



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Bromsgrove, UK – Monday, 30 April 2007

Bromsgrove School donates 190 recycled PCs to underprivileged schools in Dominica

For immediate release

Bromsgrove School has given 190 reconditioned computers to 10 schools on the Caribbean Island of Dominica. The project was carried out and funded by Leamington based IT supplier, NS Optimum Ltd. "We're delighted to be part of this inspiring project" said Chris Edwards, Headmaster of Bromsgrove School, "Without the tremendous support from NS Optimum and the co-operation of the Ministry of Education in Dominica, the project would not have been possible".

'Mission Dominica' began back in July 2006 with discussions in Dominica between the Ministry of Education and SLIC (the Sustainable Living Initiative Centre). Jem Winston is a Director of SLIC and Managing Director of the 3 Rivers Eco Lodge, responsible for spearheading all SLIC operations. Jem identified the importance of ICT in increasing efforts to save the environment, he explained, "Dominica has an education-for-all policy and very little budget is assigned for spending on ICT. As part of the Sustainable Living Initiative, students are taught about the use of renewable energy. The students need ICT skills to source equipment for implementing renewable energy equipment in Dominica".

NS Optimum Ltd recycled an outstanding 99% of the redundant PCs from Bromsgrove School. 200 machines were repaired, stripped for spare parts, upgraded and prepared for a new lease of life. Gavin Rose, Managing Director of NS Optimum remarked, "Mission Dominica is not just about recycling PCs, it's about giving students in Dominica access to ICT that they did not have before. We also took the opportunity to send over technicians to train school staff and students on best practices for cabling, maintaining,



repairing and expanding computer networks". Gavin continued, "We hope that the success of this project will be an example to many and pave the way for a second phase in the near future".

After an initial site inspection in January 2007, the computers, along with new cabling, wireless networking and tools donated by Mayflex, Netgear and other manufacturers in the UK were loaded into a container which had previously bought bananas to the UK. The Geest Line offered the provision of the container and shipment to Dominica at a discounted rate. "The project took extensive planning and preparation", explained Scott Fisher, NS Optimum Network Manager for Bromsgrove School, "Deployment of the PCs and training took us just two weeks in mid-March and since then all schools have been supported remotely from the UK over a secure internet connection". The 4-6 year old PCs are expected to serve the schools for at least another three years.

In a press conference, held at Dominica Grammar School marking the completion of the project, Stephenson Hyacinth, Chief Education Officer stated, "We believe that all our students of the 21st century must be given the opportunity to gain some knowledge in ICT, and be able to use the instrument as best as possible. We regard the initiative as a very important initiative which helps us to achieve our goal of providing a high quality level of education to all our students".

Chris Edwards concluded "We're proud that we cater for students from 28 different nationalities at Bromsgrove, 95% of which will continue their studies at a British University. We hope that our affiliation in this project is the beginning of a long term link with Dominica as part of our efforts in global education. There's no doubt, students in Dominica and Bromsgrove alike, have much to learn from each other".

~Ends~



Editorial Contact

Immacula Ltd
8/9 Stratford Arcade
75 High Street
Stony Stratford
Milton Keynes
MK11 1AY

James Dean
james@immacula.co.uk
+44 (0)1908 888 349
+44 (0)7968 772 536

Notes for editors

For more information about the project, and further contact details, please use the editorial contact above.

A press conference at Bromsgrove School will be held within the next two weeks. To bring this fantastic new relationship to life, a live video link will be set up between students from Bromsgrove School and Dominica Grammar School. Chris Edwards, Headmaster Bromsgrove School, James Millington, Head Boy Bromsgrove School, Gavin Rose, Managing Director NS Optimum, Scott Fisher, NS Optimum Network Manager for Bromsgrove School and Jem Winston, Managing Director 3 Rivers Eco Lodge (live video link from Dominica) will all be available for interview. For any further requirements and more details, please contact the editorial contact above.

An official letter of thanks from Stephenson Hyacinth, Chief Education Officer for the Ministry of Education in Dominica to Gavin Rose, Managing Director NS Optimum is available on request.

Video footage of two national news pieces (before and after completion of the project) broadcasted in Dominica, in DVD format is available on request. Other formats may be able to be made available.



Notes on 'Mission Dominica'

Project planning began in July 2006.

The initial inspection trip by NS Optimum consisted of Gavin and Scott on January 12th 2007.

All schools were thoroughly documented during inspection for requirements.

Installation took 2 weeks from March 17th 2007, carried out by two NS Optimum engineers.

Accommodation for the two engineers was covered by the British High Commission.

The project was funded by NS Optimum Ltd, costing in the region of £30k.

Full cost of the project including all donated equipment and services is in the region on £70k.

NS Optimum Ltd is currently looking for sponsorship to implement a 2nd phase.

The Commonwealth of Dominica has a population of 71,000 covering 289.5 square miles.

Ten schools stretching across the island benefited, four of which had no ICT infrastructure at all.

Beneficiaries: Castle Bruce Secondary School, Goodwill Secondary School, St Mary's Academy, Dominica Grammar School, North East Comprehensive School, Portsmouth Secondary School, Paix Bouch Primary School, Atkinson Primary School, Orion Academy and Petite Savanne Primary School.

Staff and students were taught best practices for maintaining and installing networking and PCs.

Siam Software provided free of charge allowing NS Optimum to remotely monitor hardware and network remotely from the UK over a secure internet connection.

Broadband access is available to all schools in Dominica.

Dominica Grammar school will run evening ICT classes for the general public.

The Sustainable Living Initiative Centre (SLIC) is a Dominica government project.

Jem Winston is on the board of Directors for SLIC and Managing Director of the 3 Rivers Eco Lodge.

The 3 Rivers Eco Lodge is responsible for implementing SLIC projects.

Jem Winston was responsible for introducing 'Mission Dominica' to the Chief Education Officer.

The 3 Rivers Eco Lodge has won Green Globe awards for its environmentally friendly tourism.

A 40' container was supplied by The Geest Line at discounted price for the project.

The Geest Line eastbound shipments mainly consist of Bananas from the Caribbean.

Westbound shipments include small packages to large project machinery destined for the Caribbean.

The Geest Line ships into Portsmouth, UK and Le Harve, France. It also comprises of an extensive internal logistics network between Caribbean islands.

190 PCs, 2 servers, printers, interactive whiteboards, digital projectors, Mayflex network switches, Netgear wireless networking, surge protectors and network trunking, cabling and tools were provided.

Dominica runs on a 240V power supply.

Computers supplied were based on 4-6 year old Intel original motherboards, Intel processors, 256MB RAM, 40GB Hard Disks and Windows 2000 operating system.

Servers were based on dual Intel Xeon processors.

Equipment is expected to serve the schools for at least three years.

Humidity was deemed a problem by NS Optimum on inspection, due to the sea air.

Silica gel packs were built into all equipment to minimise machine failures by humidity.

All machines were thoroughly wiped of all existing data, although machines were network nodes in previous life and therefore contained little user data.

Bromsgrove School had no use for the 200 PCs after a recent upgrade in their own computer labs.

Chris Edwards has worked in 4 continents and strongly believes in advantages of a global education.

Chris sees a link between the schools in Dominica to learn from each other.

Dominica has much to offer with their ongoing ecological preservation.

Bromsgrove School has presence in Bangkok, a purpose built brand new school in the city.

Students from 28 countries currently attend Bromsgrove School.

Potential of organising student/teacher exchanges with Dominica.

The 3 Rivers Eco Lodge is a perfect example of what could be learnt by students in the UK.

Expedition training for the World Challenge 2007 was held at Bromsgrove School.

The Bromsgrove Debating team won the national rounds and represented the country in the Model European Parliament in Kiev, Ukraine.