 2013, with almost three out of four (73%) using such applications to build their image and to market products.
- Social networks were enterprises' favourite form of social media.
- Half of the EU businesses that used social media, especially those in the accommodation sector, reported using them to obtain customers' opinions or reviews or to answer their questions.
- Among the enterprises using social media, their size was not so important in determining whether the firm used social media to attract customers: 72% of small enterprises used them for image building or for marketing products, compared with 79% of large enterprises.



Maria-Kaisa Jurva

Maria-Kaisa Jurva has been working as a journalist in Sweden since 1997. She has a diploma from Stockholm University's journalist programme. She is bilingual in Swedish and Finnish, which has helped her secure work for Swedish-Finnish daily and weekly newspapers.

She has been a freelance reporter and feature writer since 2006 with a special interest in social issues, migration and human rights. Her areas of specialisation include minority language politics and linguistic human rights.

In addition, she is also an interpreter and translator. She translates mostly from Swedish to Finnish, but also the other way round and from English into her mother tongue(s). Her interpretation and translation activities enable her to keep in touch with policy developments in her areas of interest and also to touch upon other thematic issues, which are a useful source of information and inspiration for her articles in the Swedish and Finnish press.

Like many freelancers, she appreciates how challenging it can be to pitch and sell stories: "It is always a little 'battle' to get space in media," she says.



Alberto Mérida

Alberto Mérida graduated in journalism thanks to an Erasmus grant, and specialised in the coverage of EU and international affairs. For almost five years he was the communication consultant in charge of the Citizen Information Programme (PRINCE) in Spain. He has also been the audio-visual correspondent for the European Commission.

Passionate about communication, EU affairs and new technologies, Alberto has worked in a variety of media outlets in four continents. His professional experience covers different formats, including written press, broadcast TV and 'vintage technologies', such as broadcast teletext news (Telecinco news and Premium SMS content in Mexico and Miami), but also the latest digital communication trends applied to journalism, public relations and institutional affairs.

Alberto is a managing partner of Dubsar PR Spain, a digital communications agency based in Madrid and coordinator of ComunicacionSocial.net. He is also involved in the project 18razones.eu, a series of events and online actions to raise awareness about the European Parliamentary elections among first-time 'potential' voters, especially undergraduate university students.

A few examples of websites

ESN has a vast experience in the design and management of creative dynamic websites, including interactive features, web applications, and links to social media. A few examples are illustrated in this section.



ESN WEBSITE

<http://www.esn.eu/>



CROATIA IN THE EU

<http://www.croatia-in-the-eu.eu/>



EX-SMOKERS

<http://www.exsmokers.eu/dayoftheexsmokers/>
<http://quitsmokingwithbarca.eu/uk-en#.UrLPbPTuLh4>



FET HOUSE

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fet-house/>



INFOGRAPHIC OF EUROPEAN BORDER SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/multimedia/infographics/index_en.htm#080126248ad359ff

As a member of the Network by ESN, you can always consult us should you wish to develop or upgrade a website for any of your projects.